



# Baker City Herald

February 1, 2019

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In **OUTDOORS**, 1B  
Eagle Cap mushers in action

IN THIS EDITION: Local • Health & Fitness • Outdoors • TV **\$1.50**

QUICK HITS

**Good Day Wish To A Subscriber**

A special good day to Herald subscriber Marcella Neske of Baker City.

BRIEFING

**Compassion Center banquet set for Saturday**

The Northeast Oregon Compassion Center's annual banquet is set for Saturday, Feb. 2 at 5:30 p.m. at in the Family Life Center at the Baker City Nazarene Church, 1250 Hughes Lane. There will be silent and live auctions, and a tri-tip dinner.

**Best Friends seeks donations for Saturday Market**

Best Friends of Baker City is accepting donations of gently used items for the Saturday Market, which happens every Saturday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 2950 Church St. If you have items to donate, please call Best Friends at 541-523-7387.

**Baker County Garden Club meets Feb. 6**

The Baker County Garden Club will meet on Wednesday, Feb. 6 at 10:30 a.m. for a meeting and fun at Baker Botanicals, 3797 10th St. Please bring a chair, sack lunch and beverage. New members are always welcome.

**Community choir practices begin on Monday**

The Baker Community Choir begins rehearsals for spring performances on Monday, Feb. 4. Rehearsals are Mondays at 7 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, Fourth Street and Washington Avenue. Please arrive at 6:45 p.m. on Feb. 4 to pick up music. Those who can't attend Feb. 4 can join the next Monday. Concert dates are May 3 and 4 at 7 p.m. and May 5 at 3 p.m.

No experience is necessary. High school students and older are welcome. Those in middle school can participate if accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Cost is \$15 per person. More information is available by calling LaVonne Yeumans at 541-523-2347.

WEATHER

Today

43 / 34



Increasing clouds

Saturday

45 / 31



Rain likely

Sunday

44 / 26



Rain showers

**American Flag Displayed At Brooklyn Primary School**

## Summer's Special

■ Summer Curry, who flew flag while serving in Afghanistan, worked at the school



Lisa Britton/For the Baker City Herald

J.F. Griffin, far right with microphone, tells the story of how Summer Curry, center, had a flag flown in honor of Brooklyn Primary when she served in Afghanistan in 2005.

By Lisa Britton  
For the Baker City Herald

Summer Curry said she wouldn't cry.

Then she watched Sgt. Andrew Vowell and Spc. Christopher Serven present the colors (an American flag and an Oregon flag) through the sea of students at Brooklyn Primary School.

Her eyes teared up. Curry was honored Wednesday in a ceremony during a school assembly. J.F. Griffin orchestrated the event after he discovered an American flag in a box, tucked away in the custodian's closet.

The papers with the flag explained its significance: Curry had it flown in Brooklyn's honor in Afghanistan, where she served from 2004 to 2006.

Griff, as he's known to the staff and students, is a veteran himself and wanted to honor Curry and the flag. It is now secured inside a picture frame and on display in Brooklyn's lobby.

A plaque below reads: This flag was flown on September 9-10, 2005 during "Operation Unforgiven," a



Lisa Britton/For the Baker City Herald

The flag that Summer Curry flew while serving in Afghanistan is displayed in the lobby at Brooklyn Primary School.

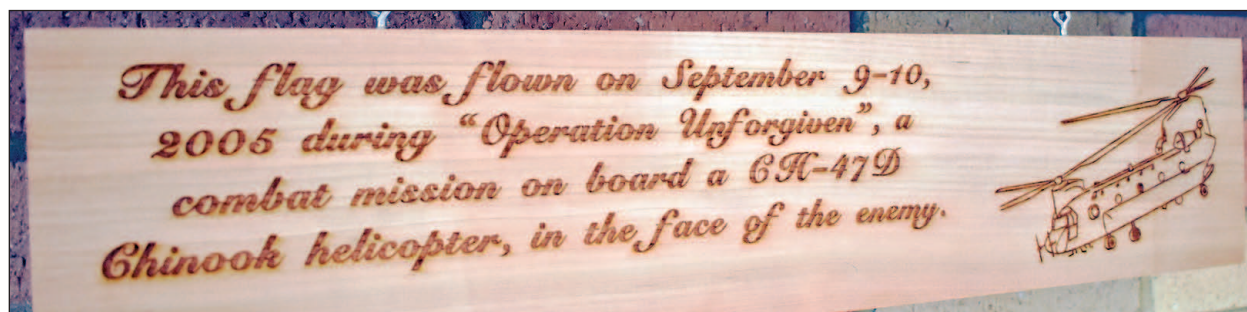
combat mission on board a CH-47D Chinook helicopter, in the face of the enemy.

Curry, a 1992 graduate of Baker High School, was called to active

duty in November 2006.

"I had just gotten hired on at the school district," she said.

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Lisa Britton/For the Baker City Herald

## County's veteran ratio above average

By Casey Crowley  
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The percentage of adults in Baker County who are military veterans is more than twice the national average.

About 15 percent of the county's adults are veterans, compared with about 7 percent nationally.

It's not uncommon for

rural areas such as Baker County to have a higher percentage of veterans, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

About 25 percent of the nation's veterans live in rural areas, but only about 19 percent of the total population lives in those areas.

One potential contributing factor is cost of living.

Veteran pensions range from \$13,000 to \$26,000 depending on the level of assistance they require and the size of their immediate family. For many veterans in Baker County their only source of income is federal benefits, including their VA pension and Social Security, said Rick Gloria, veteran

service officer for Baker County. This is because many are either too old to work or have medical issues that prevent them from working. An upside to veteran pensions is that all the money they receive is tax-exempt.

See **Veterans**/Page 2A

## Police raid meth lab

By Chris Collins  
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A Baker City couple were arraigned on multiple drug charges Thursday after police uncovered an illegal drug operation in their rented Fourth Street apartment during a Wednesday search of the residence.

"We had some information of drug activity so we got a warrant," Police Chief Dustin Newman said Thursday.

"What we expected we were going to find is exactly what we found."

Baker City Police officers, with assistance from the Oregon State Police, Baker County Sheriff's Office and federal law enforcement officers, served the search warrant at 12:45 p.m. Wednesday at 1604 Fourth St. They arrested Andrew Ferns, 34, and Cheris Owens, who lived in Apartment 2 of the building.



Ferns



Owens

See **Arrests**/Page 6A

## Work starts on county's first solar project

By Casey Crowley  
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Work started this week on Baker County's first solar power farm, which is being built just north of Unity, about 46 miles southwest of Baker City.

Workers are building a road to the site where thousands of solar panels will be installed starting in April.

The 25-acre project should be finished this summer, and start producing power no later than October, according to an official from Enerparc Inc., the Oakland, California, company that owns the project.

The solar array has a projected output of 2.75 megawatts. That's enough to power at least 50 residential homes.

Although the Unity project is Enerparc's first in Baker County, it's not the biggest one the company is pursuing.

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**MONDAY — WEEKEND HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS WRAP UP**



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