

SEPTEMBER

■ High Temperature: 96, the 3rd

• Low Temperature: 28, the 30th

• Total Precipitation: .74 (avg.: .57)

Baker Cowboy Jesse Brown Sets Steer Wrestling Record At Pendleton Rodeo

Round Up Record



Ben Lonergan/EO Media Group

Jesse Brown leaps from his horse onto a steer during the steer wrestling event at the 2019 Pendleton Round-Up. Brown won the event and set a new arena record of 3.7 seconds.

By Jayson Jacoby
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SEPTEMBER 18 — Cowboys have been tangling with steers at the Pendleton Round Up for more than 100 years but Baker City cowboy Jesse Brown needed less than 4 seconds to make history.

Brown, 27, not only won the steer wrestling event at the famous rodeo on Saturday.

In the finals Brown brought his steer down in 3.7 seconds.

His performance broke the Round Up arena record of 3.8 seconds set in 2002 by K.C. Jones and equalled in

2014 by Casey Martin.

Brown, a 2011 Baker High School graduate who was competing in his fourth Round Up, said he was especially excited to set a record at such a renowned rodeo — and in the final round no less.

“It’s a big one,” he said of the Round Up, which started in 1910. “It’s one of the most prestigious rodeos in the world.”

And Brown’s event, steer wrestling, has been part of the annual September event almost as long, dating to 1911.

Brown, who competed in team

roping at Montana State University after transferring from Washington State University, where he played football, said steer wrestling “fits me the best” among rodeo events.

He’s ranked 25th in the world in the event.

Brown said his goal for 2020 is to qualify for the biggest spectacle in rodeo — the National Finals Rodeo that happens each December in Las Vegas.

Although Brown’s 3.7-second time in Saturday’s finals at Pendleton was an arena record it wasn’t his own personal best time.

2 people contract West Nile

By Jayson Jacoby
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SEPTEMBER 25 — Two Baker County residents recently contracted the West Nile virus from mosquito bites, officials announced Tuesday in a press release.

The people were not identified. Nancy Staten at the Baker County Health Department declined to give the gender or age of the two people, or say what part of the county they live in due to privacy concerns.

The health department also didn’t disclose the condition of the two people and whether either had been hospitalized.

The virus generally causes mild flu-like symptoms, but it can also lead to severe illness and in rare cases can be fatal.

The most recent confirmed human cases of West Nile virus in Baker County were in 2014, when two women who live at New Bridge, about 3 miles north of Richland, were infected. Both women recovered.

This year there have been five other confirmed cases of Oregon residents contracting West Nile virus while in the state — three in Harney County and two in Malheur County.

D.A. to don judge’s robes

By Chris Collins
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SEPTEMBER 27 — Oregon Gov. Kate Brown has appointed Matt Shirtcliff, Baker County district attorney, to replace the retiring Greg Baxter as Baker County Circuit Court judge Nov. 1.

Baxter, who has served as Baker County Circuit Court judge since Jan. 1, 2001, announced in July that he would retire Oct. 31.

Shirtcliff has been district attorney since 2001 and has worked for the district attorney’s office since 1994.



Shirtcliff

Record heat fuels blaze

By Jayson Jacoby
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SEPTEMBER 2 — Record heat during the holiday weekend contributed to the growth of the area’s largest wildfire, and winds pushed smoke from the blaze into Baker Valley on Sunday.

The 204 Cow fire was started by lightning Aug. 9 on the Malheur National Forest in the extreme southwest corner of Baker County. The fire, estimated at 6,700 acres, has also burned south into Grant County.

The 204 Cow fire is 10% contained.

The temperature Saturday reached 96 degrees at the Baker City Airport, breaking the previous record for Aug. 31 of 94, set in 1998.

It was the second record high in four days at the airport. Wednesday’s high of 100 broke the previous record for Aug. 28 of 98 degrees, also set in 1998.

The heat, combined with low humidities and gusty winds, pushed the 204 Cow fire toward containment lines that crews have established, according to fire officials.

Some of the smoke also came from fires that crews intentionally lit to burn areas between the main fire and those containment lines.

Five helicopters are assigned to the fire. Some of those are based at the Baker City Airport.

2015 RULE EXPANDED FEDERAL REGULATION OF WATERWAYS

Walden praises water rule repeal

By Jayson Jacoby
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SEPTEMBER 13 — Congressman Greg Walden and a local rancher and county commissioners are among those applauding federal officials for repealing a rule enacted during the Obama administration that critics contend could deprive farmers and ranchers of irrigation water.

At issue is the Waters of the United States rule, and specifically how that term is defined.

That definition affects how far the federal government’s authority extends in enforcing the 1972 Clean Water Act.

In 2015 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers enacted a rule that broadened the definition of Waters of the United States

to include not just navigable waterways, but also their tributaries and some other adjacent waterways, including ones that don’t hold water year round.

In a statement Thursday, Walden said that since 2015 he has heard from farmers and ranchers across Oregon who fear the federal government, using the expanded definition, could restrict how they use water.

Warner hopes to retire from PERS but stay on the job

By Samantha O’Conner
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and Jayson Jacoby
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SEPTEMBER 23 — Baker City Manager Fred Warner

Jr. hopes to retire at the end of this year — but he wants to continue doing the same job for at least another year.

This possibility exists through Oregon’s Public Em-

ployees Retirement System (PERS).

PERS allows certain public employees to retire and begin collecting their pension, but continue to work for a public

agency.

“I don’t want to retire, I just want to retire from PERS and keep working as the city manager,” Warner, 65, said on Friday.

Great Salt Lick auction raises almost \$17,000 for Parkinson’s research

SEPTEMBER 23 — Baker City’s unique fundraising event for Parkinson’s disease research, the Great Salt Lick auction, raised almost

\$17,000 Saturday, the second-most in its 13-year history.

Whit Deschner, who started the event, said the move this year from Cross-

roads Carnegie Art Center to the Churchill School was well-timed.

“We’ll miss its old home, Crossroads,” Deschner said,

“but we are excited using its new location, Churchill School. I don’t think Crossroads could have squeezed this crowd in.”

We have been pleased to support:

- Eastern Oregon Museum
- Friends of Baker Heritage Museum
- NFIB Small Business
- Baker Bulldog Boys Basketball
- Schnauzer Service dog for Iraq War Vet



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123 Years

Former councilor suing county, sheriff
By Jayson Jacoby
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SEPTEMBER 13 — A former Baker City Council member who pleaded guilty to criminal mischief in November 2017 after he was cited that summer at the abandoned lime plant near Huntington has filed a civil rights lawsuit against Baker County and Sheriff Travis Ash, seeking \$1.3 million in damages.

Adam David Nilsson, 48, filed the suit in August in U.S. District Court in Pendleton. He is demanding a jury trial.

Nilsson, who is representing himself, contends the county and Sheriff Ash violated his constitutional rights.

Nilsson claims the county and Ash violated his rights under the Second and Fourth amendments while

serving a search warrant in August 2017 at the Baker City home where Nilsson and his wife, Upekala, live.

Nilsson also claims that Sheriff’s Deputy Gabe Maldonado violated his Second Amendment rights during the Aug. 1 incident at the lime plant when he searched Nilsson for a handgun for which Nilsson had a concealed carry permit.