

FIREWORKS!
CELEBRATING THE
FOURTH OF JULY
IN NORTHEAST OREGON

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MAGAZINE
JULY 5, 2021

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Baker City Herald

July 1, 2021

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IN THIS EDITION: Local • Business & AgLife • Go! magazine **\$1.50**

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscribers David and Julie Mespelt of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Alexandra Colton receives \$2,500 scholarship from P.E.O. Sisterhood

Chapter AX of the P.E.O. Sisterhood has awarded Alexandra Colton of North Powder a \$2,500 Oregon Scholar Award from the Oregon State Chapter of P.E.O. This award grants monies for tuition and fees to women pursuing a degree at an accredited Oregon college or university. The applicant must have junior, senior, or graduate level status.

Colton is in her final year at Oregon State University, pursuing a degree in Veterinary Medicine and specializing in large animal veterinary studies. Her emphasis is on Food Production Medicine. Colton has received P.E.O. grants every year since graduating from high school.

Haines Fire District board meets July 12

HAINES — The Haines Fire Protection District will have its monthly board of directors meeting July 12 at 6 p.m. at the main station in Haines. All citizens of the district are welcome to attend.

WEATHER

Today
95 / 56

Mostly sunny

Friday
97 / 54

Sunny

Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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

From mayor to governor?

Baker City Mayor Kerry McQuisten announces bid for Republican nomination in the 2022 primary

By **Jayson Jacoby**
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Less than six months after she became Baker City's mayor, Kerry McQuisten is vying for a higher political office, one in which her constituents would number nearly 4.3 million rather than 10,000.

McQuisten announced her candidacy for Oregon governor on Tuesday, June 29.

McQuisten, 49, will seek the Republican nomination in the May 2022 primary.

"I'm excited to get started," McQuisten said on Tuesday. "It's an adventure."

Although McQuisten said her disdain for current Gov. Kate Brown's policies — McQuisten on her website



McQuisten

describes the Democrat governor's pandemic policies as "draconian lockdowns" — McQuisten, should she win the Republican primary, won't have a chance to unseat Brown.

Brown is precluded from serving another four-year term due to Oregon's term limits law, so Oregonians will elect a new governor in November 2022.

See **Governor** / Page A2

100-Acre Blaze Burned Tuesday Afternoon In Keating Valley



Baker County Sheriff's Office/Contributed Photo

A single-engine air tanker drops fire retardant ahead of a blaze in Keating Valley on Tuesday, June 29.

Fire Threatened Several Homes

No structures damaged in blaze about 18 miles northeast of Baker City

By **Jayson Jacoby**
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A fire sparked by farm equipment on the hottest June day on record in Baker County raced through dry grass and sagebrush in Keating Valley, threatening several homes before crews from multiple agencies, with help from a pair of air tankers, stopped the blaze Tuesday evening, June 29.

"It really took off in 110-degree heat with 20 mile an hour winds behind it," said Buzz Harper, chief of the Keating

Rural Fire Protection District. "In that heat and wind it could have been real bad."

The fire, which was fully lined Tuesday night, burned about 100 acres, Harper said. No homes were damaged.

Crews from the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management were mopping up Wednesday morning, he said.

Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash said the Sheriff's Office gave evacua-

tion notices to about 10 residents as a precaution.

Flames came within about 50 yards of one home, Harper said.

The fire was reported to Baker County Dispatch at 2:52 p.m.

Harper said the blaze started in a field near Middle Bridge Road, where a swather was operating. He suspects a disc on the swather hit a rock, causing a spark.

See **Fire** / Page A3

Two New Cameras Slated To Be Installed This Year In Baker County

Cameras keep an eye out for fires

By **Joanna Mann**
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Mountaintop cameras are the newest tool for finding wildfires, and unlike human lookouts, the cameras are on duty all the time.

The hundreds of cameras across the West that make up the Alert Wildfire system are mainly in remote

areas where there aren't people around to watch for wildfire smoke around the clock.

"These cameras are actually posted at places where our radio sites are," said Andy Robertson, manager of the fire dispatch center at the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Vale District. "So there wouldn't

be anybody there. They are definitely a nice tool to have, especially in the very remote places that we have here."

Five of the cameras are in the southeast part of Oregon, but the BLM hopes to install two, and possibly three, cameras this year in Northeastern Oregon, including two in Baker

County, Robertson said.

The planned camera sites are Lookout Mountain in eastern Baker County north of Huntington, Beaver Mountain, east of Dooley Mountain and Highway 245, and Cottonwood Mountain west of Vale.

See **Cameras** / Page A3

Owners pleased by end of COVID limits

By **Samantha O'Conner**
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After more than a year of closures, occupancy limits and other restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Baker City restaurant owners are excited about the end of those limits.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown announced last week that she would cancel executive orders June 30.

"I'm thrilled," said Theresa Perkins, who owns The Little Pig on 10th Street. "I think it's wonderful. I would love to go back to normal. It would be great."

Restaurant and bar owners have endured a variety of restrictions since March 2020. Since Dec. 1, 2020, Oregon has used a county-based risk level system. At times since then, Baker County has been in the extreme risk level, which bans indoor dining in bars and restaurant.

See **COVID** / Page A3

Hottest June day on record

By **Jayson Jacoby**
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An already sizzling June in Baker City etched itself even deeper into the temperature record books on the month's penultimate day.

The temperature crested at 103 degrees on Tuesday, June 29 at the Baker City Airport.

That's the hottest temperature ever recorded during the month at the airport, where records date to 1943.

The previous record was 102 degrees, on June 17, 1961.

Tuesday was the second straight triple-digit day at the airport, following the 100-degree high on Monday, June 28.

Both temperatures set new daily records.

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SATURDAY — SWEET WIFE BAKERY READY TO OPEN IN NEW LOCATION