

Baker City Herald

Serving Baker County since 1870 • bakercityherald.com

January 31, 2020

IN THIS EDITION: Local • Health & Fitness • Outdoors • TV \$1.50



In **SPORTS, 6A**
Baker
wrestling

REMINDER TO OUR READERS ABOUT CHANGES TO THE PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Starting next week, the Baker City Herald will be published Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. That means you won't see a paper for Monday, Feb. 3. Starting with the Tuesday, Feb. 4, issue, papers will be delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. Because the Herald will be printed in the evening rather than the morning, Tuesday's issue will be in boxes and at retail outlets several hours earlier in the day than in the past.

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Sheila Merrill of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Garden Club meeting Feb. 5

The Baker County Garden Club will meet Feb. 5 at Baker Botanicals, 3797 10th St., at 10:30 a.m. Topic will be herbs and how to winter over. Please bring a sack lunch, beverage and a chair. New members are always welcome.

WEATHER

Today
44 / 32
Partly sunny

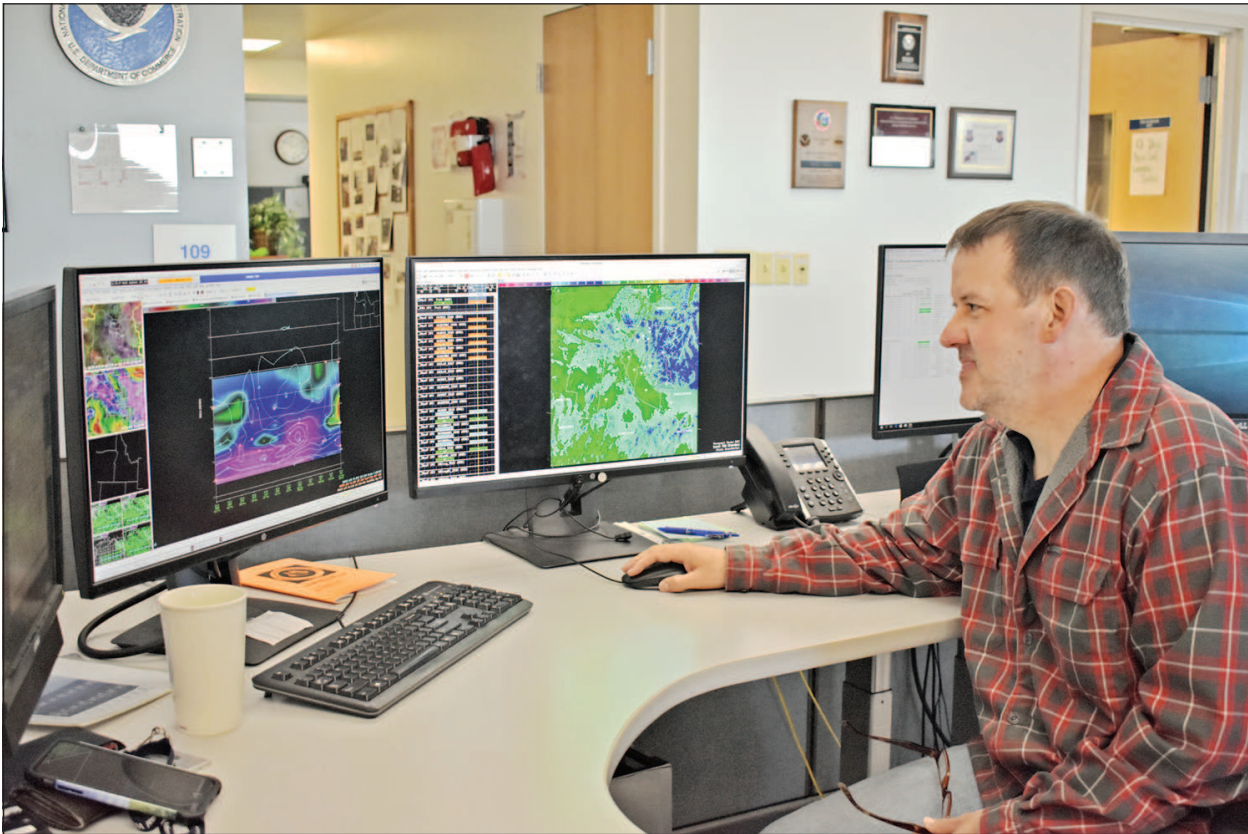
Saturday
46 / 27
Mostly cloudy

Sunday
37 / 20
Mostly cloudy

The space below will be blank on issues delivered or sold from boxes. The space is for a postage label for issues that are mailed.

Meteorologists In Boise Issue Forecasts, Warnings For Baker County

Weather Wizards



Lisa Britton/For the Baker City Herald

Chuck Redman, fire weather forecaster at the National Weather Service office in Boise, can track weather conditions as well as multiple forecast models from his desk.

By Jayson Jacoby
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

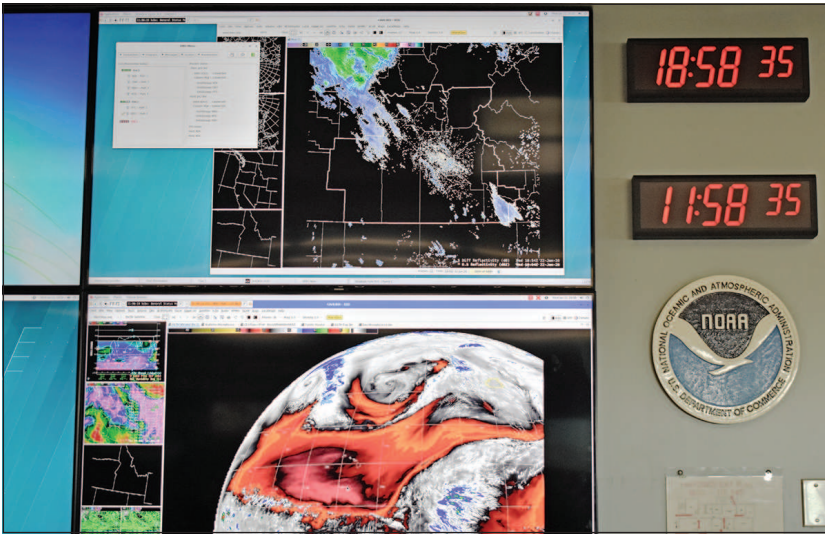
BOISE — The people who tell us whether it's likely to rain tomorrow rely on satellites 22,000 miles above the Earth and on balloons that aren't so different from what you might use to decorate a toddler's birthday party.

