

Local & State

Spay/neuter fund has helped with almost 2,800 animals in 14 years

The Mollie Atwater and Friends Spay/Neuter Fund, in its 15th year, has helped pay for the spaying or neutering of almost 2,800 dogs and cats in Baker County and North Powder.

The organization works with the community to reduce the number of unwanted and homeless cats and dogs in Baker County and North Powder by assisting people with spay/neuter surgery costs and providing information on the benefits of spaying/neutering one's animals.

The table at right has detailed numbers, based on the location, of the animals the Fund has helped. The figures are as of Nov. 21, 2019.

Spaying and neutering feral cats and pets makes a difference in the health and well-being of our community and our animals, a spokesperson for the group stated. Both males and females contribute to the birth of unwanted puppies and kittens.

Had the animals spayed or neutered with help from the Mollie Atwater Fund not been treated, and each had contributed to a litter of six puppies or kittens, then a minimum of 16,788 animals would have needed homes over the past 14 years.

Money raised for this program is spent locally.

Mollie Atwater Spay / Neuter Fund Results

AREA	Domestic Dogs	Domestic Cats	Feral Cats	TOTAL
BAKER CITY (inside city limits)	392	696	418	1,506
BAKER CITY ADDRESS (outside city limits)	62	141	225	428
DURKEE	5	21	3	29
HAINES	40	53	43	136
HALFWAY	57	141	89	287
HEREFORD	3	6	0	9
HUNTINGTON	14	7	6	27
IRONSIDE	0	1	0	1
N. POWDER	22	49	80	151
OWBOW	1	1	48	50
RICHLAND	27	34	68	129
SUMPTER	5	16	1	22
UNITY	7	16	0	23
TOTALS	635	1,182	981	2,798

The Mollie Atwater Fund, which operates under the nonprofit umbrella of Best Friends of Baker Inc., has benefited from continued financial support from local residents and from the Gene and Charlotte Hale Animal Care Fund and James G. Tyler Foundation.

People needing help with spay/neuter surgery costs for their animals can pick up a request form in Baker City from the Animal Clinic or Baker Veterinary Hospital, in Halfway at the post office or Old Pine Market, and at the Richland post office. People wanting to contrib-

ute to the local effort can send their tax-deductible donation to: Mollie Atwater and Friends Spay/Neuter Fund, P.O. Box 402, Baker City, OR 97814, or go to Best Friends of Baker's Facebook page and click on the donate button below the fundraiser listed for the spay/neuter program.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Democrats plan holiday party Dec. 19

The Baker County Democrats will not be having their monthly meeting at Rogers Fellowship Hall as usual. They will instead be having a holiday party at the home of treasurer Ramon Lara. Dinner will begin at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 19.

Those planning to attend are asked to call Peter Hall at 541-519-7274.

Bazaar supports Upward Sports program

A Last Chance Bazaar that supports the Upward Sports Program is set for Dec. 20 and 21, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. both days, in the Family Life Center at the Baker City Church of the Nazarene, 1250 Hughes Lane. Lunch options will be provided by the Upward Sports Program.

Lane restrictions continue at Ladd Canyon

The Oregon Department of Transportation will continue the Interstate 84 westbound lane restrictions through the Ladd Canyon construction zone over the next week or so. The restrictions should end by Dec. 21, according to ODOT officials.

SKIING

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Season passes can be picked up starting at 8 a.m. Saturday in the main lodge. Lift tickets

will be sold starting at 8:30 a.m. in the ticket booth. The Rock Garden chairlift, along with the handletow and Magic Carpet, will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

HEART TO HEART

Shop With A Hero was wonderful

I had the pleasure of being one of the volunteers for the second-year event for Shop With A Hero. It was a very overwhelming experience for me to see the smiles on the children's faces and the warmth in their hearts to know they got to buy a gift for every one of their family members and take it home with them and put it under their tree for Christmas. I hope the community of Baker City continues to support this wonderful event

Thank you everyone of you for time and support for this event. All of the police agencies, the fire department and the rural fire departments and all of the other volunteers. A special thank you to Detective Shannon Regan for promoting this wonderful event.

Marlene Rogers
Baker City

Expert predicts slightly warmer winter this year

By Matthew Weaver
Capital Press

SALEM — The Pacific Northwest will see slightly above normal temperatures and normal precipitation throughout the winter, a well-known weatherman predicts.

Art Douglas, a professor emeritus of atmospheric sciences at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, is best known for his presentations at the Spokane Ag Show every winter.

