

Local

BAKER COUNTY CALENDAR

FRIDAY, APRIL 12

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

MONDAY, APRIL 15

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

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

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

■ **"Growing the Food I Want" Gardening Class:** Topic is "Three Veggieeters: Night Shade, Root and Salad," 6 p.m., Baker Botanicals, 3797 10th St.; Master Gardener volunteers will provide tips for commonly grown vegetables; classes continue Wednesdays through May 15; cost is \$5 per class; more information is available by calling Mindy Sherrieb at 541-523-3449 or leave a message at 541-523-6418 or mastergardener.baker@oregonstate.edu

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

■ **Baker Rural Fire Protection District Board:** 5:30 p.m. at the Pochahontas Fire Station.

■ **Baker School Board:** 6 p.m., Council chambers at Baker City Hall, 1655 First St.

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

50 YEARS AGO from the Democrat-Herald April 12, 1969

"Requests for information about Baker College has overwhelmed us," Gordon MacMahill, Albion, Ida., said. MacMahill is in Baker talking to prospective students and enrolling them in the college.

25 YEARS AGO from the Baker City Herald April 12, 1994

HALFWAY — Pine-Eagle schools will switch to a shortened-week schedule next fall.

The school board is expected to approve the move at its May meeting, said Steve Peterson, Pine-Eagle superintendent.

10 YEARS AGO from the Baker City Herald April 13, 2009

Idaho Power has asked the Oregon Public Utility Commission to cancel a scheduled Wednesday hearing over the need to build a 500-kilovolt line from Boardman to Hemingway.

ONE YEAR AGO from the Baker City Herald April 13, 2018

St. Francis de Sales Cathedral needs a new roof, and fundraising efforts thus far have raised about 70 percent of the needed \$300,000.

"We've had quite a bit of roof damage," said Dawn Coles, parish secretary.

The shingled roof is more than 30 years old. Leaks have recently caused damage to the lathe-and-plaster layer, resulting in the loss of three tiles inside the cathedral at First and Church streets.

Of the \$300,000 total, the Diocese of Baker contributed \$100,000 and Catholic Extension Services provided a \$45,000 grant that required a match. A local donation of \$50,000 plus \$28,000 from other donors met that match requirement.

"That was a huge blessing," Coles said.

The next fundraising effort is a "Raise the Roof Fiesta" planned for Friday, May 4, at the Baker Elks Lodge, 1896 Second St.

Social hour begins at 5 p.m., followed by dinner at 6 p.m. and a live auction at 7 p.m. There will also be a silent auction.

Dinner will be catered by El Erradero.

OREGON LOTTERY

MEGABUCKS, April 10

14 — 24 — 30 — 43 — 46 — 48

Next jackpot: \$4.2 million

POWERBALL, April 10

12 — 21 — 23 — 39 — 67 PB 6

Next jackpot: \$101 million

WIN FOR LIFE, April 10

41 — 46 — 49 — 51

PICK 4, April 11

• 1 p.m.: 7 — 3 — 3 — 7

• 4 p.m.: 4 — 8 — 0 — 1

• 7 p.m.: 9 — 7 — 6 — 2

• 10 p.m.: 4 — 1 — 7 — 9

LUCKY LINES, April 11

4-7-11-14-17-21-25-32

Next jackpot: \$16,000

SENIOR MENUS

■ **MONDAY:** Baked cod, cup of chowder, broccoli-blend vegetables, roll, coleslaw, ice cream

■ **TUESDAY:** Cheese manicotti with meat sauce, peas, garlic bread sticks, green salad, cinnamon rolls

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 those under 60.

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MEASURE

Continued from Page 1A

Board members have discussed the possibility of asking voters to approve a much smaller — \$6 million — measure, possibly in November 2019 or in May 2020, that doesn't include any new construction.

Connie Potter, a communications consultant who contracts with the Oregon School Boards Association, met with the 5J Board by phone during an April 4 work session to look further into which voters the district needs to persuade to support a future bond measure.

The Board plans to meet in early May to continue its discussion.

The information was compiled by L2, a Bothell, Washington, firm.

