

Bentz the GOP's choice to replace Walden in Congress

By Gary A. Warner
Oregon Capital Bureau

Former Sen. Cliff Bentz of Ontario won the Republican nomination for the 2nd Congressional District in Oregon on Tuesday.

Former Rep. Knute Buehler of Bend called Bentz just before 9:30 p.m. to concede the race. Former Sen. Jason Atkinson of Central Point was running third. Jimmy Crumpacker, a recent transplant to Deschutes County who spent over \$600,000 and was endorsed by anti-abortion and gun rights groups was running fourth. None of the other seven candidates on the Republican ballot had more than 10% of the vote. Alex Spenser of Klamath Falls and Nick Heuertz of Central Point were ahead in the field of five Democrats vying for the seat, with Spenser holding about a 1% lead as of Wednesday afternoon.

Bentz thanked the voters of the district, who he said looked past the large amounts of advertising by Buehler and Crumpacker to give him the win. "I think people in this congressional district are

Baker County Election Results

2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT — REPUBLICAN

- Cliff Bentz 1,767
- Jimmy Crumpacker 688
- Knute Buehler 635

2ND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT — DEMOCRAT

- Alex Spenser 248
- Nick Heuertz 247
- Chris Vaughn 231

U.S. SENATOR — REPUBLICAN

- Jo Rae Perkins 1,453
- Paul J. Romero Jr. 980

U.S. PRESIDENT — REPUBLICAN

- Donald J. Trump 3,325

U.S. PRESIDENT — DEMOCRAT

- Joseph Biden 823
- Bernie Sanders 171

two years ago when he was running for governor, then tried to run as a conservative for Congress. People remember: Knute is a good physician, but politically, he just doesn't fit this district."

The race drew 11 Republicans to replace Rep. Greg Walden, R-Hood River, who announced last fall that he would retire after 22 years in Congress. The district is the only one of five in Oregon represented in Congress by a Republican. It covers all of Eastern and Central Oregon, along with a large slice of the southwestern part of the state.

Bentz announced early for the race, with much of the geography of his state senate district overlapping Walden's.

Bentz is a former state representative and senator. In both offices his district included Baker County.

Buehler entered the race, bringing his statewide name recognition and fundraising ability into the contest. The physician served two terms in the state House sandwiched between unsuccessful bids for secretary of state in 2012 and governor in 2018.

smart and they study the candidates before they vote," Bentz said. "Jimmy is a nice guy, but he doesn't really live in the district. He's a Portland

guy with a ski cabin in Bend. Good on him for trying, but he has to know the district before running for Congress. "Knute ran as a moderate

ELECTION

Continued from Page 1A

Nichols also thinks some voters might have been less likely to consider making a change on the three-member Board of Commissioners during the coronavirus pandemic, preferring instead to maintain continuity among the county's elected officials.

Joseph, 39, agreed it's "very possible" that voter trepidation during this unprecedented crisis made the incumbent's usual advantage even greater than normal.

"Bruce was doing a very good job with his virus response," Joseph said. Joseph said the pandemic also "made it very difficult for me to campaign the way I wanted to."

He said he had hoped for a larger turnout, as well. About 46.6% of Baker County's 12,171 voters returned their ballot.

Joseph's term on the Baker City Council ends Dec. 31, 2020. He is not eligible to run for re-election due to the term limits clause in the city charter.

Noxious weed levy

This countywide, 4-year levy raises about \$100,000 per year and provides about 30% of the revenue to control weeds such as whitetop, Scotch thistle and others that can reduce the value of farm and grazing land.

The weed control levy passed with 3,864 votes in favor (68.6%) and 1,765 opposed (31.4%).

The levy's tax rate is about 5.9 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value — about \$8.85 per year for the owner of a \$150,000 property.

Mosquito control levy

Officially called the "vector control" levy, this 4-year tax assessment helps pay to control mosquitoes in a 200,000-

acre district that includes most of Baker, Bowen and Keating valleys.

The levy passed easily, with 2,998 voters in favor (70.2%) and 1,270 opposed (29.8%).

The vector control district has two main sources of revenue. There is a permanent tax rate of 32 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, and the local option levy — the one voters approved Tuesday.

The local option levy is about 15.3 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Pine Eagle Health District levy

Voters in the Pine Eagle Health District in eastern Baker County by a wide margin renewed the local option levy to help operate the Pine Eagle Clinic in Halfway for five more years. The measure passed with 293 voters in favor (74.2%) and 103 opposed (25.8%).

The levy will raise about \$735,200 over the five years. The tax rate is 85 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.

