

Baker City has a new Little Free Library

Several members of a family were involved in adding a Little Free Library to Baker City's network of these small, front-yard book exchanges.

The city's newest Little Free Library is at 2530 Sixth St. Gretchen Stadler and Barbara O'Neal are the library's stewards.

Gretchen's brother-in-law, Paul Heron, built the library, her sister, Leslie Stadler Heron, decorated it, and her brother, Randy Stadler, secured the post.

Gretchen Stadler said she and O'Neal welcome residents to stop by to pick up a book that looks interesting, or to drop off a book you think others might enjoy.

That's the basic idea of Little Free Libraries.

"Now that it is filled with books and ready for visitors, this Little Free Library doesn't just belong to us anymore, it belongs to everyone in Baker City," Gretchen Stadler wrote to the Herald. "We hope you will stop by soon to take or share a book."

Baker City's other Little Free Library addresses: 2413 Third St.; 1641 Washington Ave.; 2339 Auburn Ave.; 2810 Main St.; 1617 Valley Ave.; 2150 Church St.



Submitted photo

Baker City's newest Little Free Library, where people can pick up or drop off books, is at 2530 Sixth St.

CHARGING

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There's also an Electrify America station in Huntington, about 50 miles southeast of Baker City.

The situation is different in Baker City.

Although Tesla, probably the best-known maker of electric vehicles, installed one of its Supercharger charging stations in 2015 in the parking lot of the Sunridge Inn in Baker City, those stations can charge Tesla vehicles only.

Other EVs, such as the Chevrolet Bolt and Nissan Leaf, can't recharge at a Tesla Supercharger station.

Tracy said OTEC has added a Chevrolet Bolt, which has a range of about 240 miles when its batteries are fully charged, to its fleet. He

said OTEC employees use the vehicle to travel between the cooperative's offices.

Tracy said the charger OTEC will install in Baker City can handle all types of EVs, including ones that use the North American charging port design or the Japanese version. The station would also accommodate Teslas, which come with adapters.

Tracy said OTEC officials want to install charging stations in places where drivers who use them can easily access restaurants and shops while their car's batteries are being replenished.

He said OTEC doesn't want electric vehicle drivers to bypass Baker City and other communities in the cooperative's service area due to a lack of charging stations.

Tracy said the OTEC sta-

tion would be able to give a typical EV up to 250 miles of driving range in one hour.

As for cost, he said OTEC plans to charge a \$1 connection fee per vehicle, and then a per-minute fee as electricity is being transferred to the vehicle's batteries.

Tracy said OTEC hasn't calculated the kilowatt-hour rate for the electricity dispensed from the charging station. But he said it's likely that a driver who pulls in with batteries nearly empty, and then uses the charger to fully recharge the vehicle, would pay about \$15.

The amount of time needed to recharge a car would be based not only on the charge level of the batteries but also on the age of the vehicle.

Tracy said older EVs, such as the first generation Nissan Leaf, can't recharge

as rapidly as newer vehicles such as the Bolt.

The cooperative's goal is for the stations to be self-sufficient, bringing in enough revenue to cover their operating and maintenance costs.

A feature on OTEC's website — otec.com — allows users to compare the driving range, per dollar spent on fuel, between gasoline and electric vehicles.

According to the calculator, if gasoline costs about \$3.05 per gallon, for the cost of one gallon of gas an EV driver could buy enough electricity to give about 110 miles of range — effectively, 110 miles per gallon.

To access the comparison calculator on OTEC's website, click on "Electric Vehicles" under the "Energy Solutions" pulldown menu.

QUIET

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Her point was made more clear as a train sounded its horn while traveling through town just a few blocks from City Hall as she spoke.

Fargo and Dougherty maintain that creating a quiet zone over a section of rail line would make Baker City a safer, quieter and healthier community.

Since 2005, the Federal

Railroad Administration has allowed a process that ensures that quiet zones provide as much safety as the sounding of train horns.

Pendleton has a quiet zone and La Grande just this year established one in its community.

Quiet zones can be established either by showing the Federal Railroad Administration that the crossings are just as safe as crossings without

horns or they can install supplemental safety measures, Fargo and Dougherty told the Board.

The neighborhood group promoting the quiet zone designation for Baker City points out that experts will determine the risk at each of the five crossings in the community. And, train crews still may sound the horn in case of danger on the tracks.

Train horns reach 96 to

110 decibels, which is about the level of a rock concert or a jackhammer, Fargo told the Board.

He also reported that the World Health Organization recommends keeping railroad noise at less than 54 decibels. Information from the organization states that louder noises could have negative health effects. And at night, for proper sleep, noise should be kept at less than 44 decibels.

