

What's new at the Baker County Library

Baker County Library Director Perry Stokes recently received a request in the suggestion box at the library, 2400 Resort St., to have a list of some of the newly arrived books and other materials published in the Herald.

FICTION

- "The Sky-Blue Wolves," S.M. Stirling
- "Crispin Guest Mysteries," Jeri Westerson
- "European Travel for the Monstrous Gentlewoman," Theodora Goss
- "The Refrigerator Monologues," Catherynne M. Valente
- "Smile," Roody Doyle

NONFICTION

- "The Truths We Hold," Kamala Harris
- "Deep Creek," Pam Houston
- "Zero Sugar Cookbook," David Zinczenko
- "Devotions," Mary Oliver
- "The First Conspiracy," Brad Meltzer

DVDS

- "A-X-L" (family)
- "Can You Ever Forgive Me?" (comedy)
- "First Man" (drama)
- "Maquia: When the Promised Flower Blooms" (anime)
- "The Sisters Brothers" (action/western)

LIBRARY HOURS

- Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m.-7 p.m.
- Friday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Sunday, noon-4 p.m.

While Baker City periodically melts, not far away the shoveling goes on

By Jayson Jacoby
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

For Cindy Birko the immediate problem wasn't moving her car.

First she had to find it. She knew the vehicle had to be out there in the driveway where she'd left it.

But the nearly ceaseless snowstorms that descended this week on Pine Creek, the rural neighborhood at the foot of the Elkhorns where Birko and her partner, Phil Reindl, live, rendered even familiar objects as indistinct lumps in a largely white landscape.

"We are buried and quickly running out of places to put the cleared snow," said Birko, whose home is on Spring Creek Loop, just south of Pine Creek Lane.

Although February brought several snowstorms to Baker City, none brought more than several inches in a short period.

And intermittent thaws prevented snow from accumulating to any great depth.

But the month also illustrated the climatic fact that even over relatively minor distances, and elevation gains, conditions can be dramatically different.

The Pine Creek area, for instance, is only about 11 miles from Baker City.

And Birko's home is about 4,100 feet above sea level, just 650 feet higher than Baker City.

Yet while residents in the city were watching the



Photo by Cindy Birko

Cindy Birko's Kia Sorrento sport-utility vehicle was scarcely recognizable after snowstorms dumped almost 3 feet of snow in the Pine Creek area west of Baker City this week. Birko said she measured 42 inches of snow in her yard Thursday.

remnants from Wednesday morning's storm soften to slush, flakes continued to fall at a prodigious pace along Pine Creek.

"The past two storms really piled it on," Birko said.

Her neighbor, Bruce Bittler, who with his wife, Teresa, owns the Elkhorn Mountain Bed and Breakfast, measures each day's snowfall.

He recorded 32 inches between 2 a.m. Saturday and Thursday.

Since the first accumulations in November, Bittler said he has measured 219 inches of total snowfall.

During the memorable winter of 2016-17, Bittler tallied a winter total of 289 inches.

But he said the current depth on the ground is

comparable to the deepest he measured during that winter.

On the opposite side of the Elkhorns, in Sumpter, the snow is about 4 feet deep, said Kathy Reedy, who owns The Depot Inn motel.

Reedy said the persistent storms have made for excellent snowmobiling conditions, a major attraction for the old mining town about 28 miles west of Baker City.

On the other side of the county, in Halfway, another place that like Sumpter is renowned for its fence-burying snow depths, the winter has been wet but not as white.

As of Thursday the snow depth in Halfway was about 15 inches, said Steve Backstrom, who compiles the official daily weather records and submits his statistics to the National Weather Service.

With a total precipitation of 5.2 inches, this was the third-wettest February ever at Halfway, where records date to 1936, Backstrom said.

(The record was 6.86 inches, in 1999.)

But much of that moisture fell as rain or slushy snow that didn't accumulate.

Backstrom said snow deepens to more than 3 feet just a few miles away, though, at the upper end of the Pine Valley at the base of the Wallows.

