

BHS/BTI STUDENTS REMOVING HAZARDOUS MATERIALS FROM STRUCTURE

School district has potential buyer for Odd Fellows building on Main St.

By Chris Collins
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An investor from the Treasure Valley area is interested in buying the Odd Fellows building on Main Street for both commercial and residential use once cleanup work is completed by the Baker School District.

The lodge donated the property to the District about two years ago and it became a project of the Baker High School/Baker Technical Institute's environmental science class focusing on brownfield cleanup.

The work is being paid for by grant funding, and once complete, the District is free to sell the building. A portion of the sale profit will go to the Odd Fellows Lodge and a portion will be retained by the District to be plugged back into the environmental science/brownfield program, said Doug Dalton, the District's chief financial officer and BTI president.

In the meantime, the District received an "unsolicited offer for the building," he said.

At its July meeting, the Baker School Board directed Dalton to work to close the sale.

He said that action was needed at the July 9 meeting to document Board authorization of the transaction to allow the sale to go forward.

The prospective buyer, who Dalton declined to name until details of the sale are finalized, is waiting for cleanup to be complete and other matters to be settled.

"The buyers are still doing their due diligence and we are continuing to work on the remediation process," Dalton said.

The District soon will be issuing requests for proposals from contractors for the cleanup work.

The building, which has been owned by the International Order of Odd Fellows since 1888, was developed and was part of a railroad warehouse in 1884, a description of the site written for the state Department of Environmental Quality states.

The building houses the former lodge hall upstairs at 1720 Main St.; downstairs is The Little Bagel Shop at 1780 Main St.; and a separate en-

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— Doug Dalton, Baker School District

trance leads to the longtime site of the former offices of The Record-Courier newspaper at 1718 Main St.

The Little Bagel Shop, which will continue to lease space in the building, had no contamination at its site and is not included in the cleanup project.

Contamination comes mostly from chemicals and lead used in the longtime weekly production of The Record-Courier, Dalton said. Lead-based paint and asbestos are other issues to be addressed in the cleanup of the two portions of the building.

"The biggest condition (of the sale) is we complete the cleanup," Dalton told the Board. "We are sitting ready to close once we have no further action from DEQ."

More information on the sale of the building should be available for public release in the next 30 to 60 days, he said.

Because of the success of the BHS/BTI brownfield program, Eastern Oregon University is gearing up to offer college coursework that will lead to a bachelor's degree in Sustainable Rural Systems, Dalton said. The program has been approved by EOU leaders and awaits final approval from the state's Higher Education Coordinating Commission, he said.

In other business related to property transactions, the Baker School Board has authorized Dalton to finalize a deal to purchase a little more than an acre of property at 3110 10th St. for \$300,000. The sale is expected to close about Aug. 1, Dalton said.

The site is owned by Blue Willow Enterprises, and A Cut Above tree service is housed on the property.

Under the proposed agreement, the tree service would continue to rent its site on the north end of the lot for at least 12 months after the sale closes. The Auto Ranch dealership also has a month-to-month lease for the south end of the property, which

also is expected to continue, Dalton said.

The District foresees many possible uses for the site, which sits between Ninth and 10th streets just west of Baker Bulldog Memorial Stadium.

Director Kevin Cassidy, who works for the Oregon Department of Transportation, noted that the District also might be able to tie the property into an upcoming ODOT project planned for Hughes Lane and 10th Street. Superintendent Mark Witty added that the property might also fit into consideration of connecting the Leo Adler Memorial Parkway, 10th Street and other school district properties in the area.

In other business during the July meeting, the Board agreed to approve an application for changing grade levels at Eagle Cap Innovative High School from Grades 9-12 to Grades 7-12.

Seventh- and eighth-graders will be separated from older students in the program, which is housed at the former North Baker School building at 2725 Seventh St.

A new alternative education program taught by Annetta Evans, former Haines sixth-grade teacher, will be added at the school in 2019-20. Witty said he expects the District to enroll 15 to 25 students who are no longer attending school in the alternative program.

"This will be a different opportunity for them to re-engage in their education," Witty said.

