

Local

BAKER COUNTY CALENDAR

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

■ **Live Music by Keith Taylor:** Ragtime piano, 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Crossroads, 2020 Auburn Ave.; no charge.

MONDAY, MARCH 18

■ **Baker County Red Cross Volunteers:** 6 p.m., in the Red Cross Office at Baker City Hall, 1655 First St.

TUESDAY, MARCH 19

■ **Elkhorn Community Preparedness:** 5:30 p.m. supper; 6:30 p.m. meeting; at the Sunridge Inn Restaurant.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

■ **Baker County Board of Commissioners:** 9 a.m., Courthouse, 1995 Third St.

■ **Baker City Tree Board:** 5:30 p.m., Conference Room at City Hall, 1655 First St.

■ "Growing the Food I Want" Gardening Class:

"Garden Soils: It's a Dirty Business," 6 p.m., Ace Hardware, 2200 Resort St.; MarkliAnn Johnston, Master Gardener volunteer, will tell how to optimize soils for food production; classes continue through May 15; cost is \$5 per class or \$20 for the five classes for those registered by March 22; information: Mindy Sherrieb, 541-523-3449, 541-523-6418 or mastergardener.baker@oregonstate.edu

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

50 YEARS AGO from the Democrat-Herald March 15, 1969

"Deeper Life Services" at the Church of the Nazarene from March 16-23 will combine the talents of Dr. Lauriston DuBois, college professor and chaplain and the musical talents of his son, Bayard.

Bayard was a three-year letterman in high school. He is presently a sophomore in college and is on the varsity basketball team.

25 YEARS AGO from the Baker City Herald March 15, 1994

The state will unveil a draft master plan for the new Sumpter Valley Dredge State Park Thursday evening at the Sumpter Town Hall.

Kathy Schutt of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department will present the plan.

10 YEARS AGO from the Baker City Herald March 16, 2009

Cattlemen across Oregon are working to educate urban lawmakers about the potentially devastating effects a handful of bills currently before the Legislature could have on the state's agriculture industry.

ONE YEAR AGO from the Baker City Herald March 16, 2018

A steady light rain fell Wednesday morning while about 55 Baker High School students stood outside the school in silent remembrance of the 17 people who died a month ago in a shooting at a Florida high school.

The students were asked by senior class president Eva Jones-Bedolla to turn off their cellphones before the vigil began. For those 17 minutes, students complied with the request. They did not check their phones, take photos of themselves and their friends or catch up on the latest gossip of the day.

"I was really proud of the students who showed up," Eva said. "They stood in silence."

The Baker students joined others from across the country, including 60 at Baker Middle School, who walked out of their classrooms at 10 a.m. local time to participate in a variety of events.

OREGON LOTTERY

MEGABUCKS, March 13

11 - 17 - 21 - 24 - 25 - 26
Next jackpot: \$9.4 million

POWERBALL, March 13

18 - 36 - 45 - 47 - 69 PB 3
Next jackpot: \$495 million

WIN FOR LIFE, March 13

5 - 37 - 64 - 76

PICK 4, March 14

• 1 p.m.: 7 - 5 - 7 - 6
• 4 p.m.: 0 - 9 - 3 - 9
• 7 p.m.: 2 - 6 - 7 - 0
• 10 p.m.: 2 - 2 - 9 - 3

LUCKY LINES, March 14

2-8-10-14-20-24-26-30
Next jackpot: \$10,000

SENIOR MENUS

- **MONDAY:** Boneless chicken breast with cream gravy, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, biscuit, fruit cup, brownie
- **TUESDAY:** Pot roast, parslid red potatoes, green beans, roll, green salad, cheesecake

Public luncheon at the Senior Center, 2810 Cedar St., 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; \$4.50 donation (60 and older), \$6.75 for

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7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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DROUGHT

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By August, which was marked by record-breaking high temperatures and a dry spell at the Baker City Airport that started in late June and extended for more than 65 days, the drought was rated as severe for much of the county.

Both the state and the federal governments declared a drought emergency in the county.

