



Baker County Sheriff's Office/Contributed Photo

A 1998 Ford Ranger pickup truck driven by Craig Monteith, 17, of North Powder, rolled over Tuesday, March 23.

Teen cited for reckless driving in rollover crash on gravel road

By Chris Collins
ccollins@bakercityherald.com

A 17-year-old North Powder boy was cited on a charge of reckless driving after his pickup truck failed to negotiate corners on the graveled McCarty Bridge Road, careened into an embankment and rolled at least twice Tuesday afternoon, March 23.

Craig Monteith was the driver of the 1998 Ford Ranger pickup truck involved in the crash, said Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash.

Monteith was wearing a seatbelt and was not injured.

Ash attributed the cause of the crash to speed.

"He was driving too fast negotiating the corners," Ash said of Monteith. "He was out of control for about 60 yards."

The vehicle came to rest on its top at the side of McCarty Road near Conro Road near North Powder. Ash was dispatched to the crash at about 2 p.m. A Baker City ambulance crew, North Powder quick response unit and the Haines Fire Department also responded.

A passenger in the front seat of the pickup, Aaron Clinkenbeard, 20, of Kennewick, Washington, who was not belted in, remained in the vehicle as it rolled. Clinkenbeard was taken

by ambulance to Saint Alphonsus Medical Center. No information about his condition was available in time for this report.

A third passenger, Natalia Bollerander, 15, of North Powder, who also was wearing a seatbelt, sustained bumps and bruises on her head, Ash said. Her parents picked her up at the scene.

The three also were traveling with a goat.

Ash said they were all lucky to have survived the crash, especially Clinkenbeard.

"The whole passenger side of the roof was caved in," Ash said.

CHIEF

Continued from Page 1A

Since January 2021, Duman's title has changed to interim police administrator because as of Jan. 1 he is no longer a certified police officer. In order to retain that certification, the 62-year-old Duman would be required to return to the police academy. Instead, he will retire.

He was hired in July 2019, as interim police chief, to replace former Chief Dustin Newman, who resigned to accept a position with the Polk County Sheriff's Office.

"After much consideration, I believe Lt. Duby has the ability, commitment and leadership qualities to continue leading our Police Department and address the issues affecting Baker City, its residents and visitors," Cannon stated in a press release.

Duby was hired by the Baker City Police Department in 2019 after retiring from a 25-year career with OSP.

"It is apparent Ray Duman, current administrator of the department, and Lt. Duby worked well together over the

last two years to create a very cohesive department," Cannon said. "They reestablished the Baker County Drug Task Force and consistently looked for ways to strengthen our city ordinances."

Duby's law enforcement career includes service as an OSP patrol trooper, detective, patrol sergeant and criminal division sergeant, in addition to his role as lieutenant with the Baker City Police.

Duby grew up in the Unity area and received an associate degree from Blue Mountain Community

College. He has received his basic, intermediate, advanced and supervisory certificates from the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training. When he's not on the job, he's an avid outdoorsman.

"My goal for the Department is to continue to provide excellent service to this community and maintain accountability of our members," Duby stated in the press release. "I look forward to continuing to work with and lead our dedicated group of officers, detectives and volunteers as their chief."

VACCINE

Continued from Page 1A

Yet as gratifying as the numbers are, Baker County Commissioner Mark Bennett, the county's incident commander throughout the pandemic, said he doesn't believe as many county residents have been vaccinated as the state database, available on OHA's website, shows.

"We aren't there," Bennett said on Tuesday. "We're trying to sort it out. It's intriguing."

Which is not to say that Bennett isn't pleased with the county's progress.

The Baker County Health Department administered 717 doses of vaccine on March 12,

and it will give the second shot to hundreds more this Friday at Baker High School. Because those residents are already counted as partially vaccinated on the OHA database, their second inoculation won't increase the county's total.

The health department has had large vaccination clinics at BHS every other Friday since early February.

But some of the numbers don't add up.

For instance, according to the OHA database, a total of 1,101 people age 80 or older have been partially or fully vaccinated in Baker County.

Yet a spreadsheet that Bennett obtained from the state lists the number of residents

in the county who are 80 and older at 1,028 — 51 fewer than the number of people shown as vaccinated.

Bennett said he doesn't believe the county has vaccinated every one of its residents 80 and older.

Nor is the 80-and-older category the only one with such a discrepancy.

The OHA database shows that 984 residents ages 75 to 79 are partially or fully vaccinated. Yet the spreadsheet pegs the county's population in that age range at 876.

For the age range 70 to 74, the vaccination total is 1,311, but the estimated population is 1,264.

The source of the differ-

ences is not apparent.

Timothy Heider of the OHA wrote in an email to the Herald that information on the agency's website "is provided to us by the local public health authority. We report the figures provided by them."

Bennett pointed out that the health department is not the only vaccine provider in the county.

Saint Alphonsus Medical Center-Baker City, St. Luke's Clinic Eastern Oregon Medical Associates and the Pine Eagle Clinic in Halfway also administer vaccines.

So do the pharmacies at the Albertsons, Safeway and Bi-Mart stores in Baker City.

Baker County's rising vaccination rate has been driven largely in the past week or so by doses of the Pfizer vaccine, according to OHA figures.

From March 15 to March 22, about 64% of the doses administered in the county — 2,049 of 3,199 — were Pfizer, according to the OHA database.

"We'll continue checking people at the doorways and making sure they're healthy."