WARNER

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Warner said the suggestion had been made that he retire even earlier, on Oct. 31, to save the City \$3,000 per month in PERS payments to the end of the year.

He was not able to make arrangements for that to happen in such a short time span, however, so the date was moved back to Nov. 30,

Warner said today.

Changes in the retirement system will take place in January, which will affect the savings realized by the City, Warner said.

Warner will continue to receive his current salary of \$101,959 for an indefinite period, serving at the pleasure of the council as he has since he was hired for the job.

One change in the new agreement requires Warner

to provide the Council with written notice six months in advance of resigning from the job rather than 30 days as his prior agreement required.

Warner said he has no imminent plans to retire. He will be available to help the City as it faces employee contract negotiations, budgeting and working toward hiring a new person for his job, he said.

"I am going to retire some day," he said, adding that he believes the new agreement "is good for the city and good for me."

He noted that three councilors will be leaving their positions because of term limits — Loran Joseph, Mike Downing and Randy Schiewe — and two — Doni Bruland and Arvid Andersen — will be eligible to run for re-election in the coming year.

Party for Judge Greg Baxter set for October 30

Judge Gregory L. Baxter will be honored with a public retirement party on Wednesday, Oct. 30.

The event will be from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the Baker County Circuit Courtroom at the Courthouse, 1995 Third

St.

Baxter announced this summer that Oct. 31 would be his last day on the bench in his current position, ending his nearly 19-year career as Baker County Circuit Court judge.

Baxter, a 1978 Baker High School graduate, served as Baker County district attorney from March 1992 to 2000, before being elected circuit judge of the 8th Judicial District. He will serve as a senior judge after retirement.



Baker City Fire Department photo

An arson fire scorched a section of the building at Broadway and Resort streets Tuesday night.

ARSON

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The business temporarily stacks used mattresses and box springs on the east side of the building, which faces Resort Street, Clark said.

A video camera captured images of what appears to be two females, probably teenagers, looking on as flames begin to flicker, Clark said. The two run away and then return before fleeing, he said.

There is a very clear image of one of the suspect's faces, he said.

"One looked right at the camera," Clark said.

The Baker City Police Department is investigating the fire.

Ten firefighters from the Baker City Fire Department, and three from the Baker Rural Fire Protection District, responded to the fire. Crews arrived within about five minutes of the first report, which came in about three minutes after the fire started, based on the camera footage.

Firefighters were on scene for about 45 minutes, Clark said.

Because the building's exterior is brick, the fire didn't cause major damage and flames did not get inside the structure, Clark said.

Although the business was closed, the condominiums upstairs were occupied at the time of the fire, Clark said.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Volunteers sought to help Rotary Club repair veterans monuments at Mt. Hope

The Baker City Rotary Club is inviting the public to join a work party to repair veterans monuments at Mount Hope Cemetery on Saturday, Oct. 26, from noon to 2:30 p.m.

Rotarians, along with Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel and Stone Tributes, have been working for the past several years to repair sunken and leaning monuments at veterans' graves at the city-owned cemetery.

Anyone interested in helping Saturday is encouraged to bring shovels and pry bars.

More information about this ongoing public service project is available by calling Dennis Teskey at 541-523-3904.

— To contribute information for the Local Briefing section, email to news@bakercityherald.com or call the Herald at 541-523-3673.

NEWS OF RECORD

DEATHS

Harold E. Dietzen: 66, of Baker City, died Oct. 15, 2019, at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Baker City. Arrangements are being handled through Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel. To light a candle in memory of Harold, go to www.grayswestco.com

Lydia M. Chancy: 96, of Baker City, died Oct. 21, 2019, at Settler's Park. Services are under the direction of Coles Tribute Center. To light a candle in memory of Lydia, go to www.coletributecenter.com

POLICE LOG

Baker City Police
FELON IN POSSESSION OF A FIREARM, RECKLESS DRIVING, ATTEMPT TO ELUDE POLICE, DRIVING WHILE SUSPENDED, RECKLESSLY ENDANGERING, UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF METH, INTERFERING WITH A POLICE OFFICER, PROBATION VIOLATION (Union County warrant): Curtis Dean Cox, 52, La Grande, 1:33 a.m. today in the 3000 block of Broadway Street; jailed.

UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF METH (Union County warrant): Darren John Fulfer, 57, 3550 Carter St., 1:33 a.m. today in the 3000 block of Broadway Street; jailed.

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(All proceeds benefit the animals of Baker County)



The public is invited to join us for a Retirement Party for Judge Gregory L. Baxter

October 30th, 2019 • 3 PM - 5 PM

Baker County Circuit Court
 Baker County Courthouse
 1995 3rd Street, Second Floor
 Baker City