Warm waters in the North Pacific and North Atlantic will favor high pressure ridges across the north, meaning "weak storminess" for the winter, Douglas told the Capital Press.

"Especially for you guys in the Pacific Northwest, it's not scary," he said.

Uncertainty in NOAA and European forecasts continues to shift between El Niño, which means warmer winters for the Pacific Northwest, and La Niña, which means colder winters.

Douglas predicts a mild December and January, with a cold February. The weather will be dry at the

beginning of winter and wet in February, in the form of snow.

"One of your biggest fears are arctic outbreaks, especially toward the end of winter that might freeze the wheat," he said. "This is the type of winter where I would be very cautious as to what might happen to winter wheat."

Douglas says the year so far appears to be most like the years 2018, 2014 and 1959.

He predicts "major jumps," from a mild start to a cold finish, from mildly dry to much wetter.

The cold in February will persist into March.

"You go from a cold March to a warm April back to a cold May," Douglas said.

In the spring, the Pacific Northwest will consistently trend toward slightly higher temperatures compared to the rest of the country.

"No concern in this forecast for you guys (for precipitation)," Douglas said. "Pretty darn normal in March, some spotty in April ... and then you get into May and the moisture tries to increase up into the

wheat area. If you want moisture, you want it in May as it's really growing, starting to bloom and all that kind of good stuff"

The summer forecast so far resembles cool-and-wet summers from 2014 to 2019. The forecast could change if equatorial sea surface temperatures move to El Niño or La Niña, Douglas said.

"I don't see how an El Niño or La Niña could come between now and March," he said. "What might happen after that? I'm truly clueless. We've had too many El Niño years in a row starting in 2014. We've never had a really good La Niña over the past five years. Statistically, it's overdue."

La Niña "recharges" the system to develop an "impressive" El Niño, Douglas said. He doesn't think that's likely, but also doesn't expect an El Niño for next summer.

CHALLENGE

Continued from Page 2A

Tuesday's group was the same mix of different students, Flanagan said.

A total of 127 students and 43 adults participated over the two days, said Haley Hueckman, Prevention supervisor for New Directions Northwest and co-chair of the Baker County Local Community Advisory Council (LCAC). Hueckman was among those who led the effort to return the program to Baker schools again this year.

This year's facilitators were Katie Salvage of Oakland, California, and Sealoyd Jones III of Detroit, Michigan. Challenge Day has its headquarters at Concord, California. More information is available at challengeday.org

The \$10,000 cost of bringing the well-orchestrated program to town, which included discounted rates on hotel rooms at the Geiser Grand, was paid with an LCAC grant, Hueckman said. Lunch also was provided for adult volunteers.

Last year, a four-day Challenge Day program was offered to freshmen and sophomores at Baker High School for two days and to seventh- and eighth-graders at BMS for two

days.

That means that next year at BHS, every student will have gone through the Challenge Day experience, Hueckman wrote in an email to the Herald.

After the two-day Challenge Day sessions, 14 professionals attended a Wednesday workshop to hone their skills for helping teens.

"It was a way for community partners to work together to create the best possible outcomes for youth in our community," Hueckman stated. "Team building and another Cross the Line activity helped us all relate and have a deeper understanding of each other."

Flanagan speaks with pride about his students and is happy that other adults get the chance to interact with them during the Challenge Day program.

"They get to understand that these kids are amazing people," he said. "It's a real selfish time in their lives at 13, but when given the opportunity, they

shine."

Challenge Day helps students gain a better understanding of each other, he said.

"It allows them to treat others with more compassion and 90% of these kids are forever changed."

Moving the program to December from last year's September schedule was beneficial for staff and students.

"This year we had time to develop relationships and bonds," Flanagan said.

Counselors were available after the training to meet with any students who felt the need to talk about issues brought up during Challenge Day.

Flanagan and his staff are working hard to remove the stigma of what many perceive as the hardships of middle school for students.

"One of our biggest goals is that they enjoy this and remember it as a positive time," he said. "This staff is amazing. These kids know they're supported and loved by these teachers."



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845 Campbell St.
PO Box 762
Baker City, OR 97814

Jeff Anderson, Broker
Cell
541-406-9444
Email
Jeff@TheGroveTeam.com
Website
www.TheGroveTeam.com



VFW Christmas & Awards Dinner

Friday,
December 20th
5 PM

Main Course:
Turkey & all the stuffings

Please bring desserts, side dishes and salads

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