

# School board to hear reports on sports facilities, Early Learning Center progress

By Chris Collins

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The Baker School Board will meet at 6 p.m. Thursday for its second Zoom video conference in compliance with Gov. Kate Brown's social distancing order during the coronavirus pandemic.

More information about how to join the Zoom session will be posted on the Baker School District website at baker5j.org

Traditionally, the Board has begun its meetings with recognition of Promise Students of the Month from the various school buildings in the community. The tradition has been known to sometimes double the audience gathered for the meeting as extended family members congregate to witness the honor bestowed on their child.

That portion of the session will be postponed until further notice, according to Thursday's meeting agenda.

Presentations scheduled Thursday include a report from Buell Gonzales Jr., the District's athletic director. He will speak about the work he has done to expand the use of the Sports Complex and other District facilities for future use in bringing more tournaments and organized sporting events to Baker City as part of the community's economic development strategy.

Superintendent Mark Witty will

speak about maintenance priorities. And Cassie Hibbert and Witty will update the Board on work being done to establish the Baker Early Learning Center.

The tentative time set for the Board to receive public comment during the session is 6:50 p.m.

Other items on the agenda include:

- The intent to award an audit services contract for the 2020-21 year.

- Approval of the Student Investment Account Plan and Agreement for Baker Charter Schools.

- Approval of annual extension agreements for Baker Early College and Baker Web Academy with the Baker School District.

- Adoption of a resolution designating May 4-8 as Teacher Appreciation Week.

- Hearing an update from Baker High School Student Body President Laura Illingsworth.

- Hearing Witty's report on listening sessions via Zoom to be scheduled, plans for a Board retreat at which visions and goals for 2020-2021 will be set, an update on the District's economic state and a budget update, and information about meals and child care provided during the COVID-19 pandemic, negotiations with the classified staff, which include secretaries, paraprofessional classroom assistants, custodians and other nonlicensed

workers, the Baker Web Academy service agreement and Wi-Fi access for distance learning.

The Board also is expected to approve these personnel actions:

- Certified staff resignations — Jeana Phillips, Baker Middle School counselor; Allison Duman, Baker High School head cheer coach.

- Certified transfer/hire — Emmy Clausnitzer, from Brooklyn second-grade teacher to Haines third-grade teacher; Johnathan Baer, from South Baker sixth-grade teacher to BMS social studies teacher.

- Certified new hires — Ali Abrego, BMS special education teacher; Teagan Wick, Haines sixth-grade teacher; Dylan Francesconi, BHS band teacher; Jacob Bokar, BHS math teacher.

- Extra-duty new hire — Ali Abrego, BHS head volleyball coach.

- Classified retirements — Tally Newman, BHS secretary; Ramona Helgerson, Haines librarian/paraprofessional; Connie Robinson, Brooklyn paraprofessional.

- Classified resignation — Katelyn Kercheski, Eagle Cap Innovative High School secretary.

- Classified new hire — Shayln Woodward, BHS secretary.

- Classified seasonal new hire — Debbie Wilde, pre-kindergarten screening assistant.

## CLAIMS

Continued from Page 1A

The most recent weekly increase was driven not by job losses in the accommodations and food services sector, as was the case in past weeks.

Jobless claims in that sector

peaked during the week ending March 28, at 47 claims. The number dropped to 32 claims the week ending April 4, and to 31 the week ending April 11.

Claims increased, however, in the health care and social assistance category — to 24 the most recent

week, up from 13 the previous week — and in manufacturing, from 11 claims to 20 claims.

New claims in the retail trade sector have been relatively steady over the past four weeks, at 11, 15, 13 and, for the week ending April 11, 14 claims.

## SERVICE

Continued from Page 1A

Some of those who attended Sunday's service watched from the lawn in front of Cockram Arena, while others sat in their cars.

For those who could not attend, Neff's sermon was also available on Facebook Live.

"Everybody that is interested and hungry and searching, I wanted to present an opportunity," Neff said. "It may not be their church but we're having church and that's what they're looking for. Basically, there's no name over the door, so people are able to just come and have a great time, touching God, being touched by the presence of God, and the word of God."

The Apostolic Lighthouse Church had its first outdoor service on Easter Sunday. About 20 cars parked, and Neff said people told him they could hear him well despite some technical glitches with the sound system.

"It was awesome," Neff said. "It felt good, it felt like we were just able to worship God outside."

Angela Light, who attended the April 19 service, said it was a great experience.

"I love it. I would do this every day if I could," Light said.

In addition to the outdoor services and online options, the Apostolic Lighthouse Church has maintained its Sunday School and youth group programs.

Neff's wife, Kristin, is the Sunday School teacher. She has been meeting with students through Zoom, playing games, having their lessons, and interacting as best they could outside the classroom.

"It may not be their church but we're having church and that's what they're looking for."

— Nathan Neff, pastor, Apostolic Lighthouse Church, Baker City

"Right now our young people in Baker are desperate for something to do and a way to connect to God and so we felt like that was an important piece for us to be able to focus on helping them," Nathan Neff said.

The online programs have attracted kids from Halfway and Oxbow, and even some from California.