— Mark Witty, Baker School District superintendent

SCHOOLS

Continued from Page 1A

Staff must still maintain 6 feet of physical distancing, however, "as best they can," Witty said.

The 6-foot distancing also must be maintained when students are eating or when students from different classrooms are passing in hallways between periods. The passing periods will not put students within close proximity for 15 minutes, the guideline for determining whether those who come in close proximity with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 must quarantine or isolate themselves from others, Witty said.

Staff and students also will be required to continue wearing masks.

Witty said the April 12 return to full-time classes will allow a two-week buffer between the March 29 return from spring break and any increase in COVID-19 cases that might result from travel during the week-long vacation.

Nine Baker School District students have tested positive for COVID-19 since classes started in September. None of those students contracted the virus at school, according to the school district and the Baker County Health Department. The most recent case, a middle school student, was reported Feb. 5, and there have been just two student cases since Dec. 9.

There will be no change to the schedule for children in kindergarten through sixth grade, who returned to four days of in-person instruction weekly on Oct. 14.

The secondary level students went back to in-person classes one day per week on Nov. 9, and to two days per week on Jan. 25.

Witty said comprehensive distance learning would remain in place for those who choose not to return to the classroom. The Baker Virtual Academy will continue to operate providing livestreaming classes and Eagle Cap Innovative High School will provide online classes for students to work at their own pace to serve families that make that choice, he said.

While many students choosing the online option have continued to do well in their studies, many will be happy to return to the classrooms full time, Witty said.

"Most kids — including me — do better in person," he said.

The routines for sanitizing surfaces, washing hands and staying home when you're sick that have been established throughout the year will continue to serve the schools well as the secondary students return to full-time classes, Witty said.

"We'll continue checking people at the doorways and making sure they're healthy," he said. "We'll keep doing our routines, and I'm confident that will continue to work."

Witty worked closely with partners across the state, including the governor's office, to push for changes that would allow the schools to return secondary students to more time in the classroom, the press release stated.

"As community risk lowers via greater numbers of vaccinations, we need to rebalance and focus on the social, emotional, and academic needs of our students," Witty stated in the press release.

"I am thrilled that we are now able to plan for our secondary students to have the opportunity to be back in school full time before the end of this school year."

Baker dropping to lowest risk

Baker County will drop from moderate to lowest risk level for COVID-19 spread on Friday, March 26. The county's two-week new case total dropped by 44 to 24. The county reported six new cases on Tuesday, March 23, the most since seven on March 4.

didn't have any numbers or other details.

St. Luke's Eastern Oregon Medical Associates is administering the Moderna vaccine only, Joy Prudek, public relations manager for St. Luke's, wrote in an email to the Herald.

Bennett said the health department doesn't require people at vaccination clinics to prove they live in Baker County, so people from outside the county could be inflating the numbers somewhat.

HARDY

Continued from Page 1A

Hardy said most students at her university grew up in Virginia, and had more knowledge of the local history around the Revolutionary War, Civil War, and civil rights.

"I had a lot of catching up to do," she said. "It was amazing to learn what I didn't know. If you're at these historic sites, you get so many more details than from history books."

She graduated from the University of Mary Washington in 2019 with a degree in historic preservation and music, and a minor in museum studies. That summer she came home to work at the Eltrym Theater, where she'd worked during high school.

In July 2019 she left for a study abroad program in Paris, France. The next month she and her mom, Kelly Hardy, drove across the country from Baker City to Fredericksburg.

"I've done that trip many, many times," Gracie said.

She began her internship at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Virginia, that same month.

"They have the capacity to do huge programs," she said. "I gained experience there I couldn't get anywhere else."

That internship ended in December 2019. Although she'd hoped to be hired as an assistant, budget cuts eliminated all the assistant positions.

So she worked as a substitute teacher

"The thing I like about Baker, that I didn't find anywhere else, is the sense of community."

— Gracie Hardy

for a while, then got hired at a children's museum in Richmond, Virginia.

"I worked there for one week and then COVID hit and we got shut down," she said. And, in her words, "COVID dragged on."

"For the first time I couldn't visit my family whenever I wanted," she said.

Finally, in August 2020 she and her boyfriend, Paul King, came home to visit.

Her mom showed her the job opening at the Baker Heritage Museum.

And then she ran into Terry McQuisten, the Museum's director, who also told her about the job opening.

"I said 'Terry, I'm not moving back to Baker,'" Hardy said.

She and King returned to Richmond, and he encouraged her to at least apply for the museum job.

So she applied. And she was offered the job.

She and King moved to Baker City in January 2021.

"The thing I like about Baker, that I didn't find anywhere else, is the sense of community," she said. "And I like going to the grocery store and seeing people I know."

See the current issue of GO! magazine, included with today's issue, about new exhibits at the Baker Heritage Museum.

MARCH into SAVINGS

\$11.97

Colorful Bird Blend

\$8.97

Audubon Songbird Multi-Bird Blend

\$8.97

Ornate Energy Blend

\$17.97

Southern City Bird Feeder

\$6.97

2-Cube White Bark Seed Feeder

\$3.97

Squirrel Snack Cake

\$22.97

Old Fashioned Seed

\$11.97

Cherry Valley

Try the SHIP TO STORE feature at millershomecenter.com

3815 Pocahontas Road, Baker City 541-523-6404

3109 May Lane, La Grande 541-963-3113

BRINGING QUALITY PRODUCTS AT AFFORDABLE PRICING TO EASTERN OREGON