An automated snow-measuring station at Schneider Meadows, about 10 miles north of Halfway, recorded about 70 inches of snow during February.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Feed the Arts Soup Supper Saturday at Crossroads

Crossroads Carnegie Art Center's annual Feed the Arts Soup Supper is scheduled for Saturday, March 2, at the art center, 2020 Auburn Ave., in Baker City. There are two meal times: 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Ticket prices vary: \$10 includes soup, bread and dessert; for \$15, diners get soup, bread, dessert and a handmade bowl to keep.

The soup will be provided by The Lone Pine Cafe. Bread will be donated by Safeway and dessert is from The Little Pig. The evening also includes a silent auction of pottery. Proceeds support the Hand to Heart Scholarship Fund.

BHS students competing in Mock Trial event

LA GRANDE — Baker High School students will compete Saturday against La Grande High School in the Mock Trial Competition.

The winning school will advance to the state finals March 15-16 at Portland. The national finals are in May in Georgia.

Inaugural Gene Rose Memorial Chamber Concert set Saturday

HAINES — The Grande Ronde Symphony Association and the Leo Adler Foundation invite the community to the inaugural Gene Rose Memorial Chamber Concert Saturday, March 2, at the Haines United Methodist Church, 721 Roberts St. The concert begins at 7 p.m. and will feature two unique groups: the Kupenga Marimba band and the Blue Plate Special blue-

grass band. Tickets are \$10 per person, thanks to a contribution from the Leo Adler Foundation.

Kupenga Marimba plays lively southern African music, mostly from Zimbabwe, on large wooden xylophone-like marimbas.

The second band to perform will transform the atmosphere from

traditional African music to traditional American bluegrass. The Blue Plate Special is a La Grande group established in 2007. This five-member band serves up bluegrass entrees with a few side dishes of Irish and old-timey tunes.

The Gene Rose Memorial Chamber Concert is supported by a grant to the Grande Ronde Symphony Association from the Leo Adler Foundation

Community Fund. Rose was a longtime friend of Adler's and had served on the Leo Adler Foundation Board of Directors since its creation.

"For us to be able to honor Gene's memory with this robust combination of musical styles is truly in honor of Mr. Rose's unique character," said Alice Trindle, president of the Grande Ronde Symphony Association.

TRAILER

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Radabaugh said she learned about the theft when she received a call from the Baker Dispatch center at 3 a.m. on Feb. 21 notifying her that the Posse's trailer had been found in the 1200 block of Broadway Street and it was on fire.

The loss is estimated at about \$10,000, which includes the \$4,000 trailer, a \$4,000 generator that was taken and other items collected over the years for the annual Youth Trail Ride.

There were two 10-by-20-foot awnings, a pop-up awning, folding chairs, five resin folding tables, six wooden

"It's the posse, it's the kids, it's the community."

— Jodie Radabaugh, Baker County Mounted Posse

tables, donated cowboy boots, a spare tire, five 10-person tents, coolers and other items.

Radabaugh said some of the supplies were destroyed in the fire, but she believes many were stolen before the trailer was burned.

The trailer was covered by liability insurance only.

"We have the funds to replace it," Radabaugh said of the loss, but that's not the point, she emphasizes.

"It's the posse, it's the kids, it's the community. Everything bought was from the

community or from us cooking around with the chuckwagon," she said.

Volunteers work tirelessly throughout the year to raise money to fund the trail ride and to keep the cost at \$2 each for participants ages 12 to 15. The ride was first established in 1964, and this year's event will not be hampered by the criminals who took the equipment that the volunteers have worked so hard to acquire over the years, Radabaugh said.

"Insurance and the horses are our major expenses," she said. "Even if it takes every last penny, we will have the trail ride in June.

"It just will be a lot more extra work for all the volun-

teers," she said.

Posse volunteers can be found in their chuckwagon selling hamburgers during events such as the Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally, the Baker City Bronc & Bull Riding events during Miners Jubilee and at the Demolition Derby. They solicit donations from businesses and individuals throughout the county during the year and most years they also sponsor a gun show during the Thanksgiving weekend.

