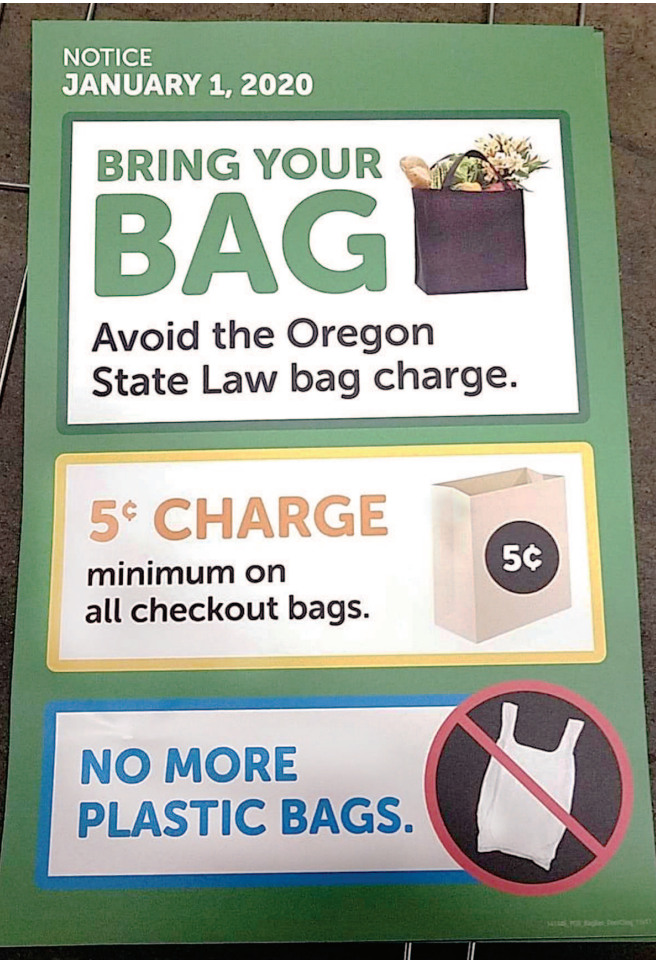


Community



Submitted photo
A sign at the Safeway store in Baker City reminds customers about the impending ban on certain bags.

BAG BAN

Continued from Page 1A

Kassien said he likes the single-use bags mainly because they have handles.

With a chuckle, he admits that he's stubborn about trying to make only one trip from his truck to his house with groceries, regardless of how much merchandise he has. The bags' handles make it possible to carry several bags in each hand.

"I will cut off circulation in my hands to do so," he said, smiling.

Kassien and his husband, David, have another perspective on the upcoming bag ban because they own a restaurant, D&J Taco Shop in Baker City, that's also affected.

David said that although he understands the purpose behind the law — reducing the amount of plastic in landfills and the environment — he is concerned about the financial burden on small businesses that have to find other types of sacks.

The law's provisions are somewhat different for restaurants, as they can provide reusable paper bags to customers for no cost, unlike grocery stores and other businesses that have to charge at least a nickel per bag.

The problem for their restaurant, Jamie said, is that the paper bags available aren't big enough to accommodate take-out meals from their restaurant.

He hopes to find larger paper bags that also have handles.

Jamie said he and David have been alerting their customers about the pending change.

"Most were fine with it,"

Jamie said.

A few minutes after the Kassiens left Albertsons, Matt and Brenda Reidy walked out with their groceries tucked into reusable fabric bags.

Matt Reidy said they have been using those containers for at least five years, so the upcoming plastic bag ban won't have any effect on them.

He said he supports the new law.

"I'm all for it," he said. "We don't need to add any more plastic into the landfills. We have all these one-time-use plastics."

The Reidys said the fabric sacks, which have handles and in some cases a rigid floor for stability, work well.

"We've worn some out," Brenda Reidy said with a smile.

Many businesses have put up signs alerting customers to the Jan. 1 effective date of the law.

Marilyn Logsdon, who with her husband, Kevin, owns York's Park Grocery in Baker City, said she doesn't consider the soon-to-be-banned bags single-use, as they're described in the law.

Marilyn Logsdon said customers have told her they use the bags for garbage and other purposes.

She said most customers prefer the plastic bags, and very few ask to have their purchases tucked into paper sacks.

Logsdon said the paper sacks in stock now at York's aren't large enough to accommodate some customers' orders, nor do they have handles.

The single-use bags are popular in part because they do have handles, she said.

