

Local & State

Intern joins Herald for summer

■ Sam Anthony, 21, has finished his junior year studying journalism at the U of O

By Chris Collins
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University of Oregon junior Sam Anthony started his first real job at the Baker City Herald on Monday.

Anthony, 21, arrived just in time to report on the Monday evening vigil for George Floyd, the man who died May 25 in the custody of Minneapolis police. Anthony's story about the Baker City event starts on Page 1A of today's issue of the Herald.

Anthony said he turned down invitations to join friends for similar events last week in the Salem area, some of which turned violent, to spend time at his Aumsville home with his parents, his 10-year-old sister and his grandmother before heading to his summer job.

Anthony is a 2017 graduate of Cascade High School, a 4A school like Baker High, which serves the towns of Aumsville and Turner and the rural communities in between.

He will be spending the next 10 weeks in Northeastern Oregon as an intern at the Herald through the University of Oregon's Charles Snowden Program for Excellence in Journalism. Anthony is one of 17 students chosen for the prestigious internship, which is a partnership with newspapers and radio stations throughout the state.

As this year's Baker City Herald Snowden intern — the 17th to spend a summer working in the community — Anthony no doubt will find the experience different than that of the other aspiring

"I'm excited for the opportunity and the chance to check out a new place."

— Sam Anthony, who's working as an intern this summer at the Baker City Herald

journalists who've traveled across the state for the job.

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, Baker County summer events, many of which are typically assigned to interns, either already have been canceled or will be substantially altered from the usual extravagant productions geared to bringing visitors to the region.

Anthony said his grandpa was hoping to ride through on his motorcycle for a visit during the annual Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally in July. Although his grandpa might still drive through, it won't be to ride in this year's rally, because it was canceled in early May.

There will be no Baker City Cycling Classic later this month, and the East-West Shrine Football Game and the hoopla that goes with it each August have been canceled.

All hope is not lost for Anthony to get a taste of two of Baker County's headliner summertime attractions, however. Plans are still in the works for scaled-back versions of the Miners Jubilee and the Bronc and Bull Riding competitions. And there will be some semblance of the Haines Fourth of July fireworks and rodeo and the Baker County Fair.

As Anthony approaches his senior year of college, he says he is leaving his options open as to his future career. At this point, as a student in the Journalism School's Honors program, he is pursuing

journalism and media studies degrees, and might add advertising to his credentials.

He says he was eager to apply for the Snowden Internship to help him get a better understanding of what the work entails.

"I wanted to check it out and see if it is something I want to do for the rest of my life," he said.

And if not, he hasn't ruled out continuing his education in law school or through pursuit of a Master of Business Administration degree.

Anthony says he sees himself as a kind of jack-of-all-trades and he's been told you can do just about anything with either a law degree or an MBA.

"I want to keep my options open," he said.

Looking ahead, he thinks a law degree with an undergraduate degree in journalism could be the perfect blend.

Anthony says he was particularly drawn to journalism because of his interest in a wide range of other occupations.

"I'd like to know how it feels to be a plumber or an electrician, or a judge or the president," he said. "Journalism lets you see what it's like to do all of those things."

As he began his summer internship this week, for example, he learned about what it takes to sell goods from a roadside stand. That story also is included in today's issue, on Page 3A.

Anthony is not sure how

his final year of undergraduate study will start in the fall.

His junior year ended, as it did for most students, with an extended spring break that turned into online classes.

At first he remained at his home in Aumsville and later returned to Eugene to finish out the year.

While the online classes seemed easier, it was harder to stay motivated to do what Anthony said seemed to be "busy work" for most classes.

He also is on the staff of the Daily Emerald, the University of Oregon's student newspaper.

He has worked as an associate editor on the opinion desk and has been a writer for the newspaper's Arts & Culture section. Anthony also has participated in the University of Oregon's Catalyst Journalism Project, which combines investigative reporting and a search for solutions to important issues throughout the state. The stories produced through the project are then pitched to the Eugene Weekly for possible publication, Anthony said.

After completing his internship with the Herald, he will return home to spend time with his family and friends. He hopes to be returning to Eugene for in-person classes in the fall. If the university campus remains closed, he will stay at home and attend classes online.

Anthony said that while he was hoping to spend the summer closer to his family, he is happy to be working for the Herald in Baker City.

"I'm excited for the opportunity and the chance to check out a new place," he said. "It feels like a chance to grow up a little bit."

Oregon prepares for phase 2

By Sara Cline
Associated Press

SALEM — Oregon's phase 2 coronavirus reopening plan will begin Friday and includes opening pools, zoos, museums and movie theaters, allowing recreational sports, loosening current restaurant restrictions and expanding outdoor gatherings to 100 people.

Gov. Kate Brown held a news conference late Wednesday morning with state health leaders to discuss the next steps to ease restrictions from her stay-at-home directives.

"This cautious approach is keeping many vulnerable Oregonians safe during the pandemic," Brown said. "I know it is frustrating that reopening has to move slowly. I know our economy has taken an extraordinary blow. But, let me be clear, this cautious approach is saving lives all across the entire state of Oregon."

Thirty-one counties are eligible to apply for phase 2, including Baker, Deschutes, Jackson and Lane, according to the state's reopening dashboard.

The governor's office is reviewing the applications and will announce today which counties can move forward to phase 2.

Currently, gathering limits are set at 25 people. Under phase 2, gatherings will be increased to 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors, said Gina Zejdlik, Brown's deputy chief of staff.

Larger indoor gatherings with up to 250 people are allowed in other settings, including churches, if the space is big enough to allow attendees to social distance.

