

JULY

- High Temperature: 99, the 23rd
- Low Temperature: 36, the 20th
- Total Precipitation: trace (avg.: .53)

Dotty And Myron Miles Of North Powder

Fair Family of the Year



S. John Collins / Baker City Herald

Dotty and Myron Miles of North Powder are chosen as the 2019 Baker County Fair Family.

By Lisa Britton

For the Baker City Herald

JULY 29 — Myron Miles raised his hand.

That simple act, a gesture that volunteered his time and grain, helped launch the tradition of a Shrine steer that linked the Baker County Fair to the Shriners Hospital for Children.

“I’ve been steer chairman since day one,” he said.

Rod McCullough presented the idea at a meeting of the Cattlemen’s Association — he suggested the club buy a 4-H steer and donate it to support the East-West All-Star Shrine Game that was coming to Baker City for the second year.

“You could have heard a pin drop. This was a radical idea,” Myron said.

But there was a problem.

The fair — called the Junior Show at the time — was the first week of

August. The Shrine game wasn’t until the third week in August. Where would the steer go in the meantime?

The idea fizzled.

Then Myron raised his hand.

“I have some grain in the bin. I’ll take him,” he told the group.

That was in 1974.

It is that dedication, along with other involvements in the fair, that earned Dotty and Myron Miles the honor of being named Fair Family for 2019.

In their nomination letter, Dan and Haley Morris, the 2015 Fair Family of the Year, wrote: “Myron is a true believer in the Shrine Steer Program and has been an inspiration to the kids who have had Shrine steers. This is an extremely honored achievement and he is always there to help in any way to make it work out.”

Cheryl Buchanan has seen the couple’s dedication to the fair for 40 years.

“When I showed over 40 years ago their two little kids were playing in the sand and wood chips by the beef show ring,” Buchanan wrote. “They have been active in all aspects of our ag community and supporters of youth, especially the Shrine Hospital.”

Growing up showing animals

Myron, 78, grew up south of town, along Highway 7 toward Sumpter.

“I showed both 4-H and FFA when I was growing up,” he said.

His mom, Delma, had a horse club. Myron was part of the Powder River Wranglers, led by Dan Warnock Sr.

He has loads of stories from those years, but one in particular makes him laugh before he even tells it.

Baker couple escape harm

■ Murder suspect accused of taking two vehicles in attempt to flee near Baker City

By Chris Collins
ccollins@bakercityherald.com

JULY 12 — Bob Borders isn’t sure who’s voice woke him up Monday night at his home on Taggart Lane north of Baker City.

Was it the voice of someone who wanted to do him harm, or was it the voice of his protector?

The way everything turned out, the 65-year-old Borders is more inclined to believe he was protected when 23-year-old Colby James Hedman arrived at his door and entered his home about 10:30 Monday night.

Borders told the story in a telephone interview while working at his part-time job at Thatcher’s Ace Hardware Thursday afternoon. He retired from his job as a hospital administrator about eight years ago.

Borders said he was home alone asleep in his chair in the living room when Hedman happened along Taggart Lane Monday night.

Police believe Hedman stole a Toyota pickup truck from the man he is accused of murdering in Walla Walla, Washington, just a few hours before he arrived on the Borders’ property just north of Baker City.

Man gets 55 months for arson

JULY 17 — Raynmon Haze Garcia, the 21-year-old man who set the fire that destroyed a block of historic buildings in Huntington in late May, pleaded guilty to arson and reckless burning Tuesday in Baker County Circuit Court and was sentenced to 55 months in prison.

Garcia, of 390 E. Jefferson St. in Huntington, pleaded guilty to one count of first-degree arson, one count of second-degree arson and one count of reckless burning. He was sentenced to 37 months in prison on the first-degree arson charge and 18 months on the second-degree arson charge.

USFS bans camps

By Jayson Jacoby
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

JULY 26 — The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest has banned overnight camping on a 240-acre site near Sumpter due to damage caused by people staying in the area for longer than the 14 consecutive days allowed.

“Because of this type of use, the area has become very impacted from the campers,” according to a memorandum from Tom Montoya, Wallowa-Whitman supervisor.

The aarea is near Huckleberry Creek, along Forest Road 1090 about 5 miles southeast of Sumpter.



Marvin Wood awarded for safety

By Samantha O’Conner
soconner@bakercityherald.com

JULY 22 — Marvin Wood Products in Baker City on Wednesday celebrated its recertification as a star site through the state’s Voluntary Protection Program (VPP), a reflection of the company’s successful health and safety programs.

Oregon OSHA administrator Michael Wood, left, talked to Marvin Wood Products employees about earning their safety award. Ray Illingsworth, MWP Safety Coordinator, directs nine safety committee employees at the plant.

Michael Wood, administrator for Oregon OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), said Marvin Wood Products, which employs about 175 people, was first certified for the program in 2003.

Businesses must be recertified every three to five years, and there are currently just 21 companies statewide that qualify for the program, which can reduce their workers compensation cost.

“People assume that recertification is just a routine but the truth is we lose sites every cycle,” Wood said during a ceremony at the Baker City plant.

Sen. Wyden visits Baker

By Brandon Taylor
Baker City Herald

JULY 1 — Senator Ron Wyden hosted a town hall Sunday at the Baker City Senior Center on Sunday as part of his pledge to have a town hall in every county in Oregon each year.

“When you’re in Baker City, you’re a long way from Washington, D.C.,” said Wyden, a Democrat who is Oregon’s senior U.S. senator, serving in that office since 1996.

Based on questions the senator fielded Sunday, among the things that matter in Baker County are environmental concerns such as weed spraying and climate change, and economic issues such as tax credits and rebates, and health care.



Wyden

Belushi to perform in Huntington

JULY 26 — Actor and musician Jim Belushi will play a benefit concert this Saturday, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., at Lions Park in Huntington.

All proceeds raised from the event will go to the families who lost buildings and businesses in an arson fire May 23.

The concert is hosted by HotBox Farms. Admission is free, and donations will go to support the victims of the fire. Concessions will be available to purchase.

West Nile detected in skeeters

By Jayson Jacoby
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

JULY 17 — For the first time since 2017, the West Nile virus has been detected in mosquitoes trapped in Baker County.

The virus, which mosquitoes can transmit to people, was found in mosquitoes trapped earlier this summer in Keating Valley, about 15 miles east of Baker City.

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