The program will emphasize "project-based learning" and is being tested as a one-year pilot program, he said.

The positions of Evans and a paraprofessional assistant to be added to the program, will be paid for by additional funding authorized by the 2019 Legislature for dropout-prevention and career and college readiness programs (Ballot Measure 98 money), increased state school support the district will receive for the new students, and Northeast Oregon Network grant money designed to help families and individuals access health and social services.

Thomas Joseph will fill the .15 administrative role

at Eagle Cap. He also will work with programing at the secondary level including BTI pathways, mentor teachers at BHS and BTI and coordinate the District's international program, Witty said.

As she has in the past, Tracie Smith will continue to lead Eagle Cap students in a blend of face-to-face instruction and online learning. Eagle Cap students also attend Blue Mountain Community College or work from home depending on their abilities.

"We design our learning environment around the student's needs, creating individual learning plans, learning environments, and coursework that will challenge our students and prepare them for college or career readiness," Smith states on the Eagle Cap page of the District's website.

In his report to the Board, Witty noted that the District's wide range of summer programs are underway.

The Summer Academy is averaging 174 students a day. Thirty-six students are enrolled in kindercamp, about 30 are taking part in a variety of science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM) instruction and there are classes for algebra readiness, robotics and the youth transition program, which includes about 15 students.

Witty said about 20 different community partners are participating to offer programming to Baker students during the summer.

The superintendent was featured on a segment of Oregon Public Broadcasting's "Think Out Loud" radio program Friday talking about Summer Academy. His segment can be heard by clicking on the headline announcing the program at the bottom of the District's website at baker5j.org

Witty said his appearance on the program was made possible by Umpqua Bank, one of the grant sponsors of the summer program.

As a final action for the July meeting, directors agreed to re-elect both Chris Hawkins as chair and Katie Lamb as vice chair for the coming year.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Democrats to meet Thursday

The Baker County Democrats will have their monthly meeting on Thursday, July 18, at Rogers Fellowship Hall, at the corner of Fourth Street and Washington Avenue, between the courthouse and Middle School. Refreshments and conversation begin at 5:30 p.m. with the meeting at 6 p.m. They will be discussing their Miners Jubilee booth and an August picnic. All are welcome.

Devin Rasmussen named to dean's list

PURCHASE, N.Y. — Devin Rasmussen of Halfway has been named to Purchase College's dean's list for the spring 2019 semester. Rasmussen is studying Media, Society and the Arts and Screenwriting, Film/Video Production.

To be eligible for the dean's list, students must carry a semester GPA of 3.5 for Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science programs and 3.75 for Bachelor of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Music Performance programs. They must take a minimum of 12 credits.

Vacation Bible School at Nazarene Church

Journey through Babylon is the theme for the vacation bible school July 29-Aug. 2 at the Baker City Nazarene Church. The event will run from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. each day at 1250 Hughes Lane.

For more information, or to register, call 541-523-3533.

WEST NILE

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During the previous several years the first confirmation of West Nile virus in Baker County mosquitoes typically happened in July or early August.

The absence of a positive test during the 2018 mosquito season was "really surprising," Hutchinson said.

So far this summer, West Nile virus has been detected in mosquitoes in Baker and Umatilla counties, according to the Oregon Health Authority. There have been no human cases of the virus this year in Oregon. Last year there were two, one in Harney County and one in Clackamas County.

Most people who are bitten by an infected mosquito never develop any symptoms, according to state health officials.

About 20 percent of people who are infected by a mosquito bite come down with a fever or other symptoms.

About 1 in 150 people become seriously ill. People at higher risk of serious complications are those 50 and older, and those with pre-existing conditions that affect their immune systems, such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Officials advise Baker County residents to reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes on their property by draining sources of standing water that can breed mosquitoes, such as watering troughs, bird baths, clogged gutters and old tires.

When outside, especially around dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are more active, use a repellent containing DEET, oil of lemon eucalyptus or Picardin, and wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.

Hutchinson said the species of mosquitoes that hikers and campers in the mountains typically deal with are "snowmelt" mosquitoes that aren't usually carriers of West Nile virus.

