

# OCTOBER

■ High Temperature: 72, the 16th

• Low Temperature: 4, the 30th

• Total Precipitation: .11 (avg.: .65)

Residents Balk At Proposal To Build 70-Foot Cell Tower Near Fairgrounds

## Cell Controversy



S. John Collins / Baker City Herald

Looking south across the proposed site for a 70-foot cell tower. The property is just north of D Street near its intersection with East Street north of the Baker County Fairgrounds.

**By Samantha O’Conner**  
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**and Jayson Jacoby**  
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OCTOBER 18 — Several people told the Baker City Planning Commission Wednesday evening that they oppose an application from Verizon Wireless to build a 70-foot-tall cell tower north of the Fairgrounds.

The Commission did not make a decision at the conclusion of the public hearing at City Hall, which attracted an audience of about 30.

Commissioners will have another public hearing on Verizon’s application for a conditional-use permit on Nov. 13

at 6 p.m., also at City Hall, 1655 First St.

The proposed site is a 2.12-acre property, owned by Carney and Deborah Lansford, that’s just north of D Street near its intersection with East Street. The property, which is zoned general-industrial, is north of Leo Adler Field and currently houses storage units.

According to the city’s zoning ordinance, Verizon could build a cell tower up to 50 feet high on the property without a conditional-use permit. The company would still have to submit an application, but the decision would be made by the planning director rather than the planning commissioners,

who are appointed by the Baker City Council.

Residents, some of whom submitted written comments, cited multiple reasons for opposing the tower, including that it would block their views and reduce their property values.

Some people also planned to testify about what they believe are harmful health effects caused by electronic emissions from cell towers.

But Commission Chairman Alan Blair told the audience that commissioners are not allowed, under federal law, to consider electronic emissions from cell towers in deciding whether to approve the application.



Baker County Sheriff’s Office photo

Andy Dennis’ body was found in this extremely steep rock chute above the East Eagle trail.

## Missing man’s body found

**By Jayson Jacoby**  
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OCTOBER 7 — Searchers found the body of Andrew Dean Dennis of Haines late Sunday morning in a nearly sheer rock chute in the Wallowa Mountains, eight days after the 60-year-old Haines man failed to return from a planned one-day deer-hunting trip.

It appears that Dennis died from a fall in the steep terrain near East Eagle Creek, his niece, Candy Sturm, said Sunday.

Sturm said her uncle’s body was found near where searchers trapped Dennis’ dog, Barney, on Saturday evening. The site is near where Curtis Creek crosses the East Eagle trail, about 2 miles from the trailhead where Dennis parked his vehicle on Sept. 28.



Dennis

## Vape ban scares local shops

**By Jayson Jacoby**  
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OCTOBER 11 — Theresa Ball is trying to figure out how to keep her Baker City business open after it becomes illegal to sell her most popular products.

That challenge could begin as soon as today.

On Oct. 4 Oregon Gov. Kate Brown signed an executive order calling for a six-month statewide ban on the

sale of flavored vaping products.

Those are liquids that are vaporized in a battery-powered device and inhaled.

Ball, who opened the Baker City Vape shop at 1820 First St. in 2013, said flavored vaping products containing nicotine constitute about 85% of the sales at her business.

Ball considers Brown’s executive order “government overreach.”

“She’s putting so many people out

of business,” Ball said on Thursday. “I don’t know if we’ll ever recover from this, in some people’s eyes.”

Approximately 1,300 people nationwide have reported lung illnesses linked to vaping, and about 30 people, including two in Oregon, have died.

But Ball points out that in some cases the people reported using products that contain THC, the psychoactive ingredient in cannabis, not vaping liquids containing nicotine.

## Union: County puts ‘safety up for bid’

**By Chris Collins**  
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OCTOBER 18 — A review of three bids submitted to the Baker County Commission for a contract to provide ambulance services in Baker City and about half of the rest of the county will be the subject of public

hearings in the coming months.

In the meantime, the president of the Baker City Professional Firefighters Local 922 has posted a letter on Facebook aimed at detailing the issue for people who would receive the service once the contract is awarded.

Jason Jacobs, president of the

firefighters union, said the Facebook post was intended to provide information to county residents.

“It’s just letting everybody know what’s going on,” Jacobs, a lieutenant at the Baker City fire station, said in a telephone interview Thursday.

## Elks Lodge hosts big event

**By Jayson Jacoby**  
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OCTOBER 21 — From their lodges scattered across Oregon, from the Coast to the high desert to the mountains and the valleys, the Elks were all headed to one place —

Baker City.

The Baker Elks Lodge No. 33 played host this weekend to officers from 52 lodges who traveled here for one of Oregon Elks’ two major annual events.

The three-day event, which

started Thursday, is a training seminar for incoming exalted rulers, said Morgan Brinton of Baker City, lecturing knight for the Baker Lodge and public relations chairperson for the Elks Northeast Oregon District.

## Who will replace Walden?

**By Jayson Jacoby**  
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OCTOBER 30 — Suzan Ellis Jones is happy for her friend, Greg Walden, who announced Monday he won’t seek a 12th term in Congress

representing Oregon’s 2nd Congressional District.

But Jones is worried about the 2nd District.

Jones, who is chair of the Baker County Republican Party and has worked on

Walden’s campaigns since he was elected to Congress in 1998, believes Walden’s retirement could open the way for a Democratic candidate to win the House seat for the first time in almost 40 years.

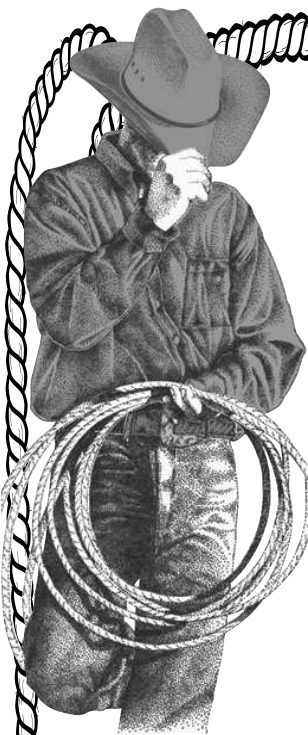
## Widow sues in hunting accident death

**By Chris Collins**  
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OCTOBER 21 — The wife of a Baker City man who died in a February hunting accident near Unity has filed a \$960,000 wrongful death lawsuit against her husband’s hunting partner.

Vicki VanCleave of La Grande filed the lawsuit Oct. 14 in Baker County Circuit Court.

VanCleave claims Richard Toubeaux, 71, of Baker City, was negligent in causing the death of her 76-year-old husband, George Sherman VanCleave.



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