Of the 10,507 registered voters in the District, 6,981 — 66% — voted on the bond measure.

The largest contingent of voters, and the group that returned ballots at the highest rate, is those age 45 or older. That cohort numbered 6,839 (65% of total voters), and 5,312 of them (78%) voted.

That group cast 76 percent of all the votes in the bond measure election.

Slightly more women voted than men: 3,590 of the 5,225 women registered, 51.3%, vs. 3,309 of 5,190 registered men, 47.5%. Sixty-eight voters, about 1 percent, did not list a gender.

In terms of party affiliation, 81% of Republicans (3,866 of 4,747) voted, compared with 75% of Democrats (1,346 of 1,805) and 41 percent of non-affiliated voters (1,320 of 3,254).

"The majority of these voters seem to be pretty fiscally conservative," Potter said. "That's something to keep in mind."

Unfortunately, precinct voting reveals little to help the District plan a strategy in that regard.

"A lot of times you can look through these precinct numbers and they can tell you a lot," Potter said.

But in this case, the Nov. 6 measure was soundly defeated in every precinct wholly within Baker County.

"The message there is voters were not happy with this particular voter package," Potter said of the precinct-by-precinct rejection of the plan. "You need to go back to the table and come back with a package that will be more palatable with voters."

And most particularly with older voters, given their reliably high turnout.

"We really need to work on gaining support of the older voters and finding a package they can afford and support," Potter said.

ANALYZING THE SCHOOL BOND

OVERALL RESULTS — 6,981 VOTES CAST

• NO: 4,760; YES: 2,221

AGES 45 AND OLDER (6,839 VOTERS)

• Turnout: 5,312 (78%; 76% of votes cast)

AGES 35-44 (1,357 VOTERS)

• Turnout: 782 (58%; 11% of votes cast)

AGES 25-34 (1,564 VOTERS)

• Turnout: 629 (40%; 9% of votes cast)

AGES 18-24 (742 VOTERS)

• Turnout: 243 (33%; 3.5% of votes cast)

Director Julie Huntington pointed to another strategy.

"The second piece of finding a comfortable package for the 60-plus voters is converting the nonvoters to voters," Huntington said.

Potter pointed out that younger voters, who in most cases are parents of current students, should be easily accessible to the District to provide information about the next proposal.

"If it's the right package, the parents should come along," she said. "It's easy to reach parents. It's harder to reach the older voters. They don't have a built-in mechanism for meeting with you like the parents do."

How people voted

A post-election survey of 387 district patrons showed that 132 (34%) respondents supported the bond measure while 255 (66%) did not.

The No. 1 reason for support, expressed by 47 people, was to allow the District to build a new elementary school to address overcrowding.

Here's how supporters ranked five other reasons presented to them on the survey:

- 2. To provide safety and security upgrades at all schools.
 - 3. To move seventh- and eighth-graders to the high school.
 - 4. To provide energy efficiency upgrades at all the schools.
 - 5. Because it would benefit children/grandchildren enrolled in the district.
 - 6. To provide more vocational opportunities and advanced classes for seventh- and eighth-graders.
- The 207 respondents who ranked reasons why they voted against the measure cited the No. 1 reason as "asking too much money at one time."

Here's how they ranked the six other choices:

- 2. Taxes are already too high.
- 3. District is not a good

steward of tax money.

• 4. Would rather remodel than build a new elementary school.

• 5. Not enough information about the bond.

• 6. Don't want to combine middle school with high school.

• 7. Don't believe there's an urgency to address bond issues.

Of the 122 Baker School District employees included in the post-election survey, 62% voted in favor and 38% voted against the measure.

Respondents to the public survey were also asked how much they would be willing to increase their property taxes for school improvements.

The option that received the most support — 23% of respondents — would increase the tax rate by 79 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value for 15 years. That would raise \$16 million for improvements.

Another 23% of respondents said they wouldn't support a bond of any amount, even if that meant the district would forego a \$4 million grant from the state.

Among district employees who agreed to take the survey, there were equal numbers (24% each) who supported \$1.86 per \$1,000 for 10 years to raise \$20 million, and 79 cents per \$1,000 for 15 years (\$16 million).