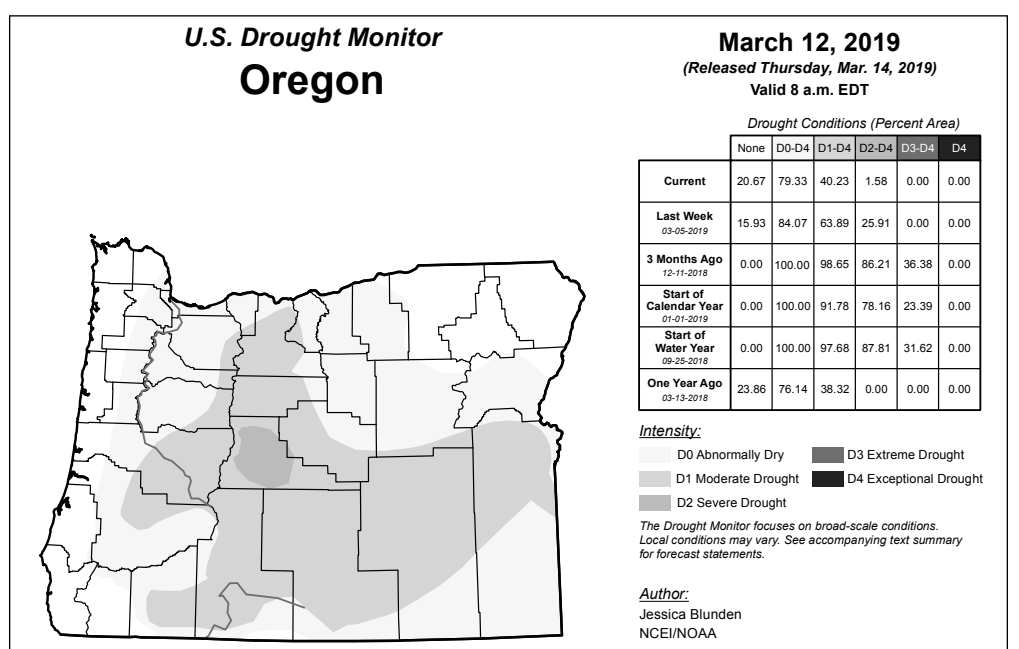
The situation remained relatively static during the fall and into January, which was warmer and drier than average, raising the prospect of a second consecutive below-average winter snowpack.

But in the first week of February a dramatic shift in the weather pattern — not just in Baker County but across much of the West — ushered in a prolonged period of cool temperatures and frequent precipitation, most of which fell as snow.

The first map to show a major change was issued Feb. 26. Most of Baker County had been downgraded from severe drought to moderate.

The wintry stretch extended well into March. And although the National Weather Service is forecasting dry and warmer conditions for the next several days, the storms of the past several weeks have buoyed the hopes of farmers, ranchers and others who depend especially on mountain snowpacks to fill reservoirs and keep streams flowing through the irrigation season.

"It looks a lot better than last year," said Frederick Phillips, who owns a cattle ranch in Keating Valley, about 20



Wintry weather to end ... for now

Baker County residents might go from shivering to sweating in the span of a couple of days.

You won't need to wipe the winter's accumulation of dust from your window air-conditioner, to be sure.

But though it doesn't appear that any records will be threatened, temperatures early next week are likely to ascend to levels last seen when kids' Halloween candy hoards were still immense.

The National Weather Service is forecasting temperatures in Baker City to reach the mid- to upper 50s on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday — the latter expected to be the warmest day of the week.

If the prediction proves accurate, one of those days will be the warmest here since Nov. 4, 2018, when the high temperature was 59 at the Baker City Airport.

The record highs for March 18-20 are, in order, 70, 71 and 71. The average highs are 51, 52 and 53.

Temperatures above 50 ought to feel especially warm after the unseasonable chill of February and early March.

The high temperature at the airport was below average on each of the first 14 days of March. The same was true on 22 of the 28 days in February.

That's in sharp contrast to January, when the high temperature was above average on 27 of the 31 days.

— Jayson Jacoby

miles east of Baker City. "I think we're going to be in for a good water year this sum-

mer"

Across Northeastern Oregon the water content in the

snowpack is about 27 percent above the long-term average.

But the situation is even more promising in Baker County's mountains, where the water content at a few sites is nearly twice the average — and almost three times what it was at this time a year ago.

The bellwether in this respect is Eilertson Meadow, in the Elkhorn Mountains about 16 miles northwest of Baker City.

The water content there on Thursday was 17.2 inches — the most measured at the site since early April 1983, when it peaked at 21.5 inches (the automated snow-measuring station at Eilertson Meadow was installed in 1980).

The 17.2-inch figure is 95 percent above average for mid-March. A year ago the water content was just 5.4 inches.

"It looks like a great snowpack and a great water year," said Curtis Martin, a rancher who lives near North Powder. "That certainly wasn't the case at the end of January."

OBITUARY

Valerie Wilson

Formerly of Hereford and Unity, 1956-2019

Valerie Joan Wilson, 62, a former Hereford and Unity resident, died peacefully on Feb. 27, 2019, at Tooele, Utah, surrounded by her husband and children.

At her request, disposition was by cremation. There will be a memorial service for Valerie on June 23 at Burnt River Community Church in Unity.

Valerie was born on April 19, 1956, at Baker City to Chet and Myrnie Koontz of Hereford. She was one of nine children born into the Koontz family. She spent her childhood on the family ranch in Hereford, riding horses, milking cows and helping her Dad out in the field. She loved playing cards with her family, which turned into a lifelong pastime.