This combination of advanced and basic technology reflects the inherent complexity of the atmosphere, said Jay Breidenbach, warning coordination meteorologist at the National Weather Service office in Boise.

The federal government's newest weather satellite, which started transmitting its detailed images of clouds and other phenomena in November 2018, is a vital tool for forecasters, Breidenbach said.

"It's a quantum leap forward in terms of what we can observe from space," he said of the data supplied by the GOES-West satellite, the second of four satellites the federal government plans to put into orbit.

The first of the four launched in 2016. The third is scheduled to lift



Lisa Britton/For the Baker City Herald

A pair of big-screen monitors on the wall at the National Weather Service office in Boise show radar and satellite images that meteorologists use to track conditions and forecast weather.

off in December 2021, and the final satellite in 2024.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the federal department of which the National Weather Service is a part, will spend about \$10.8 billion to launch the quartet of weather satellites (GOES

is an acronym for Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite. Geostationary refers to the orbit, which is stationary so the satellite sees the same part of the Earth, and its atmosphere, all the time.)

See **Weather** / Page 5A

By Phil Wright
The (La Grande) Observer

PENDLETON — Weather forecasters want to know "ground truth," but getting those direct observations of weather in the Pacific Northwest can be difficult.

Rob Brooks is one of the meteorologists at the National Weather Service station on Pendleton's Airport Hill. In Kansas, he said, the Weather Service can rely on a rancher who would look up and report a storm coming over the ridge on his land. Kansas is flat, the Pacific Northwest anything but. And while the Pacific Ocean generates massive weather systems, eyewitnesses may be sparse.

"If it's coming off the ocean, you got a few boats out there sometimes," Brooks said.

Marc Austin, the warning coordination meteorologist at the Pendleton office, echoed the notion, equating it to heavy fog impeding an angler's view of the river.

"The fewer observations you have upstream, the less you're going to know," he said.

To fill that gap, the Weather Service at its office in Pendleton uses advanced technology to generate forecasts that help inform residents, seven airports and dozens of school districts from central Oregon to Yakima and as far east as the Snake River about the weather. The two major developments on that front in recent years are Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellites (GOES) and dual-polarization Doppler radar.

The technology

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration — the National Weather Service's parent federal agency — has launched two GOES satellites and plans to put two more into orbit.

The satellites can detect fog, tell the difference between hailstorms and dust storms and reveal thunderstorms that are developing — an advancement crucial for fire season since lightning sparks many wildfires in Northeastern Oregon.

The GOES series, Austin said, provides more data and provides it more

About The Series

The weather forecasts you read are short and straightforward. But the work that goes into them is anything but. The Baker City Herald and The Observer in La Grande visited the two regional National Weather Service offices — in Pendleton and Boise — to learn about what goes into predicting weather in Northeastern Oregon. The two-part series will continue in the Tuesday, Feb. 4, issue.

quickly, and when it comes to weather, more data is better.

"Just having that data update more frequently gives us more situational awareness," he said.

Some Weather Service officers are experimenting with using that satellite imagery to find hot spots on the ground.

See **Forecast** / Page 3A

Jubilee future unsure

By Jayson Jacoby
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

A Baker County committee's recommendation to hire a new contractor to operate the local visitors center could imperil the future of the annual Miners Jubilee celebration in Baker City, according to the current contractor.

The county's Transient Lodging Tax Committee voted Thursday to recommend county commissioners award a roughly \$74,000 annual contract for operating a visitor center to Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort.

The Baker County Chamber of Commerce, which has the current six-year contract, has operated the visitor center on Campbell Street near Interstate 84 for more than 30 years.

Shelly Cutler, the Chamber's executive director, said this morning that the issue is not limited to who operates the visitors center.

Cutler said that if the three county commissioners, who are scheduled to meet Feb. 19 to consider the lodging tax committee's recommendation, agree to award the contract to Anthony Lakes, then the Chamber would no longer be able to put on Miners Jubilee and other events, including the downtown Christmas parade.

See **Jubilee** / Page 3A

Quiet zone event lures locals

By Samantha O'Conner
soconner@bakercityherald.com

More than 30 people attended an open house at Baker City Hall Thursday evening to learn more about the city applying for a Quiet Zone designation in which freight trains wouldn't sound their whistles except in emergencies.

Residents strolled among several tables with information about the potential changes the city would have to make at five railroad crossings to prevent vehicles from getting onto the tracks.

See **Quiet** / Page 3A



TODAY
Issue 123, 12 pages

Calendar2A
Classified2B-4B
Comics5B

Community News3A
Crossword2B & 4B
Dear Abby6B

Horoscopes4B
Jayson Jacoby4A
News of Record2A

Obituaries2A
Opinion4A
Outdoors1B

Senior Menus2A
Sports6A
Weather6B

TUESDAY — THE CHALLENGE OF FORECASTING BAKER COUNTY WEATHER