



Oregon State Police/ Contributed Photos

Oregon State Police Sr. Trooper Andrew McClay used his patrol SUV to ram a Toyota Camry driven by Logan Clinkenbeard of Missoula, Montana, on Friday afternoon, March 12, when Clinkenbeard was driving the wrong way in the eastbound lanes of Interstate 84 in Baker County.

WRONG WAY

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The incident started just before 2 p.m. on March 12 when OSP dispatch received multiple 911 calls about a car traveling west in the freeway's eastbound lanes at Milepost 342, near

Huntington about 38 miles east of Baker City.

In his report, McClay wrote that he was just passing Milepost 327 in the eastbound lanes when the vehicle, a gray Toyota Camry sedan, "was traveling towards me at a very high rate of speed."

McClay wrote in his report that he "rammed the vehicle to get it off the roadway."

Both Clinkenbeard's car, and the OSP Ford SUV McClay was driving, sustained significant damage from the collision, and both were towed, according to McClay's report.

TROUBLE

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She said workers on Monday, March 8 put plywood over the windows at the emergency department, which is on the ground level. "That's the biggest thing at this point," Swiger-Harrell said in a phone interview on Friday, March 12.

She said the plywood so thoroughly blocks the natural light that it's a perpetual nighttime in the emergency room.

Swiger-Harrell said hospital officials plan to invite local artists to draw or paint murals on the plywood.

Swiger-Harrell moved to Minnesota from Baker City four years ago with her

husband, Aaron Harrell. The couple have two children, a daughter, Trinity, and a son, Teagan.

The family lives in Stillwater, Minnesota, a town on the St. Croix River near the Wisconsin border, about 25 miles from downtown Minneapolis.

Swiger-Harrell said she commutes to the hospital and leaves her car in a parking structure that's part of the hospital complex.

She said she uses an underground walkway to get to the street.

"I feel pretty secure," she said.

The Chauvin trial isn't the first event that has led to tighter security in the emergency room where

Swiger-Harrell works.

Last summer, while the protests and riots were happening nearby, she said she helped treat patients with injuries including gunshots and tear gas inhalation.

The hospital, which is a Level 1 trauma center, is the nearest medical facility to the area where many of the demonstrations happened, Swiger-Harrell said.

She said it was strange to work while National Guard soldiers stood in the emergency department.

The soldiers also traveled with ambulance crews, she said.

Workers erected fencing around the emergency entrance, and there was no damage to the hospital last

summer, Swiger-Harrell said.

Thus far during the trial, with testimony not slated to start until later in March or early in April, downtown Minneapolis has been relatively tranquil, she said.

She said she drove by the Hennepin County Government Center, where the trial is taking place, on Thursday, March 11, and she saw about 10 people holding signs.

Among the bigger effects of last summer's demonstrations were freeway closures, Swiger-Harrell said.

Multiple times when her shift ended around 1 a.m. she had to find an alternate driving route to Stillwater because the freeway she usually follows was closed.

HOSPITALS

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Priscilla Lynn, Saint Alphonsus president and chief nursing officer, said in a press release that the Baker City hospitals recognition results from a team effort.

"This is a direct result of the daily dedication by our colleagues, physicians and clinicians to provide quality, compassionate care in our community," she said.

Jeremy Davis, Grande Ronde's CEO



Lynn

and president, said in a press release it was an honor again to make the list.

"I am honored to work with a dedicated team of 750 people who understand that a strong and independent health care system is crucial to sustaining the quality of life we all enjoy in our small community," Davis said. "An honor like this, when so many of our nation's small and rural hospitals are closing, underscores the importance of our continued strength and support. This is something our entire community can celebrate."

The Chartis Center for Rural Health compiles the annual program to recognize performance among the nation's ru-

ral hospitals based on the results of the Hospital Strength Index, which relies only on public data and uses 36 indicators to assess rural hospitals across eight areas of performance, including market share, quality, outcomes and cost.

Wallowa Memorial Hospital CEO Larry Davy credited the hospital's board, the Wallowa Valley Health Care Foundation and the community.

"Their unwavering support ensures that we have the equipment we need to allow us to continue to add to, and further develop the services that we offer here in Wallowa County," Davy said in a press release.

NEWS OF RECORD

DEATHS

James 'Jim' Romine: 63, a former Halfway resident, died on March 4, 2012, at his home in La Grande. His memorial service will be Friday, April 2 at 1 p.m. at the Pine Valley Presbyterian Church in Halfway. Arrangements are under the direction of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Online condolences can be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

Keldon Gross: 81, of Halfway, died on March 12, 2021, at Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center. A memorial service and celebration of Keldon's life will take place at a later date, with the time and place to be announced. Arrangements are under the direction of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Online condolences can be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

FUNERALS PENDING

Taran Arthur Moothart: There will be a celebration of Taran's life at 2 p.m., Saturday, March 20, 2021, at Harvest Church, 3720 Birch St., in Baker City. Pastor Brad Phillips will officiate. Memorial contributions may be made to the Taran Memorial Fund at Old West Federal Credit Union, 2026 Broadway St., Baker City, OR 97814, or through Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel at 1500 Dewey Ave., Baker City, OR 97814. To leave an online condolence for the family, go to www.grayswestco.com

Tommy G. West: Graveside services will be Wednesday, March 24, at 2 p.m. at Mount Hope Cemetery, with military honors. Those wishing to make memorial contributions in Tommy's memory can direct them to a charity of one's choice through Coles Tribute Center, 1950 Place St., Baker City, OR 97814. To light a candle in memory of Tommy, go to www.colestributecenter.com.

