

Drug team cites several residents

By Chris Collins
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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.

The “warrant sweep” began Monday with the arrest of Matthew John Agar, 41, and Justin Marshall Robinson, 35, who police located near 10th and D streets, Baker City Police Lt. Ty Duby stated in a press release.

Agar was cited and released on a Baker County Justice Court warrant charging him with contempt of court on original charges of second-degree disorderly conduct and second-degree criminal mischief.

Robinson was cited and released on a Baker County Circuit Court warrant charging him with two counts of first-degree forgery.

On Tuesday, narcotics detectives and uniformed officers from the Baker City Police Department and Baker County Parole and Probation

turned their attention to the problem house, located at 1226 Washington Ave.

The house is owned by Gary Kramer. Kramer’s adult son is the only person who should be residing at the home, Duby said.

“The residence had become an ongoing issue of criminal and transient activity over the last six months,” Duby stated in the press release.

Five people described by police as transients were served trespass notices during Tuesday’s operation.

They were Alex Harold Wise, 18; Trevor Heath, 24; Alex Horn, 24; Chad Cox, 39; and Victoria Mclean, 38.

Duby said Mclean also was cited on a warrant charging her with possession of methamphetamine and a charge of allowing her dog to run at large. Police seized the animal because it had been deemed a dangerous dog in a prior case, Duby said.

Wise also was cited and released on a Union County warrant charging him with failure to appear on original charges of first- and second-degree theft.

Mclean, Horn and Mariam Everson Collard, 20, who police

also describe as a transient, all were cited Thursday morning for trespassing at the house at 1226 Washington Ave.

Five other people also were arrested Tuesday during the BCNET operation.

Police contacted Alen Thomas Brown, 20, at The Knights Inn Motel at 2205 Broadway St. He was cited to appear in Baker County Circuit Court on a warrant charging him with possessing methamphetamine.

Jace Taylor Prowell, 29, also was cited and released at the Parole and Probation Office at 3320 K St. on a charge of possession of methamphetamine.

Caleb Colton Flint, 35, was contacted at Cedar and Campbell streets. As of Friday, he remained in custody at the Baker County Jail on a Circuit Court warrant charging him with violating his probation on a charge of first-degree burglary. Flint also was cited on a Justice Court warrant charging him with contempt of court on an original charge of second-degree theft.

Josalynne Voncille Hallett, 20, was cited and released at

the Baker City Police Department on a charge of second-degree disorderly conduct.

And Kleigh Pogue, 25, was cited and released at the police department on a Union County warrant charging her with two counts of failure to appear on original charges of second-degree theft.

Baker City Police Chief Ray Duman said the narcotics enforcement team is trying to keep the transient group moving.

“This house has been a sore in the community,” he said. “A lot of transient people have been showing up and people with warrants congregating there and taking advantage of the property owner.”

Duman said when a group of people like this hole up together they typically use drugs and then police start seeing crime sprees in the community.

“As this continues, we’ll be keeping them moving,” he said of the BCNET operation.

The enforcement team includes members of the Baker City Police Department and the Baker County Sheriff’s Office. The team is supported by the Baker County District Attorney’s Office and Oregon State Police.

Durkee man arrested on sex abuse charges

By Chris Collins
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A Durkee man was arraigned Friday in Baker County Circuit Court on multiple counts of child sexual abuse.

A Baker County Sheriff’s deputy arrested Cecil Allen Sangston, 60, of 36235 Hindman Road, at 4:41 p.m. Thursday. He remained at the Baker County Jail as of Friday afternoon.

A grand jury indicted Sangston on two counts of first-degree unlawful sexual penetration and three counts of first-degree sexual abuse.

The female victim, who was known to Sangston, was younger than 12 when the abuse first began, said

District Attorney Greg Baxter. The state alleges the crimes took place between Jan. 1, 2012, and Dec. 31, 2018, in Baker County.

Because of the victim’s age, if convicted, Sangston would face a mandatory minimum prison sentence of 25 years in prison under Jessica’s Law, Baxter said. Enacted in Oregon in 2006, the law increased the mandatory minimum sentences for those convicted of first-degree rape, sodomy or unlawful penetration of children younger than 12.

The crime of first-degree sexual abuse carries, upon conviction, a mandatory minimum prison sentence of six years and three months.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Forest Service tightens fire restrictions

The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, in response to rising wildfire danger, has imposed more stringent restrictions on campfires and chain saw use.

Phase B of public use restrictions took effect Friday. Campfires are allowed only in fire pits at designated recreation sites such as campgrounds. All flammable material should be cleared 10 feet from the edge of the pit, and the pit should be free of overhanging material. Anyone with a campfire must have a tool that can serve as a shovel and at least one gallon of water. Campfires must be attended at all times and completely extinguished.

Campfires are also allowed in designated wilderness areas, except the Lake Basin of the Eagle Cap Wilderness.

Chain saw use is not allowed during Phase B without a permit.

Motor vehicle travel off developed forest roads and trails is not allowed due to the risk of a vehicle sparking a wildfire in the dry grass and encroaching vegetation. An exception is driving to a campsite within 300 feet of an open road. Motorized travel on roads closed by gates, barricades, berms, rocks, or logs is prohibited.

Baker County Garden Club meets Aug. 5

The Baker County Garden Club will meet Wednesday, Aug. 5, at 10:30 a.m. at the Daugherty home, 995 J St. in Baker City. Please bring auction items and a sack lunch. Social distancing will be practiced.

WEST NILE

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(West Nile virus, quite unlike coronavirus, isn’t transmitted from person to person.)

Hutchinson is manager of the Baker Valley Vector Control District. His job is to control mosquitoes on 200,000 acres, including most of Baker, Bowen and Keating valleys.

