

Local & State

SOLAR POWER

Continued from Page 1A

The Sutton Creek project will cost an estimated \$2.65 million, according to a permit issued by the Baker City-County Building Department.

The company paid almost \$27,000 in permit fees.

The solar array will produce 15 megawatts of power. That's enough to power approximately 3,000 homes.

The Unity project, which should be finished soon and go online in mid November, will produce about 2.75 megawatts from an array overing about 23 acres.

Stevens said about 35 people are working on the Sutton Creek solar farm, including employees from contractor Vale Electric Inc. Crews are also finishing a substation near Interstate 84 that will connect the solar farm to Idaho Power Company's transmission line.

Work on the substation started in early July, according to Idaho Power, which is building the substation.

Both the solar farm and the substation are on property owned by Hat Brand Land &



S. John Collins / Baker City Herald

Douglas Stevens is the construction manager for Enerparc Solar Projects LLC of Oakland, California.

Livestock LLC of Baker City.

Brent Gyllenberg is Hat Brand's manager.

Enerparc applied in March for a permit to divide Hat Brand's parcel

into two parts. The one where the solar panels are being installed is 549.6 acres, and the site for the substation, between I-84 and Old Highway 30, is slightly larger than half an acre.

COUNTIES CLAIM STATE HAS FAILED TO MANAGE TIMBER LANDS FOR 'GREATEST PERMANENT VALUE'

Trial begins in westside counties' \$1.4 billion lawsuit against state

ALBANY (AP) — A trial that could shape how Oregon harvests its forest trust lands is underway, with 14 counties and dozens of smaller taxing districts saying they want \$1.4 billion because the state has failed to manage them for the "greatest permanent value" as required.

The trial began Thursday in Linn County Circuit Court and is expected to last three weeks, the Albany Democrat-Herald reported.

The breach-of-contract lawsuit has its origins in the Great Depression, when thousands of acres of timberlands were harvested by privately owned companies. The landowners abandoned the lands to the county after cutting the trees, figuring it wasn't worth it to replant and then wait 40 to 60 years to harvest again.

But the counties didn't want the properties, either, and couldn't afford to reforest them. Working with the state, the counties turned the timberlands over to the Board of Forestry, with the

understanding that the state would replant and share the income with the counties upon harvesting, managing for the "greatest permanent value."

The counties sued nearly four years ago, claiming that the state breached that contract when it enacted new rules since 2001, when it adopted a plan that emphasizing the protection of wildlife, clean water and recreation. They say their share of revenues from the state's six state forests, totaling more than 1,000 square miles, has fallen by \$35 million per year.

"This lawsuit is all about economic development and jobs," said David Yamamoto, a Tillamook County commissioner and chair of the Council of Forest Trust Land Counties. "This deal, this contract, was made many years ago, in the '30s and '40s, but unfortunately production from our forestlands is not what it could be."

During opening statements before a 14-person jury Friday, state's attorney Scott Kaplan

said the contract between the state and counties has always included consideration of values other than economics, such as clean air, clear water, recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat and erosion control. He said the plaintiffs want to see the lands managed like an "industrial tree farm from the Cascades to the Pacific."

He said the term "greatest permanent value" refers to the value for the entire state, not just the forest trust counties.

"State forest lands are not an ATM for the counties," Kaplan said.

According to Kaplan, the counties have actually seen their annual incomes from state timber harvest increase since 1998, totaling \$86 million in 2019. He said that last year, some 67,000 loads of logs came off state lands. Laid end-to-end, that train of logs would reach from Albany to Salt Lake City, Utah, Kaplan said.

State forest payments to counties were about \$10 million in 1987 and \$28 million in

1998, Kaplan said.

Most of the forest lands in Oregon — about 30% — are owned by the federal government, he said, while the state owns less than 3%.

In his opening statement, lawyer John DiLorenzo, representing the counties, said the case isn't about changing the way the state manages the forests, but about the state's broken promise to the counties.

"This case is based on common sense and a sense of fairness," he said. "For the deal to be amended, it has to be agreed upon by both parties."

The first witness called by the counties, Paul Levesque, a historian of the timber trust lands, testified Friday that production and sale of the timber was understood to be paramount when the deal was made.

"It was always clearly a business enterprise," he said.

However the jury decides, the case is likely to be appealed.

FROSTY

Continued from Page 1A

Temperatures on Wednesday morning could dip into the single digits in Baker City, according to the National Weather Service. That would threaten the record low of 9 degrees for Oct. 30, set in 2006.

The weather is predicted to moderate, albeit slightly, by Halloween on Thursday, with the gradual warming trend continuing into the weekend.

Temperatures during Thursday's downtown trick-or-treating event, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., are forecast in the mid to upper 30s — chilly but comfortably

above record-low levels.

The coldest Halloween on record in Baker City was 2006, when the temperature plummeted to 2 degrees at the Baker City Airport.

However frigid it gets this week it will at least be a dry cold. No precipitation is forecast this week.

A terrifying tale just in time for Halloween

Any day now the witches, goblins, ghosts and vampires will roam the earth. Halloween is fast approaching — an appropriate time for a strange and terrifying tale. This is a true story that happened to me, something I am still trying to fully comprehend. It began one gloomy night just a few months ago...

I recall a thick fog and weird chill that particular evening. I was in bed reading until about 9:30 or 10. I put aside the book, turned off

the light, rolled on to my side and was asleep in short order. Around 2 in the morning I was awakened by the usual nighttime urge. I groggily stumbled to the bathroom.

