

# Local

## TURNING BACK THE PAGES

### 50 YEARS AGO from the Democrat-Herald March 20, 1971

Vern Jacobson, Baker City manager, was honored last night at a Rotary Club dinner in the Baker Hotel for “ten years of outstanding service to the city of Baker.”

A dinner crowd of 86 gave Jacobson a standing ovation in appreciation for his service to the community.

### 25 YEARS AGO from the Baker City Herald March 20, 1996

A Richland man has filed a petition seeking to recall Baker County Sheriff Terry Speelman.

Jim Rix-Anderson filed the recall petition Tuesday. In his statement of reasons why Speelman should be recalled, Rix-Anderson alleges the sheriff illegally seized private property and allowed some to be sold to a close friend, and that he altered and ordered others to alter police records.

### 10 YEARS AGO from the Baker City Herald March 21, 2011

Baker City Councilors will decide whether to join a group of more than two dozen Oregon communities to negotiate franchise agreements with Charter Communications.

Creating a consortium would allow up to 26 cities and counties to reach an agreement with the cable television provider, which generated controversy in Baker City last year by closing its local office in late October, and deleting Boise’s NBC affiliate from its channel lineup at the end of November.

Franchise agreements allow cable companies and other utilities to place their cables and other equipment on public rights-of-way.

### ONE YEAR AGO from the Baker City Herald March 21, 2020

With schools, libraries, the YMCA, and other places closed due to the coronavirus, Baker County parents are striving to find ways to keep their children safe and entertained.

Harmony McAlpine, 45, decided not to go back to work and is staying home with her children.

A concern McAlpine shares with other parents is her children’s education.

“We’re more concerned about the school, if they are going to put them online for right now,” she said.

“Them having their education is highly important to me,” said Ashlyn Gazley, 29, who is working with her children to learn at home while Oregon public schools are closed through at least April 28.

Many parents are working on helping their children continue to learn outside of school with math, reading, and other subjects.

And having spring break, which was scheduled to start Monday, extended for at least another month isn’t proving popular with some students.

“I don’t like it, I want to go to school,” Gabby Wright, 11, said Thursday while she and her mom, Kristina Corr, were picking up meals at Baker High School.

Parents are trying to keep their kids entertained as well as educated during this long, unexpected school closure.

Board games are a big hit with some families.

## OREGON LOTTERY

### MEGABUCKS, March 17

11 — 25 — 36 — 37 — 39 — 41  
Next jackpot: \$3.3 million

### POWERBALL, March 17

34 — 38 — 41 — 61 — 62 PB 19  
Next jackpot: \$200 million

### MEGA MILLIONS, March 16

10 — 41 — 46 — 52 — 69 Mega 8  
Next jackpot: \$105 million

### WIN FOR LIFE, March 17

26 — 28 — 35 — 68

### PICK 4, March 18

• 1 p.m.: 6 — 0 — 2 — 8

• 4 p.m.: 2 — 4 — 6 — 1

• 7 p.m.: 9 — 8 — 6 — 4

• 10 p.m.: 0 — 0 — 3 — 9

### LUCKY LINES, March 18

4-5-11-16-17-23-27-31  
Next jackpot: \$46,000

## SENIOR MENUS

- **MONDAY (March 22):** Chicken and gravy over egg noodles, biscuit, Jell-O with fruit, bread pudding
- **TUESDAY (March 23):** Soup and sandwich (turkey sandwich, vegetable beef soup), fruit cup, cookies
- **WEDNESDAY (March 24):** Spaghetti, zucchini and tomatoes, garlic breadsticks, green salad, birthday cake
- **THURSDAY (March 25):** Pork roast, mashed potatoes with gravy, mixed vegetables, beet-and-onion salad, ice cream
- **FRIDAY (March 26):** Boneless chicken breast, baked potato, winter blend vegetables, fruit cup, cinnamon roll

Public 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 for those under 60. Meals must be picked up; no dining on site.

## CONTACT THE HERALD

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## COVID-19

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Over the ensuing two weeks the county had no more than four daily cases (March 8 and 10) and there have been four days with no cases (March 6, 7, 15 and 18).

The county’s positivity rate for the current measuring period is below 5%, as well (the precise figure wasn’t available from the Oregon Health Authority in time for this story).