SOGGY

Continued from Page 1A

As of 4 p.m., when today's issue was sent to the printing plant, Wednesday's rain total had reached 0.53 of an inch, a record for May 20.

It's also the dampest day at the airport since July 10, 2015. With a total of 2.03 inches of rain, that July day was the second-wettest day on record at the airport, where records date to 1943.

(The champion in that regard is Aug. 31, 1984, when a cloudburst dumped 2.29 inches of rain on the airport.)

Wednesday's storm should help ease the local drought. The U.S. Drought Monitor Index puts most of Baker County in the "moderate" drought category.

The responsible party in this case is a slow-moving low-pressure center that tracked north across western Idaho Tuesday night and into Wednesday, said Leslie Colin, a lead forecaster at the National Weather Service's office in Baker City.

That's an unusual course for such a storm, said Colin, who recently celebrated 50 years working for the National Weather Service.

Spring, however, is the period when such events are most likely, Colin said.

Indeed, May is statistically the wettest month in Baker City, with an average of 1.43

Rainy Day

Rainfall totals from locations around the region, with Wednesday's total through 3 p.m., and in parentheses the 72-hour total, through 3 p.m.

FLAGSTAFF HILL

0.84 (1.06)

MORGAN MTN. (near Huntington)

0.68 (1.40)

BLUE CANYON (near Auburn)

1.45 (1.66)

LA GRANDE (Union Co. Airport)

0.93 (2.04)

inches of rain. (June ranks second, at 1.29 inches.)

"If it's going to happen at all, this is the season it would," Colin said.

Wednesday's storm was atypical in more than one way.

The weather feature that often brings rain (or snow) to Baker County is a cold front — basically, the boundary between air masses of signifi-

cantly different temperatures.

When a cold front sweeps through, if it drops precipitation (there are completely dry fronts, as well), the rain or snow tends to fall heavily, but only briefly, lasting in some cases for less than an hour, Colin said.

"Once the front goes through the precipitation really drops off," he said.

The more noticeable effects of many cold fronts are a rapid drop in temperature and a shift in wind direction from southeast to northwest.

Wednesday's storm, by contrast, was not a cold front but a "closed low," and compared with a cold front it dawdled along.

This meant its effects — its

rain, in particular — lingered for more than 10 hours.

Rain was reported at the airport at every one-hour interval, except one, between 7 p.m. on Tuesday and 3 p.m. on Wednesday.

The storm's track also contributed to its prolific precipitation.

Because the low's center — the area of lowest atmospheric pressure — was east of Baker County, passing almost directly over Boise on its way north, the counterclockwise circulation around the center propelled rain bands from roughly north to south.

That pattern neutralizes the rain shadow that the Elkhorn Mountains cast over

Baker Valley and much of the rest of the county, Colin said.

When storms roll in from the west, which is the more typical pattern, the Elkhorns force the moist air to rise and cool, and because the colder air is the less moisture it can hold in clouds, much of the rain or snow falls in the mountains.

(Low-pressure systems such as Wednesday's have much the same effect, except they don't need mountains to lift and cool the air and siphon its moisture. Air rushes toward the center of the low (air moves from areas of high pressure to low, acting like a liquid flowing downhill) and, because the ground stops its downward movement, the air is forced to rise.)

In the normal eastward tracking storm, as the air descends the east slopes of the Elkhorns it warms and can hold much of whatever moisture didn't splash down or pile up on the peaks. This phenomenon explains why so often the Elkhorns are swathed in clouds while the Baker Valley below is dry.

But when the air flow is from north to south as it was Wednesday, Colin said, the Elkhorns can have the opposite effect, at least in a limited way, enhancing rather than retarding rainfall in Baker Valley as the air hits the wall of the Elkhorns, rises and cools.

Some of the resulting rainfall tends to spill over into the valley, Colin said.

Baker backs backhoe sale

By Jayson Jacoby
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

Baker City voters made the usual choices in Tuesday's election — choosing candidates, mulling tax levies, selling a backhoe.

That last, perhaps not so usual, item made it to the ballot due to a clause in the city's 68-year-old charter.

That clause requires city officials to get the approval of voters before selling either land or buildings worth at least \$5,000, or other property, including vehicles and equipment, worth at least \$10,000.

Over the past three decades the city has asked voters for approval to sell more than half a dozen buildings or land parcels. Voters authorized each sale, usually by large margins.

But until Tuesday the city had not gone to voters when the item on the block was a vehicle, said Michelle Owen, the city's public works director.

She acknowledged that in at least one case, involving a street sweeper, the city probably should have asked voters for permission because the value could have approached the \$10,000 threshold.

