

# Baker City Herald

June 5, 2021

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Local • Outdoors • Sports • TV

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QUICK HITS

**Good Day Wish To A Subscriber**

A special good day to Herald subscriber Craig Laeger of Baker City.

**Local, 2A**

After more than a year, children will once again gather for storytime with Missy Grammon from the Baker County Library.

**Sports, 5A**

PORTLAND — The Denver Nuggets were undaunted, even when down 14 points in the third quarter and facing an antagonistic Portland crowd.

Nikola Jokic had 36 points and the Nuggets eliminated the Portland Trail Blazers in six games with a 126-115 victory Thursday night, June 3.

BRIEFING

**Red Cross plans blood drive in Baker on June 14**

The American Red Cross has scheduled a blood drive for Monday, June 14, from noon to 6 p.m. at the Nazarene Church, 1250 Hughes Lane in Baker City. Call Myrna Evans at 541-523-5368, or go online to redcrossblood.org, to schedule an appointment.

Blood donors will not be required to wear a mask if they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, but they will need to bring an immunization card if they want to go without a mask.

WEATHER

**Today**

72 / 37



Sunny

**Sunday**

72 / 37



Mostly sunny

**Monday**

74 / 40



Mostly sunny

The space below is for a postage label for issues that are mailed.

**Spencer Shirtcliff, BHS Class of 2020, And His Brother Payton, Class of 2021, Talk About How Pandemic Affected Their Senior Years**

## One Pandemic, Two Graduates



Shirtcliff Family/Contributed Photo

The Shirtcliff family at a Baker High School football game in April 2021. From left, Beth, Spencer, Payton and Matt.

By Jayson Jacoby  
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Spencer Shirtcliff lost his senior prom and his graduation ceremony and his final high school baseball season to COVID-19, but he concedes things might have turned out even worse.

He could have been his brother.

Spencer, 19, glances at Payton, who's 18 months younger and, more important in this case, one year behind

at Baker High School.

Although Spencer laments the larceny that the virus committed on the last term of his senior year, in the spring of 2020, he has greater sympathy for Payton and the BHS Class of 2021.

"I felt really bad for you," Spencer said to Payton on the warm, breezy evening of Monday, May 31 in the shady backyard of the Shirtcliff family's Baker City home, five days before Payton's 18th birthday

and six days before he was set to receive his diploma.

"We had some normal for our senior year," Spencer said to Payton. "You had none."

Payton considers this. And although he acknowledges that his brother has a point, Payton also feels that, comparatively speaking, he fared better than some of the younger students at Baker High.

See **Brothers**/Page 3A

## Testing clinic draws 18

By Jayson Jacoby and Samantha O'Conner  
Baker City Herald

Baker County's first COVID-19 testing clinic since early January brought 18 people to a parking lot across from the Baker County Health Department on Thursday, June 3.

County officials have been focusing since winter on vaccinating residents. But a recent drop in the number of residents being tested for the virus has officials worried about a rise in the test positivity rate pushing the county into a higher risk level, with more stringent restrictions on businesses and events.

Test positivity rate is one criterion the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) uses to set risk levels. The other is the number of cases.

Jason Yencopal, the county's emergency management director, said he appreciated the people who took the free test on Thursday.

As of Friday, he didn't know whether any of the tests was positive.

See **Testing**/Page 3A

## Grad speaker has been with students for all 13 years

By Jayson Jacoby  
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

As Nicole Sullivan stands at the lectern Sunday afternoon and gives the Baker High School commencement address, she'll remember when some of the faces gazing up at her looked quite different.



Sullivan

Faces that had yet to lose a single baby tooth.

Faces several years from a first blemish of acne.

Faces that revealed the nervousness of children who have never been in a classroom.

Sullivan has an unusually close relationship with many of the seniors who will receive their diplomas on Sunday.

She taught some of them as kindergartners in 2008, when she was a student teacher in the Baker School District.

See **Graduation**/Page 2A

## Byway makes an early debut

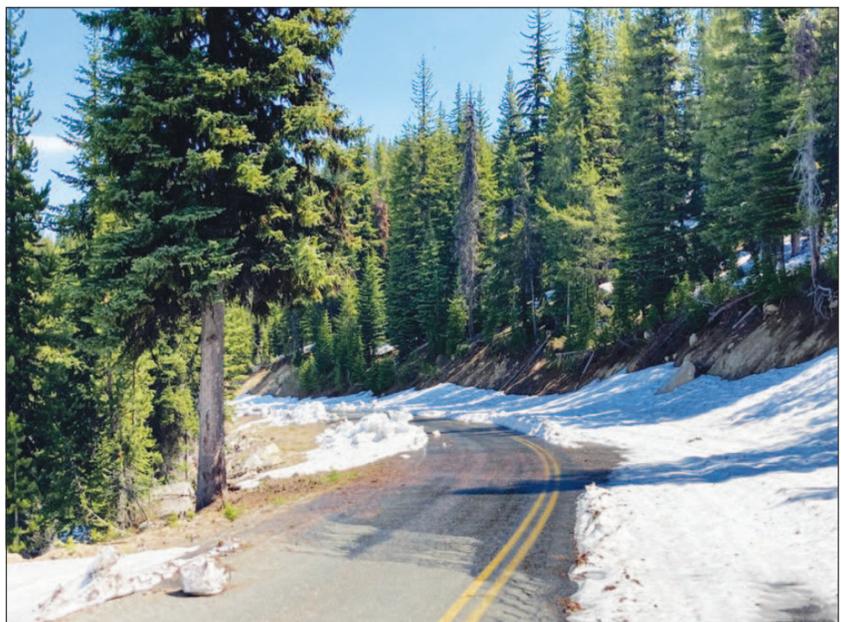
■ A crew from Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort plowed enough snow to open one lane of the popular paved route, usually closed until late June

By Jayson Jacoby  
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The Elkhorn Drive scenic byway is a 106-mile loop, but by late spring in most years just a few sections of the paved road, the total distance little longer than a football field, prevent drivers from making the full trip.

This would have been one of those years.

Until a crew from Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort got involved.



Peter Johnson/Contributed Photo

See **Byway**/Page 6A One lane is open through snowdrifts on the Elkhorn Drive Byway.



TODAY  
Issue 11, 12 pages

Classified.....2B-4B  
Comics.....5B  
Community News....3A

Crossword.....2B & 4B  
Dear Abby.....6B  
Horoscope.....3B & 4B

Jayson Jacoby.....4A  
News of Record.....2A  
Obituaries.....2A

Opinion.....4A  
Outdoors.....1B  
Senior Menus.....2A

Sports.....5A & 6A  
Turning Backs.....2A  
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TUESDAY — BAKER HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2021 GRADUATION