That’s due in part to a testing clinic that took place during the Baker County Health Department’s most recent largescale vaccination clinic on March 12, County Commissioner Mark Bennett said. More than 100 people were tested during that event, he said.

### Differences between lowest and moderate risk level

The county’s move from lowest to moderate risk on March 12 didn’t have dramatic effects on restaurants, bars and other businesses.

The main change is that restaurants and bars have to close at 11 p.m. rather than midnight, and their indoor dining, though it remains at 50% occupancy, also has a cap of 100 people. But most if not all local restaurants are small enough that the capacity limit doesn’t affect them.

Moving back to lowest risk could affect youth sporting events, as counties at the lowest risk can have up to 300 people attending outdoor events, instead of 150 people for counties at moderate risk.

For indoor sporting events, the capacity for counties at moderate risk is 50% or 100 total people, while for counties

at lowest risk the only criterion is 50% of occupancy.

### 12th death reported

Although the case rate has declined recently, Baker County did have its 12th COVID-19-related death this week.

The OHA reported on Wednesday that an 81-year-old Baker County man had died on March 11 in a Boise hospital, three days after testing positive.

The man did not have underlying conditions, according to the OHA. Of the 11 other county residents who died after testing positive, 10 had underlying conditions, the agency reported.

### Vaccinations continue to rise

Baker County has vaccinated its residents at a higher rate, per 10,000 residents, than all but one of Oregon’s 35 other counties.

As of Friday, the county had administered the first dose of either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine to 3,169 people, and 2,525 people had either received both doses or the single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which requires only one shot.

The total of 5,694 people means almost 34% of the county’s 16,800 residents are either fully or partially vaccinated.

The vaccination rate of 3,385 per 10,000 residents ranks behind only Wheeler County’s 3,450.

“The Health Department continues, along with our community partners, to vaccinate people as quickly as possible,” Staten said. “We encourage anyone who is interested to get on the list for vaccina-

tions at the Baker County COVID-19 website, www.bakercountycovid19.com or by calling 541-523-0015 or 541-523-8211.”

All residents 18 and older can sign up.

Baker County has exceeded the statewide average in vaccinating residents 65 and older, a group for whom the virus poses a vastly greater risk of death.

Of the 2,353 Oregonians who have died after testing positive for COVID-19, 91% were 60 or older, and 77% were 70 or older.

In Baker County, about 4,716 residents — about 28% of the population — are 65 or older. As of Friday, about 76% of those residents were partially or fully vaccinated.

The breakdown by age range:

- 80 and older, 1,028 people — 89% partially or fully vaccinated

- 75 to 79, 876 people — 79% partially or fully vaccinated

- 70 to 74, 1,264 people — 83% partially or fully vaccinated

- 65 to 69, 1,548 people — 61% partially or fully vaccinated

Bennett said he is scheduled to testify on Monday, March 22 during a public hearing before the Oregon House Subcommittee on COVID-19. He said he’ll be talking about resources counties need to help businesses, and how Baker County is handling vaccinations.

Bennett said he’s grateful for the work county employees and dozens of volunteers have done.

“This has been a tough and tragic year, but we’re working hard as a county,” he said.

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

As of Friday, March 19, a total of 5,694 Baker County residents — 33.9% of the population — had received either a first dose, or both doses, of a COVID-19 vaccine. Most have had either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine, both of which require two doses. A total of 265 doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which requires only one shot, have been administered. The breakdown of doses:

• **80 AND OLDER:** 916 (16% of total)

• **75 TO 79:** 689 (12.1%)

• **70 TO 74:** 1,053 (18.5%)

• **65 TO 69:** 939 (16.5%)

• **60 TO 64:** 433 (7.6%)

• **50 TO 59:** 612 (10.7%)

• **40 TO 49:** 484 (8.5%)

• **30 TO 39:** 353 (6.2%)

• **20 TO 29:** 176 (3.1%)

• **19 AND YOUNGER:** 39 (0.68%)

## BUILDINGS

Continued from Page 1A

The building is owned by Nemece Enterprises LLC.

- 120 Bridge St., \$2,350 to replace the roof.

Loran Joseph said his mother, Linda Joseph, bought the historic home and plans to replace the roof in May to prevent further damage inside before beginning the interior remodel.

“That is the only thing this year,” Loran Joseph said.

The two-story home once housed a brothel, he said.

- 1933 Court Ave., \$2,000 for window installation and interior work.