"It's open to anybody and any young person that wants to have fun, study the word of God," Neff said.

### Traveling puppet shows

Church members have sought other ways to stay engaged with the community during the pandemic.

Kristin Neff said she, along with Light and other members of the congregation, built a mobile puppet stand.

"They've driven around town with music playing while she and her son dressed as clowns and Light and others acted as puppeteers.

"The kids were so excited to see us come," Kristin said.

Nathan Neff grew up in Baker City, attended Bible college in California, and came back to Baker City, serving as assistant pastor for 13 years and as pastor for the past 6½ years.

"I was in the military and wound up going to Iraq, and it was while I was in Iraq that God spoke to me and said you're going to pastor in Baker," Neff said.

SERIES FROM LOCAL HISTORIAN GARY DIELMAN EXAMINES 1864 LAND SURVEY OF THE AREA THAT WOULD INCLUDE BAKER CITY

# Baker City's first map was drawn in 1864

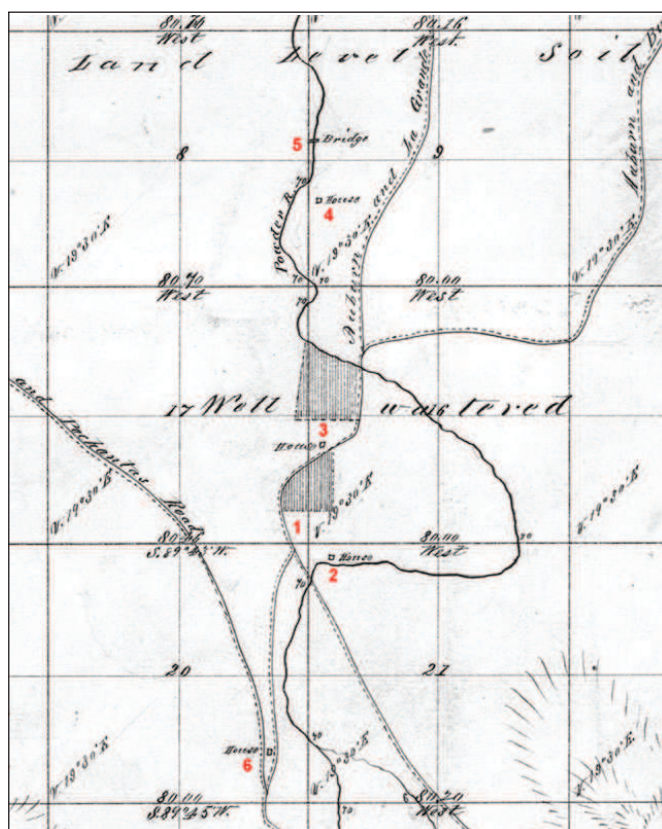
By Gary Dielman

The 1864 Baker City Township Map fascinates me. It's the closest we can get to a "photograph" of what Baker City looked like before the town was platted in 1865. The oldest actual photograph we know of dates from about 1868.

The 1864 Baker City Township Map has several remarkable features considering the fact that in the spring of 1862 the only roads in Baker County were the Oregon Trail and a spur of that trail through Eagle Valley. What caught my attention upon first seeing the 1864 map is the number of wagon roads traversing the mostly sagebrush terrain of the township. Coming from all directions the roads converged on the area where settlement of Baker City would begin just one year later. Also surprising are two farm fields in the heart of the area that would become city. Once settlement began in 1865, the fields disappeared like an inch of snow on a warm spring day, leaving no trace that the fields ever existed.

Another remarkable feature of the 1864 Baker City Township Map is the course Powder River took through town in May of 1864, when the township was being surveyed. At Bridge Street the map shows the river taking a 90-degree turn to the east for almost a mile, then northwest to Main and D streets, where it again flowed north. In a later installment in this series I'll explore possible explanations for this surprising swing east.

The final features of the map are by far the tiniest but just as intriguing as any other features: four 1/32nd of an inch squares, each labeled "house" (see map at right, with red numerals). Plus there is an equally tiny mark labeled "bridge." All five features are located in the area that became present