Another 8% of staff members said they wouldn't support any bond measure.

Facilities Committee

In addition to reviewing the post-election results, Board members and administrators met with members of the Long Range Facilities Planning Committee that helped advise the District about the bond measure and with other community members and business leaders to gather more information.

"People who said *no*, say we know we have to spend something," Superintendent Mark Witty said of his conversations and review of comments.

He added, however, that he does not believe the community is willing to pay to build a new school based on those conversations and remarks.

"I was a little surprised on how engaged respondents were on safety and security," director Andrew Bryan said of the post-election survey results and in conversations with community members.

Bryan credited a letter to the editor written in October by Chris Hawkins, board chair and an Oregon State Police officer, for bringing the issue to the forefront for voters.

"It seemed like a 'don't leave abandoned buildings' thread went through (comments)," Witty added.

"I certainly saw that," Huntington said, noting comments such as "you had a building, you got rid of a building; you had a school, got rid of a school and now you need a school again. I saw that repeatedly."

That sentiment referred to Churchill School, which the school district sold more than a decade ago.

Bryan expressed frustration with comments about the District's past lack of maintenance of its properties.

"I even heard that from children of people who were administrators at the time we didn't take care of our buildings," he said.

Witty said he will address the issue with information perhaps to be published in a future edition of the Bulldog Pride newsletter by outlining what the district has done over the past 10 years and why.

"We have \$800,000 targeted for maintenance in the next budget cycle," he said. "We did more in previous years."

Witty pointed to state grants that provided about \$2.6 million to make seismic upgrades at Brooklyn Primary School and Baker High School last year. And the District hopes to receive similar grants this year to continue that work.

"We are making pretty strong, consistent investment in the facilities," he said.

Baker was like many other Districts that did have to defer maintenance in the past, he said.

"Every District ... during the recession shuttered maintenance," Witty said. "Boards had tough decisions to make. They were your representatives and they made the decisions because their primary responsibilities were to educate those kiddos."

Bryan pointed to the financial solvency of the District compared with others throughout the state that continue to struggle.

See **Measure** / Page 3A

NEWS OF RECORD

DEATHS

Mark Halley: of Richland, died April 10, 2019, at his home in Sisters. There will be a service at Richland (time and date to be announced). Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com

Marilyn Randall: of Richland, died on April 9, 2019, at home in Jerome, Idaho. There will be a graveside celebration of Marilyn's life at 11 a.m. Thursday, April 18, at the Eagle Valley Cemetery in Richland. Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com

FUNERALS PENDING

Gerald Wesley "Jerry" or "Bubba" Howard: 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. The family suggests contributions in memory of Bubba to the Blue Mountain Baptist Church or Community Connection Senior Center 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

valleyfuneralhome.com

David King: His memorial service will be at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 13, at the Calvary Baptist Church, Third and Broadway streets in Baker City. Lunch will be served at the church afterward. Memorial contributions may be made to a charity of one's choice or to The Gideons through Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel, 1500 Dewey Ave., Baker City, OR 97814.

See **News of Record** / Page 5A

LOST YORKIE missing from Western Heights area since 3/15.

- 4-year-old neutered male
- 5 pounds
- Gray, brown & black
- Small bare spot on right shoulder
- Hair is 1 inch longer than pictured

Please call 307-290-1553
\$350 reward for Louie's return

Opening April 13th Eagle Cap Nursery

Come out & see us!

Open 7 days a week from 10 AM to 4 PM
(541) 523-6627

Located in Keating Valley

Hwy 86 to 10 mile marker Keating cut-off, 6 miles, school, stay right 3 miles.

3rd Annual Couples Retreat

Ruda Ranch
18070 W. Campbell Loop
Baker City, OR

Starts Thursday, April 25th at 6 PM
Through Saturday, April 27th (evening)
Cost is \$150/couple
There will be 5 sessions (meals included)
Register by April 21st
Call Benny Ruda at 541-519-6261

Facilitators: Larry and Cherrie Simpson have been traveling across the nations sharing the message of love, healing and reconciliation. In the past few years, they have shared the message of love to couples sharing how to laugh, dance and enjoy each others company.