In 1982, Valerie met the love of her life, Rodney Wilson. It didn't take long for them to make a lifelong commitment. They did everything together. Taking long drives in the

country, playing cards with Chet and Myrnie, and helping brand calves was how they spent their time together. Rod and Val tied the knot on Jan. 10, 1986. Quickly, their family grew. By 1990, they had four children: Randi, Jocee, CJ and Titus.

Valerie always felt that Oregon was her home, and she lived in many different cities. Rod and Val finally settled down in Unity to raise their family. Valerie loved volunteering at her children's school, riding the bus to swim lessons, and helping plan class parties. Valerie was also very involved in Burnt River Community Church where she faithfully attended for 35 years. Her greatest passion about church was singing. She loved to sing to the congregation. Valerie loved playing her guitar and recently learned how to play the piano.

In 2001, Valerie and Rod adopted their grandson Andrew, who proved to be a perfect addition to the family. Valerie loved attending all her kids' sporting events. You could always find her in the bleachers, yelling words of

encouragement to everyone. She herself loved to play volleyball and played in the city league. She also loved to crochet and craft. She made several afghans and rugs. Many can attest to her dedication and handiwork when it came to her rugs! She was always quick to make a rug for a wedding or birthday. She loved making them and giving them away.

In 2017, Valerie and Rod moved to Tooele, Utah, for a job opportunity and to start a new chapter in their life together. While in Tooele, they enjoyed dining out, taking in the sites and watching their grandkids play softball. In October of 2018, Valerie received the devastating diagnosis of lung cancer. She fought till the end. We love our mother and her fun-loving spirit, her children said. We can all see her dancing around the kitchen, singing her heart out. She will always be our cheerleader.

Valerie is survived by her husband of 37 years, Rodney

Wilson; her daughters, Randi Wilson and Jocee Arriola (Zac); her sons, CJ Wilson (Destiny), Titus Wilson (Josette), and Andrew Wilson (Josette); eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren; her sisters, Davelle Baker (Dale), Kristi Ping (Denny), Gwynneth Anderson (Quinton), Michelle Brown (Loren), Kimala Hoskins (Tim) and Shauna Andrews (Corey); and her only brother, Chip Koontz (Cathleen).

Valerie was preceded in death by her father, Chester Koontz; her mother, Myrnie Koontz; her loving sister, Jonda Myers; her in-laws, Lowell and Charlotte Wilson; and her brother-in-law, Richard Wilson.

Her family extends a special thanks to her team at Intermountain Medical Center. Dr. Lowe and his team of nurses took great care of her till the end. They also thanked CNS in Tooele for providing the care and comfort she needed.

NEWS OF RECORD

DEATHS

Maxine O. Harris: 83, of Baker City, died March 12, 2019, at her home at Elkhorn Village. At her request there will be no services. Those wishing to make a donation in Maxine's memory may direct them to a charity of their choice through Coles Tribute Center, 1950 Place St., Baker City, OR 97814. To light a candle in Maxine's memory, go to www.celebrationcenter.com

FUNERALS PENDING

Andrew "Andy" Pinard: There will be a social hour Friday, March 15, beginning at 5 p.m. at Wild Bill's in Halfway with a celebration of Andy's life afterward at the same location. Those who would like to make a memorial donation may do so to help defray service expenses through Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services, P.O. Box 543, Halfway, OR 97834. Online condolences may be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com

Elmyra Mitchell: Graveside service, 1 p.m., Saturday, March 16, at the Eagle Valley Cemetery in Richland. Friends are invited to join the family for a potluck reception afterward at the Rich-

land Christian Church. The family suggests memorial donations in honor of Wanda to the Eagle Valley Ambulance Defibrillator Fund through Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services, P.O. Box 543, Halfway, OR 97834. Online condolences may be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com

Andy Anderson: There will be a graveside service with military honors at 1 p.m. Friday, March 22, at Mount Hope Cemetery. Friends are invited to join the family at 2 p.m. for a reception at the Eagles Club, 2935 H St. Memorial contributions may be made to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Fisher House at Aurora, Colorado, through Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Online condolences may be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com

Gerald Wesley Howard: Private family interment has taken place at the Sumpter Masonic Cemetery. A celebration of Jerry's life is scheduled at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 13, at the Blue Mountain Baptist Church, 2998 Eighth St. in Baker City.

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In loving memory and forever in our hearts



Derwin (Andy) Anderson

Oct. 20, 1941 - Dec. 10, 2018

Please join us in celebrating Andy's Life Friday, March 22, 2019

- 1 PM Military Honors at Mt. Hope Cemetery
- 2 PM Celebration of Life at Eagle's Lodge 2935 H Street, Baker City
- 4-6 PM Frank Carlson will celebrate Andy's favorite music & pay tribute to veterans

*Death leaves a heartache no one can heal.
Love leaves a memory no one can steal.*

You will be missed by all who knew you.