

Baker City Herald

March 8, 2019

Serving Baker County since 1870 • bakercityherald.com



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

Spring forward

Daylight saving time begins at 2 a.m. Sunday, March 10. Remember to set your clocks forward one hour before going to bed Saturday



QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Keith Chadwell of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Road below Hells Canyon Dam reopens after slide

The road between Hells Canyon Dam and the Forest Service Visitors Center re-opened Thursday after being closed for more than a week by a rockslide.

Drivers planning to travel between Oxbow and Hells Canyon Dam should call Idaho Power's recorded information line at 541-785-7251 for possible road closures.

WEATHER

Today

35 / 18



Slight chance of snow

Saturday

35 / 16



Mostly cloudy

Sunday

36 / 15



Partly sunny

Full forecast on the back of the B section.

The space below will be blank on issues delivered or sold from boxes. The space is for a postage label for issues that are mailed.

Deteriorating Trend Continues With Baker City Streets

Paying for Potholes



S. John Collins / Baker City Herald

Washington Avenue is slated to be repaved this summer from the Powder River east to Clark Street.

By Casey Crowley
ccrowley@bakercityherald.com

Baker City's streets continued to get rougher over the past year, a trend that dates back almost two decades.

And although a 2017 transportation package approved by the Oregon Legislature has boosted the city's annual gas tax revenue by about \$60,000, the budget for street maintenance falls short of what's needed to reverse the trend.

The City Council reviewed the 2019 pavement management plan during a work session Wednesday evening at City Hall.

In 2000, the city, which reviews the condition of its paved streets each year, rated 97 percent of the street mileage as being "good" or "very good." Just 2.76 miles were rated as "fair."

Now just 52 percent of streets are rated as "good" or "very good," and 24.78 miles are "fair."

Jay Fuzi, an engineering technician with the city, rates streets each fall in five areas. When possible he drives the same route, in the same vehicle, each year. Fuzi has been responsible for the street ratings for the past eight years.

He rates streets based on ride quality, surface cracking, trench settlement, drainage issues and other factors affecting the street's structural integrity.

See Streets / Page 5A

Sewer rates to rise

By Casey Crowley
ccrowley@bakercityherald.com

Baker City residents could pay up to 40 percent more for sewer service by 2021 as the city prepares to build a wastewater pipeline and storage lagoon that will cost an estimated \$11 million.

That is the worst-case scenario, however, Public Works Director Michelle Owen told city councilors during a work session Wednesday.

The current sewer rate for residential customers is \$23.26 per month.

The highest rate city officials have looked at is \$32.50, an increase of \$9.24 per month.

"We know we are going to be in the \$30 range, there is virtually no question," City Manager Fred Warner Jr. said.

Boosting the monthly rate to \$30 would represent an increase of 29 percent.

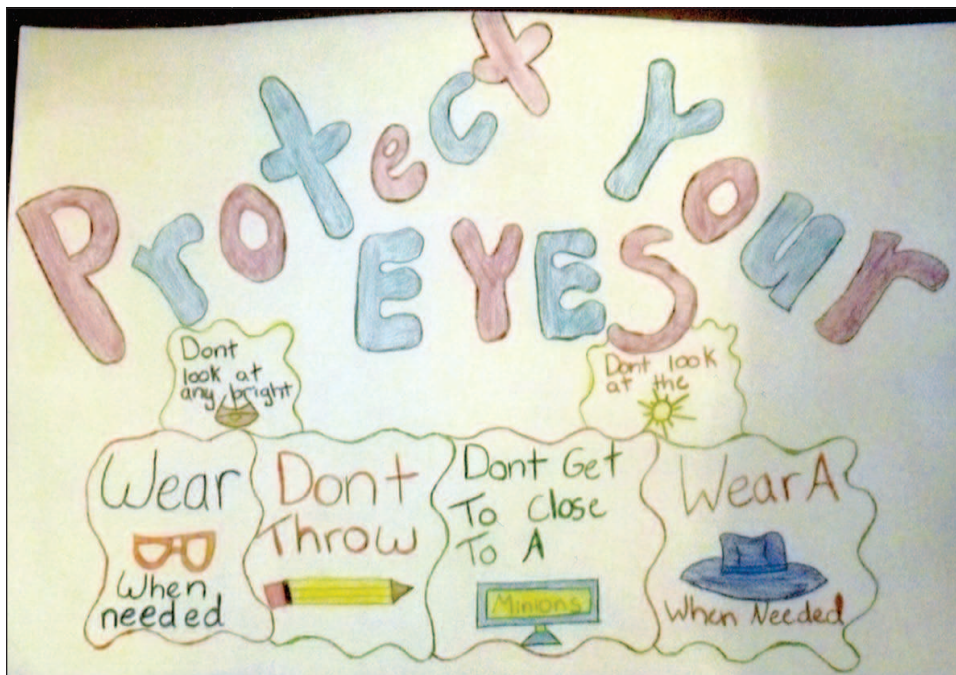
The city would raise rates over two years, starting July 1, 2019, with the monthly charge not rising above \$27.88 then.