PHASE 2

Continued from Page 1A

Bennett said Baker County exceeds the state's criteria for moving from phase 1, which started May 15, to phase 2. These include the ability to do contact tracing in the case of positive tests, and sufficient health care capacity to accommodate a 20% increase in suspected or confirmed COVID-19 hospitalizations.

As of Wednesday, Baker County had had a single confirmed case. It was reported on May 6.

Bennett said although he is pleased that the governor's phase 2 guidelines are almost identical to what the county requested in a proposal last month, county officials are still waiting for detailed guidelines for festivals and similar events.

Those are crucial, he said, because organizers of Miners Jubilee and other events are waiting to decide whether to go ahead with those events.

"We are also opening up more sectors in a limited way, like movie theaters and churches can open and expand their occupancy as long as they are in strict compliance with physical distancing, sanitation and occupancy limitation," Zejdlik said.

Following updated guidance, zoos, museums and outdoor gardens, will be

allowed to open statewide.

Recreational noncontact sports, such as pickleball and tennis, will begin again. In addition, collegiate athletes will return to training by mid-June, said Gov. Brown.

Restaurants, which are currently required to close at 10 p.m., will be allowed to stay open until midnight in counties approved for phase 2.

The governor is also shifting from requiring people to work remotely to "strongly recommending" it. In order to enter phase 2, counties must meet Oregon's safety and preparedness prerequisites for reopening and have been in phase 1 for at least 21 days.

State epidemiologist Dean Sidelinger said during Wednesday's press conference that phase 2 is likely to be in effect "for several months."

As of Wednesday, at least 159 people in Oregon have died from the coronavirus and 4,399 people in the state have tested positive for the disease. Pat Allen, the director of the Oregon Health Authority, said the state currently has the fourth-lowest COVID-19 infection rate in the nation.

"I think it is safe to say our situation is stable," Allen said. "Oregonians have been doing what they need to do, to keep themselves, their loved ones and their neighbors safe."

For most, the coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

Man convicted of sex abuse awaits new trial

■ Joshua Dean Baker was convicted in 2018 by a 10-2 jury vote, but the U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled that nonunanimous verdicts are unconstitutional

By Chris Collins
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A Halfway man who has spent the past two years in prison is back in the Baker County Jail awaiting a new trial on charges of sexually abusing his daughter.

Joshua Dean Baker, 43, was found guilty by a 10-2 jury vote in February 2018 of three counts of first-degree sexual abuse.

Baker County Circuit Court Judge Greg Baxter, who has since retired, sentenced Baker to three consecutive 75-month prison terms on each of the counts, for a total mandatory minimum sentence of 18 years and nine months.

Because of the nonunanimous jury verdict, which the U.S. Supreme Court banned as unconstitutional in an April decision, Baker's case was returned to the lower court for retrial. (Oregon was the last state to use the nonunanimous verdict system when the Supreme Court ruled.)

On May 22 the Oregon Court of Appeals issued an order reversing Baker's conviction and remanded the case back to Baker County Circuit Court.

As part of the order, Baker agreed to withdraw his appeal of other issues that came up during his trial. Baker's attorney, Rob Raschio of Canyon City, filed an appeal of his client's conviction on April 10, 2018.

Throughout Baker's February 2018 trial, Raschio repeatedly asked Baxter to require a unanimous verdict, as Raschio maintained was Baker's constitutional right.

Baxter continually denied Raschio's request, agreeing with then-District Attorney Matt Shirlcliff's argument that "Under current Oregon law (in February 2018) as well as United States Supreme Court precedent, the Defendant is not entitled to the unanimity requirement."

Shirlcliff maintained at trial, and Baxter agreed, that at the time in Oregon, a 10-2 verdict was allowed to convict on a charge of first-degree sexual abuse, a Class B felony.

That all changed this April.

And last week, the Oregon Supreme Court and the Oregon Court of Appeals began sending nonunanimous jury verdicts on 10-2 or 11-1 decisions back to the lower courts for retrial.

District Attorney Greg Baxter, the retired judge's son, said Baker's case was one of two convictions with nonunanimous jury votes that have been returned to Baker County. The other is a drug case.

"For those cases, they will just go back to day one as far as negotiations or a trial," Baxter said. "It's as though the first one never happened."

On May 28, Joshua Baker was transferred from the Snake River Correctional Institution at Ontario to the Baker County Jail. Baker made his first court appearance before now-Judge Shirlcliff on Monday.

Gov. Kate Brown appointed Shirlcliff as Baker County Circuit Court judge on Nov. 1, 2019, to replace the retiring Judge Baxter. (The governor then appointed the retired judge's son, Greg Baxter, to fill Shirlcliff's vacant role as district attorney.)

On Tuesday, Shirlcliff recused himself from serving as judge in further proceedings in Baker's case because of his conflict.

Baker appeared in court Wednesday morning before Judge Lung S. Hung of Malheur County. Hung denied Raschio's motion on Baker's behalf that his client be released on his own recognizance. Hung set bail at \$150,000, court records state. Baker may be released after posting 10% of that amount, \$15,000.

Baker is scheduled to appear in court next at 8 a.m. Wednesday, July 1, before Judge Erin Landis of Union County.

State plans more virus tests in care homes

By Fedor Zarkhin
The Oregonian/OregonLive

The state apparently has a plan in the works to test broad swaths of residents and staff in senior care homes and expects to release more information on it this week.

Yet details remain elusive.

Oregon will be "expanding" its existing guidelines for senior care home testing, state officials said in a statement

Monday, but declined to say more other than they will provide "updates as soon as they are available."

In contrast, Washington state health leaders last week mandated that all consenting residents and all nursing home staff get tested by June 12 and promised to provide them with the necessary tests free of charge.

See Tests/Page 6A

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