POLICE LOG

Baker City Police Arrests, citations
FAILURE TO APPEAR (Baker County Circuit Court warrant): Jason Lee Edison, 46, Baker City, 5:04 p.m. Sunday, March 14 at Madison and Sixth streets; jailed.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (Baker County Justice Court warrant): Brenda Herbert Winston, 26, Baker City, 11:57 a.m. on Sunday, March 14 in the 1100 block of Campbell Street; cited.

FAILURE TO APPEAR (Union County Circuit Court warrants): Brandy Dawn Arthur, 28, Baker City, 9:16 a.m. on Saturday, March 13; cited and released.

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF INTOXICANTS: Breydon Lloyd Thomas Colvin-Rice, 21, Baker City, 5:30 p.m. on Friday, March 12 in the 2000 block of Seventh St.; cited and released.

Oregon State Police Arrests, citations

FAILURE TO APPEAR (Baker County Circuit Court): Joseph William Palmer, 40, Huntington, 5:17 p.m. on Friday, March 12, on Interstate 84, Milepost 340; cited and released.

Accident report
Saturday, March 13 at 11:07 a.m. on Interstate 84, Milepost 338, OSP Sr. Trooper Andrew McClay responded to the scene where a semi-truck hauling straw bales overturned on a curve, spilling bales of straw into both the eastbound and westbound lanes. The truck was driven by Jose C. Alfaro-Bautista, 30, of Nampa, Idaho. The freeway was closed temporarily while the straw bales were removed.

VACCINE

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Baker County has had 1,977 residents fully vaccinated — 11.7% of the county's 16,800 residents — and another 2,468 people — 14.7% — have received the first of two doses.

(The Johnson & Johnson vaccine requires only one dose. As of Monday, 169 doses of that vaccine had been given in Baker County.)

Baker County's vaccination rate of 2,643 people per 10,000 residents ranks second among Oregon's 36 counties, behind only Wheeler County.

The state's least-populated county, with about 1,440 residents, Wheeler County's vaccination rate is 3,303 per 10,000.

Nancy Staten, director of the Baker County Health Department, said Baker County's vaccination rate is a testament not only to the Health Department, its staff and the volunteers who have worked at the large clinics, but also to the county's partners that also are administering vaccines.

Those include Saint Alphonsus Medical Center-Baker City, St. Luke's Clinic-Eastern Oregon Medical Associates, Pine Eagle Clinic in Halfway, and the pharmacies at Safeway, Albertsons, Bi-Mart and Rite Aid stores in Baker City.

"It's a community-wide effort," Staten said.

Because most of the doses that have administered in Baker County are either the Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, which require two doses, the biweekly clinics that the Health Department has put on at the high school — on Feb. 12 and 26 and March 12 — have been a mixture of people receiving either the first or the second dose, Staten said.

On March 12, about 300 of the 717 doses the Health Department administered were second doses that fully vaccinated the people who received them, she said.

Staten said the Health Department will continue to offer inoculations to county residents who are 65 and older, based on Oregon's eligibility guidelines.

However, with 63.3% of those residents having received either their first dose or both doses, Staten said the number of people in that age range who are on the county's waiting list has shrunk considerably in the past couple weeks.

Staten urges all residents, even those who are younger than 65, to go to the county's website — www.bakercountycovid19.com/ — to have their name added to a waiting list.

She said the county also shares that information on occasion with other vaccination partners when they have available doses.

Staten said some residents are also making appointments to be inoculated at pharmacies, and when county employees call them to set up an appointment, they don't need to make one because they've already received a vaccine at a pharmacy.

Staten said state officials have told her that the county's weekly allotment of doses could increase starting the week of March 29. She said that could lead to a situation where the county has enough doses to start offering vaccinations to people between 45 and 54 who have underlying medical conditions.

So far more than 1,200 county residents younger than 60 have received one or both doses. Many of those people either work for a school district, a childcare provider or a police or fire agency, all groups that have been eligible for vaccines, regardless of age.

Staten said the county has also inoculated people from a variety of age groups following the large clinics at BHS after all the people with appointments have received a vaccine. That's done to avoid wasting a single dose, she said — once a vial of 10 doses is punctured, all the doses have to be used within six hours.

COVID-19 vaccinations in Baker County, by age group, gender

As of Monday, March 15, a total of 4,445 Baker County residents — 26.5% of the population — had received either a first dose, or both doses, of a COVID-19 vaccine. The breakdown by age group and gender:

• **80 AND OLDER:** 773 people

• **75 TO 79:** 517 people

• **70 TO 74:** 821 people

• **65 TO 69:** 703 people

• **60 TO 64:** 365 people

• **50 TO 59:** 462 people

• **40 TO 49:** 352 people

• **30 TO 39:** 286 people

• **20 TO 29:** 140 people

• **19 AND YOUNGER:** 26 people

• **FEMALE** 2,478 people

• **MALE** 1,961 people

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Are you Interested in Teaching Preschool?

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church is hiring a part-time preschool teacher. Candidates with a background in early education and experience working with children are preferred. The position will pay \$20-\$25/hour, depending on experience. Classes run three hours per day Monday-Thursday with additional prep time. Interested candidates need to submit a letter of interest detailing their relevant background and experience along with two current references to St. Stephens Preschool, P.O. Box 1146, Baker City, OR 97814 or email to: st-stephens@qwestoffice.net.

If you or someone you know might be interested in this opportunity you can also visit our YouTube channel to learn more by <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJ2rUNn94FA>.

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