The city probably will take out a loan to build the treatment plant. Optional sources include the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Business Oregon and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

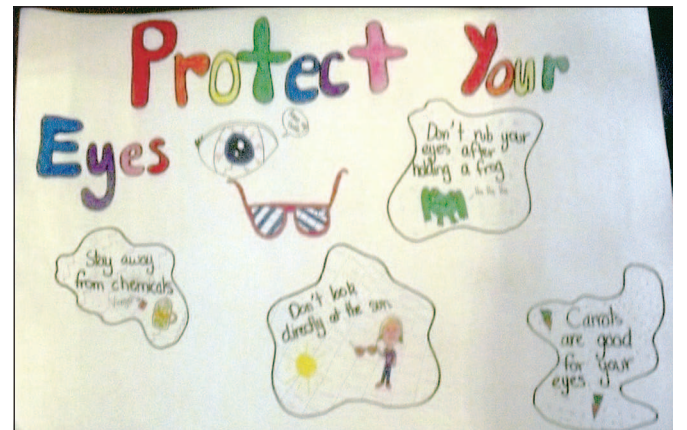
"The goal is to keep the project cost as low as possible," Owen said, "so we borrow less, we pay back less, so the rate can be less."

See Sewer / Page 5A

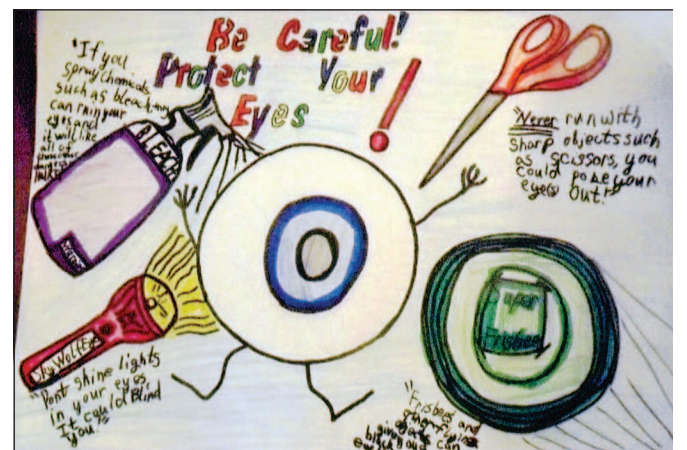
1st place: Taylor Churchfield



2nd place: Taylor Johnson



3rd place: David Kerns



Elks poster winners named

A sixth-grader at Keating Elementary School and two fifth-graders from South Baker Intermediate are the winners in the annual Elks eye injury prevention poster contest.

All fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade students at South Baker, Keating and Haines schools were eligible to enter.

Hal Huntington, contest chairman from the Baker Elks Lodge, received 129 posters from nine teachers at South Baker and Keating.

Winners are:

- 1st — Taylor Churchfield, sixth grade, Keating, Mrs. Wilde's class
- 2nd — Taylor Johnson, fifth grade, South Baker, Mrs. Howard's class
- 3rd — David Kerns, fifth grade, South Baker Intermediate, Ms. Callahan's class

Johnson's poster placed second at the district competition, and Churchfield's placed third. Both were sent to the state competition which takes place later this month.



TODAY
Issue 130, 14 pages

Calendar 2A
Classified 4B-7B
Comics 3B

Community News 3A
Crossword 5B & 7B
Dear Abby 8B

Health 2B
Jayson Jacoby 4A
News of Record 2A

Obituaries 2A
Opinion 4A
Outdoors 1B

Senior Menus 2A
Sports 6A
Weather 8A

MONDAY — BAKER GIRLS BASKETBALL AT THE STATE TOURNAMENT