

# Baker City Herald

May 13, 2019

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QUICK HITS

**Good Day Wish To A Subscriber**

A special good day to Herald subscriber Margaret Priest of Baker City.

**Sports, 7A**

Baker's girls track and field team edged La Grande for the Greater Oregon League district championship Saturday at La Grande.

Baker finished with 82.5 points to edge the Tigers by 3.5 points.

The Baker boys placed second in the district team standings, trailing La Grande 152-64.

Eight Baker girls qualified for the Class 4A state tournament in seven events.

**Oregon, 5A**

SALEM — Democrats unveiled a plan Friday to rein in Oregon's rising pension costs, a peace offering to Republicans who have shut down the Senate this week demanding reform to a system that's racked up over \$25 billion in debt.

BRIEFING

**Commissioner to discuss Mason Dam hydroelectric project**

The Baker County Board of Commissioners will discuss the Mason Dam hydroelectric project during a work session Wednesday at 1 p.m. at the Courthouse, 1995 Third St.

WEATHER

**Today**

80 / 45



Mostly sunny

**Tuesday**

79 / 46



Partly sunny

Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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**Baker Community Choir's Founding Members**

## They're Still Singing

■ Bob and Sharon McKim, and LaVonne Yeumans, have been active members of the Community Choir since its inception in 1981



S. John Collins / Baker City Herald

Bob and Sharon McKim were among the first singers to help form the Baker Community Choir in 1981 and they're still active performers.

By Samantha O'Conner  
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Patriotic music filled the second level of the Baker Heritage Museum as the Baker Community Choir, in its 37th year, performed on May 3, 4 and 5.

Among this group of talented singers, three have journeyed with the Choir since its beginning.

In 1981, LaVonne Yeumans (soprano), Sharon McKim (alto), and Bob McKim (baritone) were among the first singers to join the newly formed Community Choir and perform for its debut in the spring of 1982.

Yeumans, 81, recalls Donola (Johnson) Thornburg instructing a group of around 12 women, including herself, in

voice lessons in 1981. Yeumans believes it was inspiration from Thornburg's classes that led to the creation of the Community Choir.

Sharon McKim said Thornburg had education in music and music production.

Two other teachers, Richard Torrance and Mike Corbett, directed the choir in its early years.

"When we first started using that auditorium at the middle school, that stage was so packed because we had so many people in the choir we could hardly find places for everybody to stand," Yeumans said.

Yeumans and the McKims, both 81, reminisced about early performances of musi-

cals such as "Oklahoma!" that included singers dressing in costume.

Through the years the Choir has performed with other musicians, including The Blue Yesterdays, the National Guard orchestras, the La Grande Children's Orchestra and the Grande Ronde Symphony Orchestra.

Yeumans said the choir is careful when setting dates for its performances so as not to compete with the traditional Vespers concerts at Baker High School in December.

Recalling their favorite performances, Sharon McKim said she has always enjoyed those with a patriotic theme.

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## Council to talk garbage rates

■ After April 23 discussion, Baker Sanitary Service has proposed a lower-cost option for customers who have trash picked up every other week

By Jayson Jacoby  
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

Baker Sanitary Service, which is asking the Baker City Council to approve an 18.75% rate hike for weekly residential garbage collection, has also proposed a new, lower-cost service for customers who only need to have trash picked up every other week.

The company, which has the exclusive franchise to collect trash in Baker City, outlined the proposal in a letter included in the City Council's packet for its meeting Tuesday.

The meeting starts at 7 p.m. at City Hall, 1655 First St.

In the letter, Baker Sanitary President David Henry wrote that he suggested the bi-weekly option after the Council considered the company's proposed rate increases during its April 23 meeting.

During that meeting Councilor Lynette Perry told Henry that constituents had asked her about a reduced rate for less-frequent collection.

The bi-weekly option, using the standard residential rollcart, would cost \$15 per month.

The current rate for residential weekly collection is \$16 per month. Baker Sanitary is requesting an increase to \$19 per month.

The franchise agreement gives the City Council the authority to approve or reject rate increases by Baker Sanitary, with one exception — the company can boost rates by up to 5% each year without Council approval.

Baker Sanitary hasn't had a general rate increase since 2007.

Since the April 23 meeting the City Council has also received a letter signed by 33 local residents who want councilors to consider several issues related to Baker Sanitary's request and the operation of the company's landfill a few miles southeast of town.

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## Planned fire a partial success

By Jayson Jacoby  
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A prescribed fire near Baker City produced an impressive plume of smoke Friday afternoon and evening, but on parts of the 236-acre area the blaze was more fizzle than fury.

"We probably accomplished about 50 percent of what we were hoping to get," said Steve Hawkins, deputy fire staff fuels program manager for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. "That's pretty typical of spring burning."



Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald

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A prescribed fire produced a plume of smoke Friday afternoon in Washington Gulch, about 4 miles west of Baker City.

## Forest officials warn that signs of winter linger

The U.S. Forest Service is warning visitors to expect lingering snow and muddy roads in the mountains of Northeastern Oregon even as valley temperatures have risen to near summer levels.

This not only increases the risk of people getting their vehicles stuck, but driving on soggy roads can cause ruts and other problems.

"We typically see multiple incidents this time of year where families head up for the day, get stuck, and end up spending the night or making a very long hike out to look for help," Lisa Rynearson, safety officer for the Malheur National Forest, said in a press release.

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TODAY  
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WEDNESDAY — GO! MAGAZINE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE