

Local

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

50 YEARS AGO from the Democrat-Herald August 8, 1970

Work crews have been preparing classrooms at the vacant St. Francis Academy this week for occupancy by public school third grade students this fall.

J.R. Evans, 5-J School District superintendent, said today he expects nearly 220 students to occupy the eight classrooms being prepared.

25 YEARS AGO from the Baker City Herald August 8, 1995

Monday morning's rain storm cooled, but didn't extinguish, the Crawfish prescribed natural fire.

Fire experts expect the 295-acre fire to be quiet for the next week to 10 days, but say it could reawaken if hot, dry weather returns this month and persists into September.

10 YEARS AGO from the Baker City Herald August 9, 2010

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's new mercury emissions limits could force Ash Grove Cement Co., one of Baker County's larger private employers, to close the plant near Durkee that employs 116 people.

The EPA's new rules, announced this morning, do not include the subcategory that Ash Grove officials had asked for.

The subcategory, which Rep. Greg Walden, R-Ore., had also endorsed, acknowledges that the limestone Ash Grove processes at the Durkee factory contains higher-than-average amounts of mercury.

ONE YEAR AGO from the Baker City Herald August 9, 2019

Firefighters had an assist from the weather Thursday as they battled four lightning-sparked blazes in Baker City's watershed.

The coolest temperatures in more than two weeks, along with higher humidities and occasional rain, helped crews stifle fires in the section of the Elkhorn Mountains, about 10 miles west of town, where the city obtains its drinking water.

A potent lightning storm Wednesday night ignited the fires. The largest, in the headwaters of Elk Creek near the southern boundary of the 10,000-acre watershed, burned about 5 acres.

The three other fires were all about one-tenth of an acre. Two started near Marble Point, at the watershed's western edge, and the third was near the eastern boundary of the watershed above Washington Gulch.

Firefighters were assisted Thursday by helicopters that dropped water on the Elk Creek fire, said Michelle Owen, the city's public works director.

"The Forest Service responded with resources and got on it right away," Owen said. "It's a little bit scary, but they spent a lot of hours on it. And yes, the weather cooperated. We couldn't have had better weather."

City officials have for decades feared that a major fire in the watershed would foul the streams and springs with ash and mud, forcing the city to build a filtration plant that likely would cost more than \$10 million.

The city adds chlorine to disinfect its water, and since 2014, the year after cryptosporidium in the water sickened hundreds of people, the city has also bombarded the water with UV light to inactivate the microscopic parasite.

OREGON LOTTERY

MEGABUCKS, Aug. 5
3 — 7 — 14 — 27 — 32 — 41
Next jackpot: \$5 million

POWERBALL, Aug. 5
7 — 14 — 17 — 57 — 65 PB 24
Next jackpot: \$158 million

MEGA MILLIONS, Aug. 4
2 — 22 — 30 — 42 — 62 Mega 20
Next jackpot: \$22 million

WIN FOR LIFE, Aug. 5
20 — 36 — 43 — 77

PICK 4, Aug. 6
• 1 p.m.: 4 — 6 — 1 — 6
• 4 p.m.: 7 — 2 — 4 — 8
• 7 p.m.: 4 — 5 — 7 — 7
• 10 p.m.: 0 — 2 — 4 — 8

LUCKY LINES, Aug. 6
2-8-11-14-19-24-27-30
Next jackpot: \$31,000

SENIOR MENUS

- **MONDAY (Aug. 10):** Beef pot roast, parslied red potatoes, carrots, biscuit, pea-and-onion salad, peach crisp
- **TUESDAY (Aug. 11):** Swedish meatballs over fettuccine, mixed vegetables, bread, gelatin with fruit, bread pudding
- **WEDNESDAY (Aug. 12):** Boneless chicken breast with cream gravy, rice pilaf, green beans, bread, carrot-raisin salad, cinnamon rolls
- **THURSDAY (Aug. 13):** Meatloaf, potatoes and gravy, broccoli-blend vegetables, roll, fruit ambrosia, sherbet
- **FRIDAY (AUG. 14):** Baked cod, cup of clam chowder, roll, coleslaw, lemon bar

Luncheon at the Senior Center, 2810 Cedar St., 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; \$4.50 donation (60 and older), \$6.75, under 60. Meals must be picked up; there is no dining on site.

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OBITUARIES

Garland Wright

Baker City, 1924-2020

Garland Earl Wright, 96, of Baker City, died on July 29, 2020, at his home.

At his request, no services will be held. A private inurnment in the Veterans Section at Mount Hope Cemetery will take place soon.

Gar, as he is known, was born on May 25, 1924, at home on Orchard Street in Baker City to Earl and Julia Wright. Earl and Julia had moved from Ione to Baker; Earl worked in the office of the Sumpter Valley Railroad. Gar remembers his father and an uncle getting wood up at Tipton. They would bring it home and split and stack it in the basement. The only problem with that was that come spring, water would often flood that basement, and the firewood would end up getting soaked.

Gar grew up in Baker, attending South Baker Elementary and was in the second class to graduate from the new Baker Middle School. He attended Baker High School, graduating in 1942.

Soon, Gar received a letter from "Uncle Sam." He decided that rather than waiting to be called up, he would enlist in the Army. Gar spent the next three years serving all over the South Pacific, New Guinea, Philippines, and Japan. He was in Tokyo Bay during the signing of the Japanese Instrument of Surrender on the USS Missouri. The Missouri left the next day, but Gar and the remaining liberating forces stayed as a part of the occupying forces. One of their tasks was to clear the Bay and open it up for ship traffic.

Gar was able to be home in Baker for Christmas in 1946 and joined the Navy in April of 1947.

He was stationed in Astoria but then was able to sail the world. He visited many countries around the Mediterranean and the South Pacific. Gar recalls the whole ship being quarantined in Gibraltar. They were close enough to Gibraltar that he could see it was overrun with monkeys. After eight

years in the service, seeing action in WWII and Korea, he finally decided it was time to come home to Baker and settle down.

Gar and his wife adopted a boy, Larry, and a girl, Ginny. The children were educated here in Baker. Gar worked for The Oregon Lumber Co. and then started working for the Post Office as a mail carrier. A Post Office clerk position came open, so he gave up the letter carrier position. He began in the old Post Office and then moved over to the new Post Office in the federal building. Gar worked for the Post Office for 23 years. He also worked for the Baker Fire Department.

Gar lived in many places, including Irrigon, Klamath Falls and Pendleton, but he considers Baker City home.

Fishing was his passion, and the only thing that will stop him from fishing is the wind!

Gar is proud of his four grandchildren scattered from Nevada to Oregon and Seattle — Todd Wright and his wife, Tiffany, Stephanie Wright and her fiancé, Philip, Jodi Hall and her husband, Jeremy, and Seth Bennett. He has numerous great-grandchildren.

Gar is also survived by his daughter, Ginny.

Gar was preceded in death by his parents, Earl and Julia Wright; his brothers, Wendel, Guy and Kenneth; his son, Larry Dean Wright; and his great-granddaughter, Kendrick Wright.

A special thanks to Richard and Cheryl Gushman and Jeff Young for the love and support for Dad.

The family requests no flowers or cards, but if you want to donate, support your local friends and family during this country's current crisis.

To light a candle in memory of Gar or to leave a condolence for his family, go to www.colestributecenter.com

Matthew Coote

La Grande, 1989-2020

Matthew Carter Coote, 31, of La Grande, died on July 10, 2020.

It is anticipated that a celebration of life service will take place on April 10, 2021, at the Becker Family Sale Barn at the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show Grounds in

Union to allow Matthew's friends and family to all share memories and celebrate his life.

Matthew was born on March 17, 1989, at La Grande. A native of the Grande Ronde Valley, Matthew lived all of his short but full life in the same home. From the day he was brought home from the hospital by his parents, John Edward Coote and Anne C. (Verbout) Coote, he was blessed to be raised in a place he truly loved. Whether it was pursuing his passion of farming or playing in the hills and streams that bountifully surround us, Matthew loved the Eastern Oregon way of life.

All who knew Matthew at any stage of his life were met with a kindhearted, gentle soul. Even as a youngster at Island City Elementary, Matthew was always considerate of and a good friend to others. As a youth he participated in all types of sports. Matthew enjoyed the camaraderie sports provided. He cherished his friendships.

His early years found him developing a love for animals. In addition to owning many different pets throughout his life, Matthew enjoyed raising sheep and Registered Angus cattle. He excelled in preparing his animals for 4-H competitions at the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show and Union County Fair, as well as other junior show competitions. Whether it was friends or animals, Matthew always put the needs of others ahead of himself. He was a loyal and loving young man.

Matthew embraced his new blended family at the age of 11 when his father married his second mother, Joni Lequerica. Matthew felt blessed to have two new siblings, Cale and Cali Wetstein. Matthew relished the opportunities to share life with new friends. He was reared in love by all of his family.

After graduating from La Grande High School in 2007, Matthew worked the land he loved making hay and planting crops. He started with Tony Hamann at a young age and worked most



Matthew Coote

of his adult life at Hamann Farms. His passion to farm embodied many of the things that brought him joy. He loved the outdoors and the satisfaction of nurturing the growth of crops. He was skilled at welding and had a good working knowledge of mechanics. He could fix anything at any time.

When work gave way for a moment to play, Matthew could be found enjoying another passion his father had introduced him to in fishing. He became skilled at fly-fishing with encouragement from his mother. Along with friends and his dogs Murphy or Boss by his side, he would hit the rivers, streams and lakes that are abundant in our area. He enjoyed cooking — particularly ribs, brisket and anything that required grilling and smoking. Matthew's good nature was always fun to be around or with.

Matthew will be remembered as always smiling. He always put others at ease with his caring and compassionate nature. At every stage of life he demonstrated an innate ability to connect with others and be a friend.

Matthew is survived by his parents: his father, John Edward Coote and stepmother, Joni Lequerica of La Grande; his mother, Anne (Verbout) Coote of La Grande; his stepsiblings, Cale Wetstein of Orlando, Florida, and Cali Wetstein of Vancouver, Washington; his grandmother, Marilyn Friedrich of Portland; and several aunts, uncles and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his three grandparents, Edward and Francis Coote and Alphonso Verbout.

The Coote family would welcome and appreciate any memories or re-telling of Matthew's stories. Those may be posted online at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com.

Additionally, the family is pursuing the establishment of a memorial scholarship fund through the Union 4-H association. In lieu of flowers, tax-deductible memorial donations can be made to Union County 4-H Association, Memo: Matthew Coote Memorial, 10507 N. McAllister Road, La Grande, OR 97850.

NEWS OF RECORD

FUNERALS PENDING

Walt Saunders: There will be traditional funeral, with military honors, at 10 a.m. Monday, Aug. 10, at the Eagle Valley Cemetery in Richland. Memorial contributions may be made to the Hilary Bonn Benevolent Fund through Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home and Cremation Services, P.O. Box 543, Halfway, OR 97834. Online condolences may be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com

Mary Morin: There will be a graveside service/dedication at 11 a.m. Friday, Aug. 21, at Mount Hope Cemetery in Baker City. Arrangements are under the direction of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Online condolences may be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com

Ken Grafham Sr.: His memorial service initially scheduled for

August has been canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In place of a memorial service, family and friends may watch a video memorial service by going to www.grayswestco.com

Raelene Florene Maddox: Her memorial service will take place Sept. 5 at 11 a.m. at Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel, 1500 Dewey Ave., with Pastor Lennie Spooner of the Baker City Nazarene Church officiating. To light a candle for Raelene, or to leave a condolence for her family, go to www.grayswestco.com

POLICE LOG

Baker City Police
AGGRAVATED FIRST-DEGREE THEFT, SECOND-DEGREE BURGLARY (three counts), SECOND-DEGREE CRIMINAL MISCHIEF and POSSESSION OF BURGLARY TOOLS: Christopher Alan Griffith, 27, of Baker City, 2:24 p.m. Wednesday, at jailed.
SECOND-DEGREE DISORDERLY CONDUCT: Loren Dean Alexander Prevo, 27, of Baker City, 10:38 p.m. Wednesday, at East Street and Auburn Avenue; cited and released.
SECOND-DEGREE CRIMINAL

TRESPASSING: Matthew Wayne Frost, 33, of Baker City, 2:32 a.m. Thursday, on Campbell Street; cited and released.

FAILURE TO APPEAR (Baker County Justice Court warrant and out-of-county warrant): Andrew Jay Culley, 30, of Baker City, 12:17 p.m. Tuesday, on Cedar Street; cited and released.

Baker County Sheriff
SECOND-DEGREE CRIMINAL TRESPASSING (Baker County Justice Court warrant): Adam Troy Shelton, 47, of 2609 14th St., 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, at 14th and A streets; cited and released.

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Dan Justus and Bill Hermann.