

Baker City Herald

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IN THIS EDITION:

Local • Outdoors • TV

\$1.50



In **OUTDOORS**, 1B
Enjoying
'lesser'
mountains

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Mary Stiglich of Baker City.

Local, 3A

Members of the Baker County Narcotics Enforcement Team spent this week issuing citations to people known to have outstanding warrants and working to curtail problems at a house just a block east of Brooklyn Primary School known for criminal activity.

BRIEFING

Hells Canyon Dam road access limited

OXBOW — Driving access across Hells Canyon Dam will be limited Aug. 3-6 while Idaho Power Company crews do maintenance on the dam about 21 miles north of Oxbow, at the Oregon/Idaho border.

On Aug. 3 and 4, drivers will be able to cross the dam only between 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. PDT. Crews will be removing large beams called stop logs and moving them to a storage area. Stop logs control water flow through the dam during maintenance work. Pedestrians will be able to cross the dam during the vehicle closure. On Aug. 5 and 6, drivers planning to cross the dam should expect delays of up to 45 minutes.

WEATHER

Today

90 / 50



Sunny

Sunday

95 / 57



Sunny

Monday

89 / 50



Sunny

The space below is for a postage label for issues that are mailed.

Schools likely to start online

By Chris Collins
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It's official. Baker students will return to their studies on Sept. 8, the day after Labor Day. What form those studies will take, however, is yet to be decided. The Baker School Board agreed in a special noon meeting Thursday to approve Superintendent

Mark Witty's plan to add four days of training to help staff members learn more about the District's new technology system and recently approved English/language arts curriculum. They'll also be preparing for hygiene and social distancing protocols aimed at keeping the staff and students safe from the coronavirus when in-person instruction resumes.

That probably won't be when school starts Sept. 8, however, Witty said. He alerted the Board Thursday that despite the extra training days built into the calendar and the delayed start for students, who were originally due to begin classes Aug. 31, in-person classes probably will be delayed. The Board will hear more from

Witty on the issue during another special meeting set for noon Thursday, Aug. 5, on how to proceed in light of the requirements for offering in-person classes that Gov. Kate Brown announced on Tuesday. Those could make it difficult for Baker to offer in-person classes, especially for grades 4-12.

See **Schools**/Page 5A

Baker City's Water Use Rises Along With The Temperature



Lisa Britton / For the Baker City Herald

Baker City officials have asked residents to voluntarily reduce water use.

City Seeks To Slow Water Consumption

■ City curbs use at public facilities and asks residents to voluntarily cut back

By Samantha O'Conner
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Baker City Public Works Director Michelle Owen is asking residents to use less water during the heat wave. "We're just using a large amount of water and I thought it would be just appropriate to kind of say, hey folks, we need to be thinking about that," Owen said on Thursday. "It's hot and we all want to stay

cool but let's be smart about our water use." Although peak hourly demand earlier this week equated to a daily use of 8.5 million gallons — 4.5 million is a more typical summer day's usage — Owen said the city's water supply is in "pretty good shape." Goodrich Reservoir, the natural lake high in the Elkhorn Mountains that the city uses as a supplement

ary source, is full, holding about 200 million gallons. "I don't have grave concerns over the supply," Owen said. "Goodrich has been filled and we are using some of Goodrich and we are using the well, so we are using a lot of different sources. And we'll continue to do so."

See **Water**/Page 2A

COVID patients seek to curb risk

By Jayson Jacoby
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Alicia Hills has interviewed each of the 29 Baker County residents who have tested positive for COVID-19. And Hills, the nursing supervisor for the Baker County Health Department, said she's been gratified by residents' willingness to try to curb the spread of the virus. "Most people have been very agreeable," Hills said on Friday morning.

See **COVID**/Page 5A

West Nile virus yet to appear

By Jayson Jacoby
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Matt Hutchinson is one of the few people who can say, with conviction, that "it's been a pretty quiet year so far on the virus front." Hutchinson obviously isn't talking about the coronavirus. The virus that occupies much of his attention is West Nile virus, an infection spread to people from mosquitoes.

See **West Nile**/Page 3A



Baker City Public Works Department photo

City's watershed pipeline replacement progressing

By Sam Anthony
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7.4 miles down, 15.9 miles to go. That's the current status of Baker City's long-term project to replace the century-old, leak-prone concrete pipeline that brings water from the Elkhorn Mountains to town. This summer crews are working on the section between Elk Creek and Salmon Creek. The pipeline originated as an open ditch built in the 1860s to supply mines near Auburn. After the city acquired the ditch and its water rights from miners, the city installed concrete pipe. But the pipe sections are just 3 feet long, which means there are thousands of joints, which can leak. A test done in the early 2000s showed that when the pipe is at capacity as much as 22% of the water can be lost to leaks.

The new pipe city crews are installing is made from longer sections of PVC. The project started back in 2009, and is expected to run through 2026. With an average cost of \$750,000 a year, the total cost will likely end up coming out to around \$12 million. The city raised water rates to pay for the project. Because the pipeline is inaccessible in winter and into spring due to snow, work can only be done during summer. But Michelle Owen, the city's public works director, is hopeful that the project will be completed within 6 years. In addition to the mountain line, a steel pipeline installed in 1961 carries water from Goodrich Lake, a source of water during summer, across the valley to town.



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