"A lot of our customers

S. John Collins / Baker City Herald

Jamie Kassien says that although he appreciates the handles on grocery bags, he's prepared for the state-wide law that bans stores from providing these bags to customers starting Jan. 1.



walk, and that's why they like the plastic bags," Logsdon said.

Logsdon said that although she understands the environmental concerns about single-use bags, the new law will increase costs for her business as they buy different types of paper sacks. And they'll have to pass on those costs to customers, she said, including the law's requirement that retailers charge customers at least 5 cents for each reusable bag, whether it's plastic, paper or fabric.

The law does include a few exceptions to that requirement.

Grocery stores and other retail businesses can provide reusable plastic or recycled paper bags to customers, for no cost, to customers who use food stamps or who have a voucher through the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program.

Businesses can also offer reusable fabric bags to customers for free as a promotion on up to 12 days per calendar year.

Jim Bjork, manager at D&B Supply in Baker City, said the business has received paper bags from its corporate office, and will send its supplies of single-use bags to stores in Idaho, where they still continue to be legal after Jan. 1.

"We've been verbally having conversations with customers, warning them

that starting January 1st, if they want a bag it's going to cost them (5 cents)," Bjork said. "They know it's a state law. It's awkward but they're good with it."

He said D&B Supply will also have reusable cloth bags, with the company's logo, for sale "that we're hoping some of our customers will take advantage of."

LOCAL BRIEFING

Prime rib lunch Dec. 27 at Senior Center

The Senior Center will be serving a special prime rib luncheon on Friday, Dec. 27.

The meal, sponsored by Paul Bennett, will be served at the regular lunchtime of 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., but the suggested donation will be increased and tickets must be purchased in advance.

Seniors will be asked to make a suggested donation of \$8 each and the cost for nonseniors will be \$10. Tickets must be purchased from the office because of limited availability, a flier advertising the special meal states.

The luncheon will include prime rib, baked potatoes, green beans, a roll, green salad and carrot cake.

The center and bus service will be closed for the holidays on Christmas Eve (Dec. 24) and on Christmas Day (Dec. 25).

More information is available by calling Community Connection at 541-523-6591.

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.

Applicants sought for City Council

Baker City residents interested in serving on the City Council have until 4 p.m. on Jan. 6 to submit an application. To be eligible, applicants must be registered to vote in Oregon, and have lived within the Baker City limits for at least 12 months prior to being appointed. The vacancy on the seven-member City Council results from Councilor Ken Gross resigning at the end of this month due to his job being moved. The remaining six councilors plan to meet with applicants during a work session on Jan. 8, and then to appoint Gross' replacement on Jan. 14. To apply, go to www.bakercity.com and download the City Councilor application. Submit the application and a letter of interest to Katie LaFavor at City Hall, 1655 First St. The person appointed will serve through December 2020, and would be eligible to run for a four-year term in November 2020.

PLAYGROUND

Continued from Page 1A

The city will take delivery by Dec. 31. Bornstedt said she placed the order before the company updated its price schedule on Dec. 11.

"We wanted to make sure we got our order placed before the prices went up," she said.

Although the city has received several grants and donations for the project, totaling \$285,461, the city is still trying to raise money for the estimated \$299,000 effort, including a couple of pending grants.

"Even with the pending grant opportunities, we're still sitting about \$10,000 short, so we're still raising money and we're very confident that we'll get there one way or the other," Bornstedt said.

She said city officials have spoken to a couple of local service clubs and will be talking to others about sponsorship opportunities.

"That's available to anybody who wants to sponsor a piece of equipment or make any type of donation to the project," Bornstedt said.

Sponsorship opportunities are in three

levels — gold, silver and bronze — and range from swing seats for children at \$975, to a 53-foot-long zip track with an adaptive seat for \$11,230.

The city received \$164,000 from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, \$37,740 from the Moda Assist online voting contest last spring, \$25,000 from the Leo Adler Foundation and \$20,000 from the Sunderland Foundation.

Other contributions include:

- \$1,230 from a Facebook birthday party fundraiser by Karla Macy, whose son, Gus, has spina bifida and will benefit from the new all-inclusive playground.

- \$10,000 from the city budget
- \$2,000 from the Sunridge Inn
- \$2,000 from the Super 8 motel
- \$1,000 from Motel 6
- \$416 from a fundraiser at the Sunridge Inn during the Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally
- \$363 from an Albertsons fundraiser
- \$238 from a fundraiser by Brian and Corrine Vegter, owners of Churchill School

Bornstedt said the city will arrange a dedication for the new playground, which she hopes will be open by Memorial Day weekend.

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