Owner Andrew Bryan said most of the work allowed under the federal grant has been done.

He said that project has led to other renovations on the building, known as the Pantatorium.

“We had to take out two levels of drop ceilings in order to get to the inside of the facade in order to do the work,” he said. “So it became a little more extensive project.”

- 1829 Main St., \$2,000 to repair windows and skylights.

The building, also known as the

White House, is owned by 5th Street Rental LLC.

- 1705 Main St., \$1,000 to repair concrete sills and decorative features.

This is the Baker Tower, the 10-story former Hotel Baker at the corner of Main Street and Auburn Avenue that is the tallest building east of the Cascades in Oregon.

Owner Patrick Rhea said the money will pay for repairs that aren’t all visible from the ground, including repairing one of the decorative concrete eagle heads.

He said the work will start this spring or summer.

## NURSERY

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Use of the nursery is voluntary, and families qualify through an interview process with the director. Eligible families are identified to have five or more stressors.

The OARN has compiled statistics based on use of relief nurseries. From 2008 to 2010, 99.6% of children in a relief nursery had no maltreatment after engaging in services. From 2014 to 2016, 95% of children had no foster care placements after engaging in relief nursery services.

### The process

After meeting with the Malheur ESD and the Eastern Oregon Early Learning HUB, Mosier and a group of like-minded volunteers helped start the process to establish a relief nursery in Baker County.

The board of directors includes Mosier, Tammie Blessing, Tammy Pierce, Kelli Wright, and Beth Quinn.

They sent an initial inquiry to OARN in October 2019. The next five months involved community planning and assessing local needs.

A letter of intent was sent to OARN in May 2020 and the application was approved in July 2020.

After receiving several grants and donations, Rae-Ann Butler was hired as the program coordinator in October 2020.

Although the relief nursery model serves ages 0 to 5, the Baker Relief Nursery is focusing on ages 0 to 2.

“We’re starting with a modest program with just a few families,” Mosier said.

The board hopes to expand to serving 25 families by the end of 2021.

As a certified relief nursery, the Baker center will be eligible for state funding — but not until its second year.

“This whole first year we don’t have any state funding. It’s all donations and grants,” Mosier said.

The funding is a public-

private partnership. Of the annual operating cost for most relief nurseries, 30% is provided through the Oregon Department of Education, 30% by grants, and 40% by private donations.

By statute, a 25% cash match is required from the local community.

“For every dollar we raise here, we get three dollars from the state,” Mosier said.

The Baker Relief Nursery is eligible to receive up to \$150,000 in funding from the Oregon Department of Education’s Early Learning Division. This means \$37,500 must be raised through donations and grants. The nursery is a nonprofit organization.

### The nursery

Baker Relief Nursery is located at 1925 16th St. It will start with one classroom designed for young children.

“When you’re six months old, your job at school might be learning to sit up,” Mosier said.

Families will also schedule respite time for a baby or tod-

dlar to stay at the nursery.

The classroom teachers will schedule home visits to assess that basic needs are met, and to help connect families with community resources.

The nursery also includes a diaper bank, food bank, and baby clothing bank — all stocked with donated items.

Currently the nursery has an infant class on Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., along with scheduled respite care and home visits.

### How to help

The board of directors has several open positions, including secretary and at-large members.

Other ways to help include volunteering time during the respite hours, or making a donation to support the nursery.

For more information, call 541-239-5054 or email bakerreliefnursery1927@gmail.com.

Monetary donations can be mailed to PO Box 1176, Baker City, OR 97814.

## NEWS OF RECORD

### DEATHS

**Julia Kautz:** 72, of Baker City, died on March 18, 2021, at her home, surrounded by the love of her family. 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

**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.

**Arlene Mae School:** Celebration of her life, with a potluck,

will take place on Saturday, April 24 from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Unity Community Hall. To offer online condolences, go to www.grayswestco.com.

### POLICE LOG

**Baker City Police Arrests, citations**  
FRAUDULENT USE OF A

CREDIT CARD (Baker County Circuit Court warrant): Keyan Wayne Woodcock, 19, Baker City, 5:22 p.m. Thursday, March 18 at Auburn Avenue and Main Street; cited and released.

VIOLATION OF RESTRAINING ORDER: Adam Troy Shelton, 47, 5:51 a.m. Wednesday, March 17 at the Sheriff’s Office; jailed.

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