Radabaugh said the organization has even considered writing to talk show host Ellen DeGeneres, who is known for funding charitable causes, to see if she'd be willing to help the posse out of its financial hardship this year.

Anyone with information about the theft or the fire is asked to email Baker City Police Officer Jared Wood at jwood@bakercity.com or call Baker Dispatch at 541-523-3644 and leave a message for Wood, who is the investigating officer.

Baker City's Mount Hope Cemetery.

Gettle said a section of the street will be closed during the exercise from about 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (access to the cemetery will be maintained).

OTEC is coordinating the drill, which will also involved the Baker City Fire Department, Baker County Sheriff's Office and Life Flight, Gettle said.

She said set up for the drill will start around 9 a.m. on March 7.

Participants will work through multiple scenarios, involving the driver of a car who is hurt after colliding with a power pole, causing live power lines to fall.

PlaceVR will set up the 360-degree camera that creates the video that makes the virtual reality experience possible.

OTEC will supply the narrated safety message that will be included with the video, Gettle said.

Producing the videos will take about a month, and

Gettle said OTEC hopes to have the demonstrations available by mid-April.

She said OTEC will be buying at least 10 headsets to take to school safety events.

Gettle said OTEC's main cost is managing the logistics of the March 7 disaster drill.

The cooperative is receiving financial help from multiple organizations, including Federated Insurance, which insures member-owned electric cooperatives, as well as state and natural associations of electric cooperatives.

Gettle said PlaceVR will be filming at other sites in the area next week, including at Anthony Lakes, to collect footage that can be used in promotional videos.

She said OTEC also hopes to produce other virtual reality safety videos, including ones that focus on dangers specific to farming, such as the possibility of irrigation pipes touching power lines.

"We see a ton of opportunity in this technology moving forward," Gettle said.

VIDEO

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OTEC is contracting with PlaceVR, a Minnesota firm, to produce the video.

Actually, videos.

Gettle said there will be multiple versions — the one designed for students, for instance, will be shorter than the version that will be made available to firefighters and other first responders.

She believes the video will be useful for rural fire departments, in effect allowing their volunteers to "participate in a training after the fact."

Gettle said the idea for the virtual reality safety videos was a natural outgrowth of OTEC's emphasis on educating the public, first responders and others about how to stay safe around downed power lines.

"Safety is our number one priority," she said.

The star of the videos, so to speak, will be the mock accident scheduled for March 7 on South Bridge Street near

PLAY

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The grant wouldn't pay the entire cost of building the all-abilities playground.

Bornstedt expects the Moda grant would cover about half the cost. The city has already started looking at other grants to make up the difference.

If the city doesn't receive any grants it could use money from the general fund or try raising the money through fundraisers.

Next week Bornstedt plans to attend a Certified

Playground Safety Inspector Recertification class where she can talk with playground manufacturers about the estimated cost of all-abilities equipment.

To make a playground fully accessible, the city would need to install surfacing accessible to wheelchairs. The surface would be similar to the artificial turf beneath the playground structure installed in May 2014.

Residents can vote once per day online. To vote, go to <https://www.nba.com/blazers/assist>

Farmers Market poster contest

The Baker City Farmers Market is seeking entries for its 2019 market poster contest. Entries are due by April 1. Format is poster size, 11 inches by 17 inches, leaving room for text. To see an example, go to www.bakercityfarmersmarket.com. To enter, or for more information, call Kim Luckini at 541-519-0305.

MARCH 1-7
ELTRYM HISTORIC THEATER
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GRETA R
FRI & SAT: (4:20) 7:20, 9:40
SUN: (4:20) 7:20 MON-TH: 7:20

FIGHTING WITH MY FAMILY PG-13
FRI & SAT: (4:00) 7:00, 9:30
SUN: (4:00) 7:00 MON-TH: 7:00

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: THE HIDDEN WORLD PG
FRI & SAT: (4:10) 7:10, 9:35
SUN: (4:10) 7:10 MON-TH: 7:10

11 Bargain Matinee
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