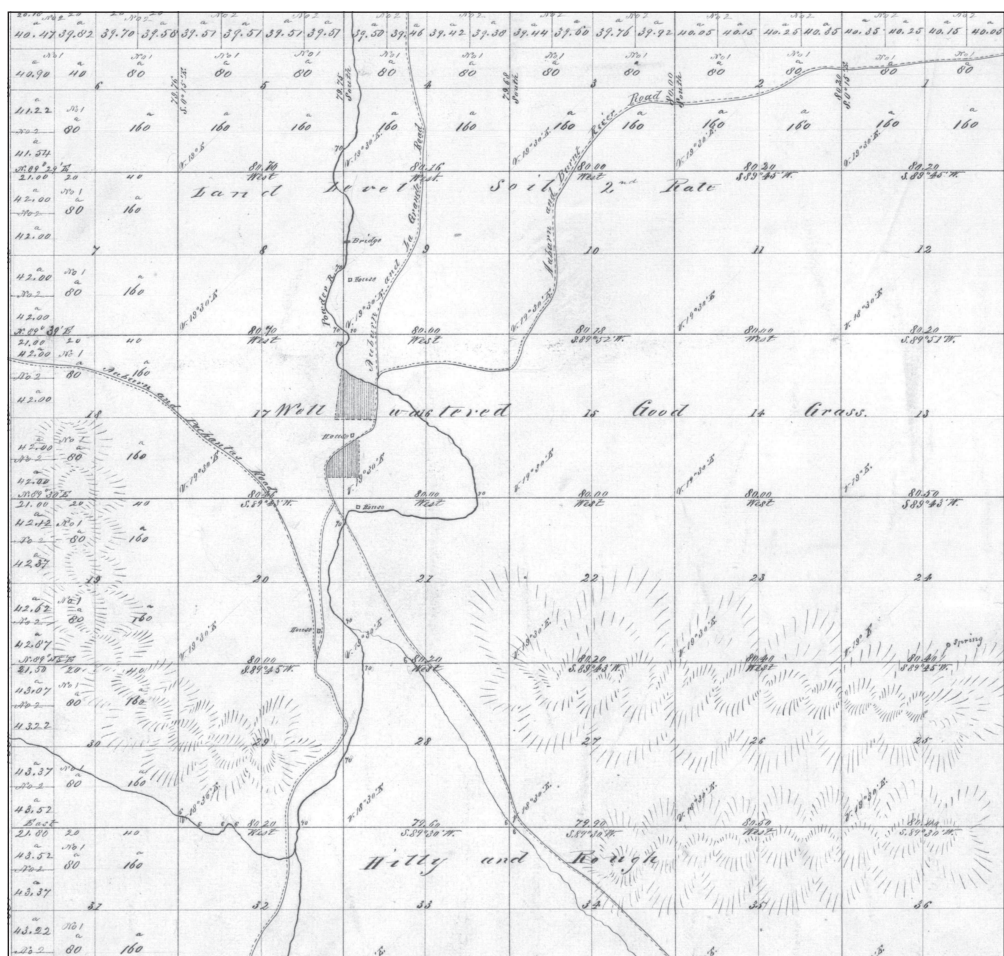
1. The Hotel Baker corner. This is the southeast corner of the portion of Baker City that lawyer Royal Pierce platted for a town in 1865.
2. Charles E. Place's cabin. It was located near his toll bridge over Powder River. It was about 10 feet south of the present BCH office. Place is the great-great-grandfather of retired Dr. Robert "Bob" McKim.
3. Charles B. Fisher's cabin. Fisher's Grove was named for him, present site of Geiser-Pollman Park. The site of his cabin was about in the middle of the Dollar Store parking lot.
4. The surveyor's called it "Finlays House." Probably refers to Thomas Finlayson. The 1870 census of Baker City lists him as a farmer (45) worth \$10,000, with wife Margaret (46), and 4 children ages 7 to 15.
5. Surveyor's put a symbol on their 1864 map with label "bridge" over Powder River. It was located a ways north of the present bridge over Powder River on Hughes Lane. The bridge may have been built by Finlayson to access a farm field.
6. The surveyors show two roads intersecting in South Baker. Just above that intersection and between the two roads there is a symbol labeled simply "house" with no indication of who the owner is. The site of the cabin was about a third of a mile north of Colorado Street.

Baker City. Surveyor field notes tell us who owned three of the four houses.

### The Surveying of Baker City Township

In the spring of 1863, aware of settlement taking place in Eastern Oregon, the General Land Office in Eugene contracted with surveyor Timothy Davenport to survey the exterior borders of township T9S R40E, which I refer to as "Baker City Township."

Then in 1864 surveyors David P. Thompson and Daniel Chaplin were awarded the contract to survey the interior 36 sections of T9S R40E. In a six-day period from May 13-18, 1864, surveyors Thompson and Chaplin and their assistants, Z.S. Dotson, James K. Stricklin, and A.J. Stricklin, surveyed all 36 square-mile sections in the 6-square-mile Baker City Township. In accomplishing that task the crew logged almost 100 miles in less than a week.



A map that includes the site of Baker City was drawn based on a survey that was done from May 13-18, 1864.

To give you a sample of what the survey crew was doing, I've transcribed the survey field notes as the crew surveyed north through the area that became Baker City. I find it the most historically interesting.

But first some technical information. The numbers that begin each field note — for example, 80.00 — refer to the number of "chains" the crew has surveyed from the beginning of a section line. Two chainmen stretch out a metal chain that is 66 feet long

and composed of 100 links. Each link is 7.92 inches long. Here's the math: 100 links x 7.92 inches = 792 inches / 12 inches = 66 feet. When the chainmen have stretched out the chain 80 times, they have surveyed one mile: 80 chains x 66 feet = 5,280 feet = 1 mile. The abbreviation of "links" in the field notes is "lks" and "chains" is "chs."

In writing about the field notes, I make mention of what we see on the ground today as reference points for the reader. But

we should keep in mind that the survey crew is on almost completely undeveloped land, where the only significant signs of civilization are some dusty roads, a couple of farm fields, and a scattering of squatters cabins.

See Map/Page 5A



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