

# Fire destroys home near Richland

By Chris Collins  
ccollins@bakercityherald.com

Investigators are continuing to search for clues to the cause of a Monday fire that destroyed a ranch house, shop and barn on Robinette Road just east of Richland near Holcomb and Hewitt parks on Brownlee Reservoir.

Firefighters were called to the blaze at the home of Robby R. and Chris Stacey, at 2:22 p.m. Monday. They were not at home when the fire started.

Keating Fire Chief Buzz Harper, incident commander, said the buildings were fully involved when he arrived at the scene. He immediately put out the call for help and about 25 firefighters responded from agencies as far away as North Powder, Baker City, and Baker Rural along with Halfway, Richland and Keating. The Oregon Department of Forestry provided help to protect the nearby hillside and Idaho Power Co. workers came to disconnect downed power lines.

In addition to the outbuildings, the fire also destroyed hay, several vehicles and the family's belonging, Harper said.

No one was hurt. One horse sustained burns to its back.

"Everybody did a good job and nobody got hurt," Harper said. "That's the best fire out there."

Temperatures reached about 85 degrees and a slight north-west wind of 3 to 5 mph fanned the flames.

When it was apparent that the property could not be saved, Harper said firefighters helped with cleanup before returning to the station at about 5 p.m.

A lack of volunteers makes it difficult for firefighters to make a "good entrance" on a fire of the size they faced Monday, Harper said.

As incident commander, it also was his job to keep an eye on his firefighters to ensure that they weren't overcome by the heat and the smoke.

The community turned out

with support in the form of a supply of cold drinking water and sandwiches, he said.

"You see the best of people at the worst of times," Harper said, which is what keeps him coming back to his role as fire chief in his community.

Because of the scarcity of volunteers in the Halfway, Richland and Keating areas, the three communities have an automatic agreement to provide mutual aid. The other departments also respond as necessary when called, Harper said.

Dave Kingsbury, Eagle Valley fire chief, was on the other side of Dooley Mountain working at his job for the Oregon Department of Transportation when the fire started.

He finished his work and returned home to find big piles of rubble at the Stacey home. He said Robby Stacey told him he had insurance, but he wasn't sure what all was covered by his policy.

# Sumpter employees on leave

By Jayson Jacoby  
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

Sumpter's assistant city recorder said she and two of the city's three other employees are on paid administrative leave.

LeAnne Woolf, a former city councilor in the town of 210 about 28 miles west of Baker City, said Sumpter Mayor Greg Lucas told her on May 14 that she was on leave due to "overcommunicating."

Woolf said Lucas cited as an example a note she allegedly wrote on a Sumpter resident's water bill, but he didn't provide a copy.

She said she doesn't know anything about a note on a water bill.

Woolf said Sumpter City Recorder Julie McKinney, and Public Works Director Jeff McKinney, Julie McKinney's husband, were both placed on paid leave Friday.

Lucas could not be reached for comment. He was elected as mayor in November 2018 as a write-in candidate.

The Sumpter City Council met Tuesday night.

Woolf, who attended the meeting, said Lucas mentioned multiple inves-

tigations regarding city operations, but he did not elaborate.

She said Lucas told a standing room only audience at City Hall that attorneys have been advising city officials.

Woolf said the city has hired temporary employees to replace her and the McKinneys.

A company from John Day is handling city recorder and bookkeeping duties, Woolf said.

Although Woolf said no city official has given her other reasons for her being put on leave, she has heard rumors that her "accounting practices are under investigation."

According to a written transcript of a May 16 Sumpter city budget hearing that Woolf provided, City Councilor Charlie Briscoe said Jeff McKinney had told him he had heard he would be fired.

Briscoe said he told McKinney that wasn't true, according to the hearing transcript.

Briscoe did say, according to the transcript, that he told McKinney that things need to change in the city, and that the city needs accountability.

# Oregon House passes carbon bill

By Sarah Zimmerman  
Associated Press

SALEM — Oregon is on the precipice of becoming the second state after California to adopt a cap-and-trade program, a market-based approach to lowering the greenhouse gas emissions behind global warming.

The House approved the plan 36-24 Monday after nearly six hours of debate, with supporters calling it the United States' most progressive climate policy. Rep. Karin Power, a

Democrat from suburban Portland and one of two key lawmakers behind the measure, said it not only cuts emissions but invests in transitioning the state economy and infrastructure to better prepare for more intense weather events tied to climate change.

Cap and trade has been a top priority this year for Democrats, who hold a majority in the Statehouse. And Gov. Kate Brown has said she will sign the measure once it passes the Senate, noting in a

statement that "Oregon can be the log that breaks the jam nationally" on climate policy.

Under a cap-and-trade program, the state puts an overall limit on emissions and auctions off pollution permits or "allowances" for each ton of carbon industries plan to emit. Only the largest polluters are targeted, and the idea is that as the emissions limit becomes stricter over time, it will be in industries' financial interest to switch to green technology.

## INTERIM

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In a press release Tuesday, Warner said "Duman will sign a one-year contract that will enable the City to meet the immediate needs of the Police Department and allow time to find a long-term police chief. Duman comes to the City with a well-rounded career with 25 years at the Oregon State Police where he held many positions including administrative and supervisory roles. Duman is a Baker City resident and is vested in the community. He is familiar with

the law enforcement agencies that serve Baker City which will make for a smooth transition."

"It was important to me to find an interim chief that could hit the ground running and who can help us build on the progress that the Police Department has achieved in the last year," Warner said. "I believe he understands the community and will work with all our dedicated officers and law enforcement partners to continue to serve our citizens. Within this next year, the City will be actively pursuing the hiring of a permanent chief of police."

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NOTES: Very rare opportunity to buy property on the Brownlee Reservoir. Once in a lifetime offering as there are no other properties available on the shores of this reservoir. Located just 42 miles from Baker City, OR and only 3 miles from Richland, OR. There is a landing strip in Baker City and Halfway OR and miles of water to explore. Enjoy endless activities such as water skiing, back country hiking, horse back riding, camping, mining and so much more! Lots of local history all around the greater Baker County area. These properties would make a great family retreat or a wonderful Air BnB investment. Properties are next to the Hewitt Park which has boat landing docks and a recreational area. Call today to preview these incredible properties!

TERMS: This home to be sold at auction with owners confirmation on July 12th, 2019 @ 1pm. Sold As-Is. Close in 30 days. 5% earnest money day of the auction, non-refundable. 5% buyer's premium. Seller to provide title insurance & 1/2 of closing doc fees.

You do not have to have an agent to participate. All real estate agents must register at least 2 days prior to auction and be present day of auction.