On my way back towards bed I grabbed a Q-tip from the medicine cabinet, hoping to quell the annoying itch in my right ear. A couple of pokes and twirls seemed to do the trick and shortly thereafter I slipped back into dreamland.

My eyes opened about 6 the next morning and I drifted in and out of slumber for a half hour before arising to a new

day. My ear tickle thingy had become more bothersome but this was nothing new. I have lived my whole life with assorted ear problems: vertigo, airplane pressure, carnival ride dizziness, balance issues .. you name it. I attacked the itchy situation with another Q-tip and, satisfied, continued on with my day.

Around midday my ear thing became unbearable, a relentless rustling tickle inside my right ear? I moved quickly to the bathroom and grabbed another Q-tip, jammed it in as far as I dared

and twirled. When I pulled it out a spider followed — dangling from the end of the Q-tip by a single web!! Screaming and blathering like an insane person I showed the creepy invader to my wife before stomping the life out of it.

They say a spider in the ear is not an uncommon occurrence — so let's all pretend I'm OK, no really, ha ha I'm OK...

Happy Halloween everyone. Don't forget the ear plugs. Peace to all.

Mike Meyer
Baker City

HEART TO HEART

"Swim out of your little pond."

Baker Valley Travel
541-523-9353 • 877-550-9353

Weekly Specials Oct 28 - Nov 3

Monday	Meatloaf.....	\$8.95
Tuesday	All You Can Eat Spaghetti.....	\$8.95
Wednesday	Beef Stroganoff.....	\$8.95
Thursday	Chicken Fried Steak.....	\$9.95
Friday	All You Can Eat Mini Shrimp.....	\$9.95
	Steak & Shrimp.....	\$10.95
	Pan Fried Oysters.....	\$10.50
Saturday	Prime Rib.....	\$14.95
Sunday	Breaded Pork Loin.....	\$9.50/8.95 sr

OREGON TRAIL RESTAURANT
221 Bridge Street • 541-523-5844
Open Daily 6 AM - 8 PM

BUFFETS
Monday - Friday 11 AM - 2 PM
Lunch includes Salad Bar, Entree, Grilled Bread, Baked Bean & Vegetable
Sunday 8 AM - 11 AM
Sunday Buffet includes Chocolate Fountain

LOCAL BRIEFING

Community Christmas Tree needed

The Baker City Community Development Department and Baker City Downtown are in search of this year's 2019 Community Christmas Tree. Candidates must meet the following criteria:

- Within 3 miles of Court Plaza (downtown Baker City on Court Avenue between Main and Resort streets)
- Maximum height of 40 feet

If you would like to submit your tree for consideration contact Robin Nudd at 541-524-2036 or rnudd@baker-city.com by Nov. 1.

Retirement party for Judge Greg Baxter

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.

Gov. Kate Brown has appointed District Attorney Matt Shirtcliff to fill Baxter's vacancy beginning Nov. 1.

Shirtcliff has been district attorney since 2001 and has worked for the district attorney's office, under Judge Baxter, since 1994.

Crossroads seeks entries for two art shows

Crossroads Carnegie Art Center is inviting all artists to submit works for the annual Ornament Expo that opens Nov. 1. Crossroads will accept ornaments throughout the holiday season from Oct. 21 through Dec. 20.

All artists who enter the "Ornament Expo" will be given a \$10 Crossroads gift certificate

The yearly exhibition "Christmas at Crossroads-The Gift of Art" opens Dec. 6. Crossroads is looking for fine art and fine crafts including paintings, clay, fiber art, glass, wood, metal, mixed media, jewelry, hand-painted signs, scarves, hats, collage, soap, small sculptural pieces, and holiday cards of high quality and locally hand-crafted.

Entries can be submitted on Monday, Dec. 2, from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

For both shows there is no entry fee and all items must be available for sale but a commission (30% for members and 40% nonmembers) will be collected on items sold during the show. Both exhibitions will end Dec. 27 and artists will collect their art that day from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. For all of the exhibit information and an entry form, go to www.crossroads-arts.org then, look for "Quick Forms" at the bottom of our home page. Click on "Ornament Expo 2019" and "Christmas at Crossroads — The Gift of Art 2019" to view details and to print the entry form. For questions, call Crossroads at 541-523-5369.

St. Francis annual turkey dinner Nov. 3

The annual St. Francis Turkey Dinner is scheduled Sunday, Nov. 3.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children

Two meal sessions are scheduled. The first starts at 2 p.m. and a second will begin at 4 p.m. at St. Francis parish hall, 2235 First St.

The meal includes roast turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, fruit salad and homemade pumpkin pie with whipped cream

Tickets are available from Jody Colton by calling 541-519-0162 or the parish office at 541-523-4521.

RATES RISE

Continued from Page 1A

In part, rates will increase because the cost of natural gas supply spiked over the last year due to a pipeline explosion last winter, which impacted regional gas supply and caused prices to increase, according to a press release from the PUC.

Avista's increase, as of Nov. 1, will be 15.2% for residential customers.

NW Natural's increase for residential customers is 4.4%.

Over the past decade, natural gas rates have declined most years, with the exception of 2013 and 2014, according to the PUC.

Mobile Service Outstanding Computer Repair

Any issue \$40 flat rate
Call or Text 24/7
Dale Bogardus 541-297-5831

If your computer is scary and slow to boot give me a call and I will save you some loot!

www.outstandingcomputerrepair.com
Refurbished Desktop & Laptops For Sale
House calls (let me come to you!)
Drop Offs & Remote Services are Available

All credit cards accepted