Each summer Hutchinson sets out a network of traps to capture mosquitoes so they can be tested for West Nile virus.

In most summers in the past decade or so — 2018 was an anomalous exception — those tests have detected West Nile virus in local mosquitoes starting in July.

Last summer, for instance, the first infected mosquitoes were trapped in Keating Valley on July 9.

Later in the summer, three other “pools” of mosquitoes — a pool consists of 10 to 50 bugs — also tested positive.

In addition, two people who live near Halfway, which is outside the Vector Control District, were infected with West Nile virus.

Both recovered, although



Photo from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Mosquitoes can infect humans with the West Nile virus.

one, Pam Hall-Brisk, suffered severe effects and was in intensive care in a Boise hospital for several days in September.

On average about 20% of people infected with the virus have any symptoms, and in most cases those are minor.

As of Friday, Hutchinson said he has sent 92 pools of mosquitoes to a testing lab at Oregon State University, and none was infected with West Nile virus.

According to the Oregon Health Authority, the virus hasn’t been found in mosquitoes anywhere in Oregon this summer. That’s also unusual, as in most recent summers the virus has been confirmed in mosquitoes in several eastern Oregon counties, such as Malheur and Umatilla, before

the end of July.

Hutchinson said the lack of positive tests is not due to laboratory issues related to the coronavirus pandemic.

He said he has had no trouble having Baker County mosquitoes tested at OSU, and the results are arriving about as quickly as in previous summers.

One factor that might be contributing to the apparent absence of West Nile virus is the relative scarcity of the species of mosquito — culex tarsalis — that most often carries the virus in Baker County.

Hutchinson said culex tarsalis populations have been below average so far this summer. He attributes this to cool weather in June.

Culex tarsalis numbers generally rise during hot spells,

and Hutchinson said he’s been finding more of that species in his traps since temperatures started climbing the past couple weeks.

The sluggish trend is reflected in the number of mosquito pools Hutchinson has mailed to OSU.

So far he has sent 92 pools to the lab. Last year at this time, despite employing the same number of traps, he had already collected 189 pools.

More information about the Vector Control District, including a schedule for spraying to control mosquitoes, is available at www.bvvc.org. To report mosquito infestations call the district at 541-523-1151.

BLM hires manager for the Baker Field Office

By Sam Anthony
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Joe Aragon, an alumnus of Northern Arizona University, is no stranger to high desert areas like Baker County.

He’s worked as a fire engine captain, a firefighting hand crew supervisor, and a vegetation program manager in northern Arizona and California. Aragon is also a certified fire ecologist.

That background made Aragon a natural fit to be the new manager of the Bureau of Land Management’s Baker Field Office.

Aragon, an avid fisherman, will be moving to Baker City with his wife, Kelly, who is studying at Eastern Oregon University to become a nurse practitioner, and their two dogs.

“I really liked being behind the scenes and getting the work done on the ground,” Aragon said. “I’ve learned the more engaged I am, the more gratifying the work becomes.”

The Baker Field Area, part of BLM’s Vale District, includes about half a million acres spread across eight counties in Oregon and southeast Washington.



Aragon

New At The Baker County Library

Patrons can reserve materials in advance online or by calling 541-523-6419. Drive-in hours at 2400 Resort St. are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m.

FICTION

- “1st Case,” James Patterson
- “Deadlock,” Catherine Coulter
- “Robert Ludlum’s the Bourne Evolution,” Brian Freeman
- “Empire of Wild,” Cherie Dimaline
- “Relentless,” R. A. Salvatore

NONFICTION

- “Deadliest Enemy,” Michael T. Osterholm
- “The Hope of Glory,” Jon Meacham
- “Hollywood Park,” Mikel Jollett
- “Unknown Valor,” Martha MacCallum
- “Breath,” James Nestor

DVDS

- “Ash Is the Purest White” (Action)
- “Flint’s Deadly Water” (Documentary)
- “Izzy Gets the (expletive) Across Town” (Comedy)
- “Sonic the Hedgehog” (Family)
- “VFW” (Horror)

Note: Processing of new movies is being delayed due to a disruption of the supply chain for filing materials. Library officials recommend using the catalog to place holds on new materials. They may be able to fill requests by borrowing from Sage partner libraries before local copies are available.



Highland Dr Real Estate:
3120 Highland Dr, Baker City, OR

August 15th, 2020 @ 10 AM
Preview: August 14th, 2020 10AM-6PM

Dream location overlooking the City. This amazing 2.32 acres is a must see. Beautiful custom built home with over 3400 sq/ft. Wonderful floor plan with open kitchen and family room with city views. The kitchen offers a large island and dining area with custom oak cabinets. Along with the living room off the entry there is a large master bedroom with city views, with a large walk in closet and walk in shower. A nice second bedroom and office/bedroom plus a large utility with bathroom on the main level. Lower level offers a large bonus room, bedroom, cold storage. Nice private back yard. Outside you’ll find a fantastic 40 x 50 shop with tack room and storage, plus a 35’ x 47’ covered RV storage. Lots of parking. This is a wonderful property.

TERMS: This property to be sold at LIVE auction on Aug. 15, 2020 at 10:00 am (pst). Sold As-Is, Close in 30days. 5% earnest money day of the auction, non-refundable. 5% buyer’s premium. Seller to provide title insurance & 1/2 of closing doc fees.

* Call Larry with any questions. You do not have to have an agent to participate. All real estate agents must register at least 2 days prior to auction and be present day of auction.

PERSONAL PROPERTY AUCTION TO FOLLOW!

MLS #98772155

DOWN REALTY

Larry Downs

DOWNSAUCTION

Downs Realty and Auctions

208-939-9456