



GO! Magazine Your guide to arts and entertainment happening around Northeast Oregon

Baker City Herald

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QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Ken Rockwell of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Heritage Museum extends deadline for exhibit nominations

The Baker Heritage Museum has extended through the end of October its open nominations for extraordinary women to be included in the Museum's 2020-21 Central Gallery exhibit — "Extraordinary Women of Baker County & North Powder."

The original deadline for nominations was Oct. 1.

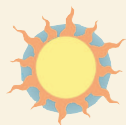
Nominations are limited to women who have passed away. Nomination forms should list reasons why the nominee made a difference in the history of the Baker County or North Powder areas.

You can drop off nominations at the Heritage Museum, 2480 Grove St., which is open daily through Oct. 26 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nominations can also be sent by email to museum@bakercounty.org, or mailed to the Museum. More information is available by calling the Museum at 541-523-9308.

WEATHER

Today

42 / 17



Mostly sunny, breezy and chilly

Thursday

49 / 20



Sunny but chilly

Full forecast on the back of the B section.

The space below will be blank on issues delivered or sold from boxes. The space is for a postage label for issues that are mailed.

Frequent Rains Foil Forest Service's Prescribed Burning Plans

Fire Plans Fizzle



S. John Collins/Baker City Herald

A prescribed fire near Goose Creek, about 20 miles northeast of Baker City, produced a plume of smoke Monday afternoon. It's one of the few prescribed fires the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest has lit this fall but frequent rain and snow are making fuels too damp to carry flames.

By Jayson Jacoby jacobyc@bakercityherald.com

Steve Hawkins is starting to get a trifle annoyed by the rain.

And, on occasion, by the snow.

About every time he's been ready to burn this autumn, another wintry Pacific cold front rolls in and fouls everything up.

Hawkins is the fuels program manager for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.

He helps to plan the Wallowa-Whitman's annual fall prescribed burning program, and this year's version, with up to 15,000 acres on the slate, is ambitious.

But a series of storms over the past couple weeks has dampened Hawkins' enthusiasm.

More to the point, they've dampened the grass and pine needles in the areas scheduled for prescribed fire this fall.

"Those fine fuels need to be dry enough to carry fire," Hawkins said on Tuesday afternoon, just as the latest entry in the parade of precipitation was pelting the Wallowa-Whitman.

"Every three or four days we've had rain or snow. It's been a difficult year to plan and to get things done," Hawkins said.

The metronomic meteorologic pattern has foiled only one type of

prescribed fire, though — broadcast burning.

Those are projects where crews seek to let flames spread across relatively large areas — typically 100 acres or more in a day.

"Every three or four days we've had rain or snow. It's been a difficult year to plan and to get things done."

— Steve Hawkins, fuels program manager, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

Broadcast burning depends on the fine fuels Hawkins mentioned — grass, pine needles and other forest litter left dry by summer's heat — being relatively dry. Generally those fuels need four to

five days of dry weather to reach that level, he said.

But the weather hasn't often granted quite that long an interval.

An exception was Monday, when crews burned about 450 acres near Goose Creek about 20 miles northeast of Baker City.

Hawkins said that fire, which included some areas that had been logged several years ago, was successful.

But the storm that arrived Tuesday morning started the cycle anew.

Hawkins said it's still possible, if more typical October weather prevails, that Wallowa-Whitman officials will be able to make progress on the prescribed burning schedule.

"The burning window usually goes through October," he said. "We're just waiting for the weather to give us an opportunity."

Among the places that would be

Fall(ing) temperatures

The vigorous cold front that brought rain, gusty winds and chilly temperatures to Baker County on Tuesday was the latest in a series of Pacific storms that have made the first two weeks of autumn feel closer to winter than summer.

Tuesday was the 14th day in the past 15 with a high temperature that was below average at the Baker City Airport.

The National Weather Service is forecasting mostly dry weather for the next several days, but the dry spell will also have a breezy and chilly start.

Temperatures tonight could plummet to near record lows. The predicted low at the Baker City Airport tonight is 17. The record low for Oct. 10 is 19, set in 2001.

A gradual warming trend is forecast into the weekend, though, with high temperatures rising into the 50s from Friday through Monday.

prime candidates for broadcast burning later this month are the Foothills project in Washington Gulch, about five miles west of Baker City.

See Burning/Page 6A

Council waits on plan to rehire Warner

By Samantha O'Conner soconner@bakercityherald.com

Baker City Manager Fred Warner Jr.'s proposal to retire from the state's retirement system and then be rehired on a one-year contract remains just that — a proposal.



Warner

The City Council took no action Tuesday on Warner's offer.

Instead, councilors scheduled a work session for Oct. 21 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, 1655 First St.

Warner's proposal is to retire Dec. 31 from the Oregon Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). Under state law he could continue to work in the same position while he starts receiving pension payments.

See Council/Page 3A

Baxter, judge's son, files for D.A.

The son of the retiring Baker County Circuit Court judge has announced that he will file for the position of Baker County district attorney.

Greg Baxter, 34, is a 2003 Baker High School graduate and the son of Gregory L. and Karen Baxter of Baker City.



Baxter

Matt Shirtcliff, the current Baker County district attorney, has been appointed to take the elder Baxter's place as 8th Circuit Court judge on Nov. 1. Baxter announced in July that he would retire on Oct. 31.

The younger Baxter currently serves as Union County's chief deputy district attorney.

"I believe that I am uniquely qualified to return to Baker County and serve in this important position," Greg Baxter stated in a press release.

For the past two years, he has served as the chief deputy district attorney in Union County where, in addition to carrying a case load, he has managed the work of the other deputy district attorneys.

See Baxter/Page 2A

MOUNTAIN LAKE IS PART OF BAKER CITY'S WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM

Crews stabilize Goodrich slope

Baker City Public Works Department crews had to contend with snow last week while building a retaining wall below Goodrich Lake, a drinking water source in the Elkhorn Mountains.

The project was prompted by a slide in early July caused by water seepage from springs. Two engineers from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers examined the dam on July 5 and found no structural problems.

Engineers recommended the city clear debris from the outlet pipe below the dam.

See Goodrich/Page 3A



Photo by Tom Fisk, Baker City Public Works

Baker City Public Works employees installed a new outlet pipe below Goodrich Lake recently.



TODAY Issue 65, 22 pages

Business.....1B & 2B Calendar.....3A Classified..... 3B-6B

Comics.....7B Community News.....3A Crossword.....5B & 6B

Dear Abby.....8B Horoscope.....5B & 6B Letters.....4A

Lottery Results.....2A News of Record.....3A Obituaries.....2A

Opinion.....4A Sports.....5A Weather.....8B