Between 2004 and 2018, there were 185 human cases of West Nile virus in Oregon, and three of those people died.

A majority of the human cases — 100 — happened in just two years, 2006 and 2007. There was one death in each of those years, one of those in Baker County.

JUDGE

Continued from Page 1A

A new law allows attorneys from neighboring districts to be considered for the appointment as well as those in Baker County, Baxter said.

That would also include attorneys from the 9th Judicial District, which serves Malheur County; the 10th Judicial District, which serves Union and Wallowa counties; and the 24th Judicial District, which serves Grant and Harney counties.

The governor will send out a notice of the opening and those interested will apply, Baxter said.

The field will be narrowed through further investigation of the applicants and the governor will make her choice.

Whoever she chooses will be required to stand for election in November 2020, Baxter said.

"The public will have a say soon," he said. "The voters will pick and I think they'll make a great choice."

Baxter will continue to serve as a senior judge for the next five years, which will require a commitment of two months a year.

CENTURY

Continued from Page 1A

"I know he (grandfather) worked up in Cascade (Idaho) when I was five years old," Phillips said. "I stayed with him for a month. My grandma went out and sawed logs with him."

Phillips remembered that they always lived in a tent around logging camps and drove a big car.

At the age of nine, he worked for a farmer cutting and stacking hay and working with a hay derrick, earning 75 cents for a 10-hour day.

"They'd never heard of a baler back in them days," said Phillips.

When he turned 12, he ran a wagon and worked at stacking hay until he was in high school, doubling his daily pay to \$1.50.

He also worked at the Mesa Orchards in Idaho, spraying the apple trees to ward off worms.

He played baseball around town when he was a kid and played basketball in high school. He didn't participate in a lot of winter sports.

"Couldn't afford the skis," said Phillips, who was a teenager during the Great Depression.

"When I was a kid and wanted to, I couldn't stand up. I was always on my head," he said with a laugh.

He wasn't one for hunting,

either.

Phillips said his father-in-law lived on a ranch and he would take Phillips out hunting with him.

"I didn't really care about it," Phillips said.

He met his wife, Beth, when they were in high school — albeit neighboring rival schools for most of the time.

"She went to Cambridge High School and I went to Council," Phillips said. "But the last year of it, she was a senior, she came to Council to take care of her grandparents."

The couple were married on Nov. 11, 1937, when he was 20 and she was 18. They had two daughters, Gloria and Marlene.

Phillips said Beth was fond of dancing.

"That's the one thing my wife said I had to learn to do was dance," he said. "She danced with her folks when she was a little kid and she loved to dance, so I had to learn to dance."

Phillips enrolled in barber school in 1939 in Boise and received a draft notice for the military and entered the Merchant Marines in 1945.

But he didn't serve for long. "They told me the war was over and they told me I could either stay in or go home," said Phillips. "And I had two little kids and I said, well, that isn't a very big decision, so I went home."

Returning home, he purchased a barber shop in Cascade, where he cut hair for nearly 28 years.

He retired from the tonsorial business and went to work for the state of Idaho managing a liquor store for eight years.

Beth worked in different places — restaurants in Cascade, the post office and then in her sister's business.

Phillips said that although they didn't travel frequently, he and Beth went on three cruises — to Alaska, Mexico and out of Florida.

When visiting their granddaughter, they toured Washington, D.C., seeing the

Lincoln Memorial, the White House and other sights in the nation's capital.

Phillips said he also took several flights with his son-in-law, who is a pilot.

The couple moved to Baker City in 1996 to be closer to family. Beth passed away that same year.

Phillips has five grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and five great-great grandchildren.

In a letter, Phillips' granddaughter, Stephanie Tweit wrote: "The most important thing to Art is family. He loves them all so much that it chokes him up to talk about them."

ELTRYM THEATER

JULY 12-18

LATE NIGHT ^R

FRI-THURS: (4:10) 7:00, 9:45

SPIDER-MAN: FAR FROM HOME

PG-13

FRI-THURS: (4:00) 6:50, 9:35

TOY STORY 4 ^G

FRI-WED: (4:20) 7:10, 9:40

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