

# Local

## BAKER COUNTY CALENDAR

### MONDAY, APRIL 6

■ **Haines Fire Protection District Board:** 7 p.m. at the Haines Library.

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8

■ **Baker County Board of Commissioners:** 9 a.m., Courthouse, 1995 Third St.

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

■ **County Commissioners:** 9 a.m., Courthouse, 1995 Third St.

### THURSDAY, APRIL 16

■ **Baker Rural Fire Protection District Board:** 5:30 p.m. at the Pochontas Fire Station.

## TURNING BACK THE PAGES

### 50 YEARS AGO from the Democrat-Herald April 3, 1970

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Nixon will ask Congress to put on a “pay as you go” basis his agreed upon 6 percent raise for all federal employees and military personnel. An additional 8 percent raise promised the mailmen will be tied to a post office reorganization.

### 25 YEARS AGO from the Baker City Herald April 3, 1995

Mild storms that brought rain to Northeastern Oregon valleys last month dropped snow in the mountains, fortifying snowpacks that, after soaring well above average early in the winter, fell below average by early March.

### 10 YEARS AGO from the Baker City Herald April 2, 2010

Phillip and Barbara Yelle discovered just how friendly Baker City can be when they started tearing down a building along Auburn Avenue.

“It’s like a parade out here some days,” says Phillip, who goes by “Doc” from his days as a military medic.

### ONE YEAR AGO from the Baker City Herald April 3, 2019

When Jeff Colton looked at the shrunken Phillips Reservoir in late January, more a puddle than the oversized pond it’s supposed to be, he was worried.

Two months later the reservoir is still pretty puny.

But Colton feels ever so much better even as he gazes across the diminished surface of the impoundment.

“That was scary back in January,” said Colton, who as manager of the Baker Valley Irrigation District distributes water stored in the reservoir on the Powder River about 15 miles southwest of Baker City.

“I was sweating bullets.”

That water nourishes crops on more than 30,000 acres, mainly in Baker Valley, and the reservoir is a vital cog in the county’s irrigation system.

Statistically speaking, the situation at the end of January was dire enough to justify Colton’s concern.

On Jan. 31 the reservoir was holding slightly less than 6,400 acre-feet of water — about 8 percent of its capacity.

Only twice since Mason Dam was finished in 1968 has Phillips been lower on the final day of January — 2002 (4,900 acre-feet) and 1989 (4,233 acre-feet).

But then the weather turned.

Which is to say, winter made its belated arrival.

## OREGON LOTTERY

### MEGABUCKS, March 30

3 — 7 — 23 — 26 — 27 — 46

Next jackpot: \$1.6 million

### POWERBALL, March 28

7 — 40 — 48 — 55 — 66 PB 11

Next jackpot: \$170 million

### MEGA MILLIONS, March 31

8 — 17 — 51 — 57 — 70 Mega 2

Next jackpot: \$121 million

### WIN FOR LIFE, March 30

21 — 42 — 49 — 64

### PICK 4, March 31

• 1 p.m.: 1 — 1 — 9 — 4

• 4 p.m.: 2 — 0 — 0 — 4

• 7 p.m.: 2 — 7 — 4 — 2

• 10 p.m.: 5 — 0 — 5 — 2

### LUCKY LINES, March 31

2-5-10-13-18-21-27-29

Next jackpot: \$14,000

## SENIOR MENUS

- **FRIDAY:** Sausage gravy over biscuits, ham, cheese and egg frittata, hashbrowns, orange slices, cinnamon rolls
- **MONDAY:** Chicken-fried beef steak, potatoes and gravy, corn, biscuits, cottage cheese with fruit, lemon bars
- **TUESDAY:** Meatloaf with gravy, parslined red potatoes, broccoli-blend veggies, rolls, green salad, peach crisp
- **WEDNESDAY:** Boneless chicken breasts with cream gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans, rolls, beet-and-onion salad
- **THURSDAY (April 9):** Beef burgundy over fettuccine, peas, bread, fruit ambrosia, ice cream

Public luncheon at the Senior Center, 2810 Cedar St., 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; \$4.50 donation (60 and older), \$6.75 for those under 60. Due to the coronavirus crisis, meals must be picked up; there is no dining on site.

## CONTACT THE HERALD

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## CANNING

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About 70% of Barley Brown’s beer is trucked to Portland, where it’s available on tap at many taverns and eateries.

With that demand evaporated, Brown, who has ceased brewing, for now, was left with thousands of gallons of finished beer in tanks and kegs, and no place to sell it.

And although beer doesn’t spoil as, say, milk does, Brown said his quality standards call for most of his beers, including the most popular, Pallet Jack IPA, to be sold within about 90 days.

The only option was to fill customers’ growlers, but since the most popular size holds only half a gallon, the volume was far too small.

The bottom line, then, is that Brown faced a conundrum — either can his beer or dump it down the drain.

The latter, a waste not only of good ale but also of the money that went into brewing it, was so abhorrent that Brown set aside his distaste for putting his beer into cans.

Although canned beer is about as American as apple pie and baseball, Brown had always resisted the temptation to have his craft brews share grocery shelf space with the likes of Keystone Light.

He had multiple reasons. First, by making his beers available only by draft, Brown said he carved out a niche in the crowded Northwest craft brewing business that gave Barley Brown’s ales a certain cachet.