Owen didn't have a record immediately available listing the amount the city received for the sweeper.

But when city officials decided they no longer needed a 1995 Case backhoe with an estimated value of \$16,000, Owen said it was clear the city would need to take the matter to voters, per the city charter clause.

Voters approved a measure authorizing the backhoe sale by a margin of 92% to 8% in Tuesday's election.

The city will sell the backhoe through an online government auction, and as with any auction it's difficult to predict whether any particular item might spawn a bidding war, Owen said.

The backhoe issue also prompted city officials earlier this year to look at its equipment fleet to identify other vehicles that are surplus, or soon will be, and that might conceivably fetch \$10,000.

They found two candidates, Owen said — a Case excavator and a 1988 International dump truck.

To avoid the possibility of having to put those pieces on a future ballot, the Baker City Council included a separate measure on Tuesday's ballot asking voters to amend the city charter clause.

The proposal was to allow the City Council to sell surplus vehicles, regardless of value, so long as the money went to the city's equipment replacement fund. The measure didn't affect the requirement that voters approve the sale of land or buildings.

Voters approved the charter-changing measure Tuesday with 75.5% in favor.

That outcome wasn't necessarily preordained, though.

At least twice in the past, in 2000 and 2002, the city asked voters to eliminate that entire clause from the city charter, which would have allowed the city to sell any surplus property, whether real estate or equipment, without getting the voters' approval.

Voters rejected that measure by 59% to 41% in 2002, and by 60% to 40% in 2000.

WE ARE NOW IN BAKER CITY!
Accepting most Dental Insurances including OHP ODS Plus
CALL 541-742-6012 FOR AN APPOINTMENT
DRS. HILLARY BERRY & LAVONNE HAMMELMAN

Prepare for unexpected power outages with a Generac home standby generator
SCHEDULE YOUR FREE IN-HOME ASSESSMENT TODAY!
877-557-1912
FREE 7-Year Extended Warranty* A \$695 Value!
Offer valid March 16, 2020 - June 30, 2020
Special Financing Available Subject to Credit Approval
*Terms & Conditions Apply

One solution for oxygen at home, away, and for travel
Introducing the INOGEN ONE — It's oxygen therapy on your terms
No more tanks to refill. No more deliveries. No more hassles with travel. The INOGEN ONE portable oxygen concentrator is designed to provide unparalleled freedom for oxygen therapy users. It's small, lightweight, clinically proven for stationary and portable use, during the day and at night, and can go virtually anywhere — even on most airlines. Inogen accepts Medicare and many private insurances!
Reclaim Your Freedom And Independence NOW!
Call Inogen Today To Request Your FREE Info Kit
1-855-839-0752
© 2020 Inogen, Inc. All rights reserved. MKT-P108

Tax Problems: RESOLVED
There are many ways we can tackle IRS or State tax relief together:
✓Tax Levies & Liens Release ✓Resolve Back Taxes
✓Wage Garnishment Release ✓Payroll Tax Negotiation
✓Stop Penalties and Interest ✓Tax Preparation & Bookkeeping Services
✓Tax Debt Negotiation & Settlement
Call us now for your FREE tax consultation & evaluation:
844-945-2056
Anthem Tax Services
Anthem offers a money-back guarantee designed to help you avoid wasting money on ineffective tax services. We will gather as much information from you as necessary and work with tax authorities to give you the best chance of reducing your tax debt. If for any reason that does not work out, and the government notifies us they refuse to reduce your overall tax liability or monthly payments by any amount, we will gladly refund you the fees you paid for our services in trying to reduce that debt. Money Back Guarantee does not apply to Bookkeeping and Tax Preparation Services.

Rachel Pregnancy Center
2192 Court Avenue, Baker City • 541-523-5357
Services Provided:
Free Pregnancy Tests
Referrals for Free Ultrasounds
Pregnancy Options Counseling
Adoption Referrals
Prenatal, Infant Care & Parenting Classes
Maternity & Baby Clothing
Post Abortion Recovery
Helping women & men in an unplanned pregnancy.
All services free & confidential.
Open Tues - Thurs
10 AM - 5 PM
(closed for lunch)

NEWS OF RECORD

DEATHS

The Rev. Elwain E. McKeen: 91, formerly of Baker City and Haines, died peacefully of natural causes on May 17, 2020, in Bend. Private services will be scheduled later.

POLICE LOG

Baker City Police
BAKER COUNTY WARRANT: Edward Allen Braswell, 44, of Baker City, 8:49 a.m. Monday, in the 2100 block of Broadway St.; cited and released.