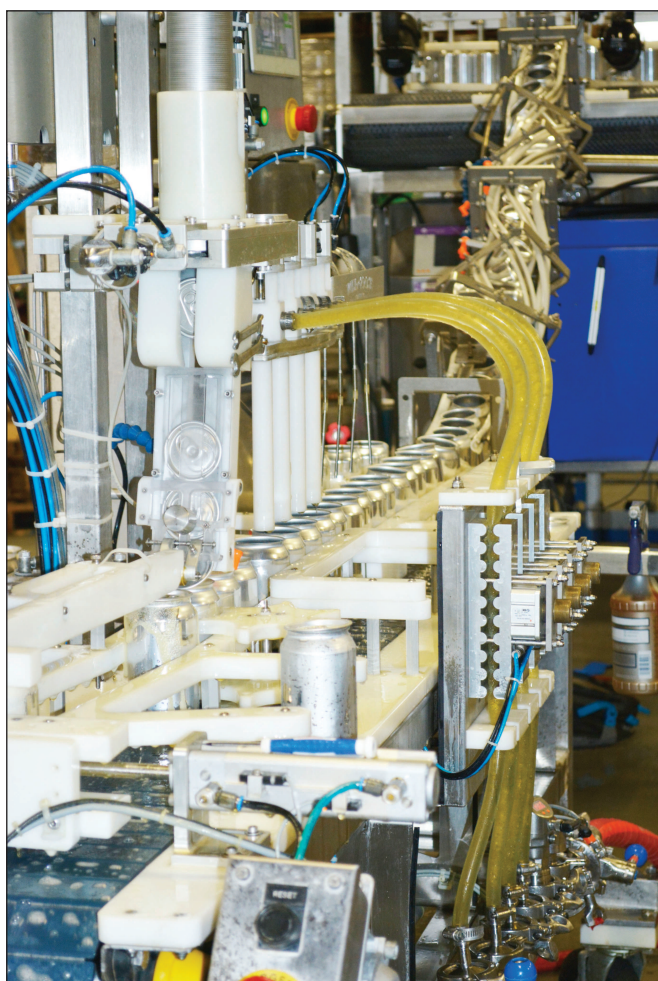
“It elevates the cool factor — not being able to buy our beer at any store,” Brown said. “We’ve definitely been proud of that.”

He said renowned restaurants in Portland serve Pallet Jack IPA in part because of its exclusivity.

The second reason is financial and logistical — running a canning operation is labor-intensive and expensive, Brown said.

That’s a particular challenge in a relatively remote place such as Baker City where shipping costs are higher than average for cans and other equipment.

“It takes up a lot of room, too,” Brown said.



Jayson Jacoby / Baker City Herald

Cans proceed down a line where they’re filled with Pallet Jack IPA, sealed and labeled.



Jayson Jacoby / Baker City Herald

An automated machine applies labels to cans of Pallet Jack IPA Tuesday morning at Barley Brown’s Brewery.



Jayson Jacoby / Baker City Herald

Barley Brown’s Brewery owner Tyler Brown, front, prepares to sample a just-filled can of Pallet Jack IPA Tuesday morning. Brewers Eli Dickison, right, and his brother, Kyle Dickison, far left, also worked on the packaging line.

But given the uncertainty about how long the coronavirus crisis will last — and in

particular the bar closures and restaurant restrictions — Brown decided to change his philosophy.

His daughter, Tori Thatcher, who is mainly quarantined at home because her first child is due in about three weeks, started making phone calls.

Brown said the only time he has canned beer was about a year ago when Boise River Canning, which has a mobile line, canned about 8 barrels of Pallet Jack during a beer festival in Boise.

(One barrel of beer is 31 gallons.)

In less than two weeks Thatcher arranged to have more than 30,000 cans delivered and labels printed (the design matches the Pallet Jack logo printed on T-shirts and hats that Barley Brown’s sells).

And on Monday a crew from Boise River Canning arrived at Barley Brown’s.

The crew, along with Barley Brown’s employees, canned about 60 barrels Monday — approximately 800 cases of 24 cans each.

Barley Brown’s posted on its Facebook page about the canning operation, and em-

“The timeline’s out of our control. It’s a learning experience.”

— Tyler Brown, owner, Barley Brown’s Brewing

ployees set up what Brown described as a “lemonade stand” outside the brewery to sell the freshly canned Pallet Jack.

They went through, appropriately enough, almost an entire pallet — 98 of the 100 cases that fit on a pallet, Brown said.

“People came from La Grande,” he said.

### Day 2 Brewing

At 8:30 a.m. Tuesday Barley Brown’s Brewery was hectic.

A cacophony of clangs and bangs and whooshes echoed off the high ceilings.

The earthy, yeasty aroma of fresh beer hung heavy and moist on the air.

Brown watched as cans slid from pallets onto an assembly line where they were lined up, as orderly as soldiers on parade.

Little more than a minute later each can’s journey ended when Brown’s brother, Luke, grabbed a case of Pallet Jack and placed it on the stack rising on a pallet.

A few full pallets, wrapped tightly in cellophane, stood in the chilly refrigerated room, where they shared space with other pallets stacked not with cans but with kegs.

See Canning / Page 3A

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