

Baker City Herald

September 4, 2021

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In OUTDOORS, B1
Finding the way in the fog

IN THIS EDITION:

Local • Outdoors • Sports • TV

\$1.50

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Iv Townsend of Baker City.

BRIEFING

County seeking volunteers for committees

Baker County is seeking volunteers for the following boards/committees:

- Baker County Cultural Coalition
 - Baker County Planning Commission
 - Fair Board Advisory Committee
 - Early Learning Regional Council
 - Transportation/Traffic Safety Committee
 - Baker County Mental Health Advisory Committee
 - NEOEDD Budget Board
 - Local Public Safety Coordinating Council
- Volunteers must submit a form, which can be found at www.bakercounty.org/commissioners.

Haines Fire District board to meet

The Haines Fire Protection District board will meet Sept. 13 at 7 p.m. at the main station, 616 Cole St. All residents of the district are welcome to attend. COVID-19 safety protocols will be in effect.

WEATHER

Today

86 / 41
Sunny



Sunday

90 / 45
Mostly sunny



Monday

90 / 48
Sunny



Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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

Greenwood pleads, avoids murder trial

By JAYSON JACOBY

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Shawn Quentin Greenwood, the Vale man accused of first-degree murder in the January 2020 fatal shooting of Angela Parrish in Baker City, pleaded no contest to three lesser counts on Friday, Sept. 3 in Baker County Circuit Court.

Five other counts, including first-degree murder, were dismissed, and Greenwood's trial, scheduled to start Sept. 8, was canceled.

Although Greenwood, 50, pleaded no contest rather than guilty, the no contest plea has the same effect as a conviction, Baker County

District Attorney Greg Baxter said.

Judge Matt Shirliff of Baker County Circuit Court sentenced Greenwood to a total of 90 months in prison on the three convictions, which include criminally negligent homicide, a Class B felony, first-degree burglary, a Class A felony, and attempting to elude law enforcement, a Class C felony.

Greenwood will be credited for time already served. He has been in the Baker County Jail since his arrest on Jan. 13, 2020.



Greenwood

None of the three charges for which Greenwood was convicted carries a mandatory minimum sentence, so he will be eligible for a reduction in sentence based on good behavior and other factors.

Baxter issued a press release early Friday afternoon. It reads:

"The Baker County District Attorney's Office offered the plea agreement in this case after it was apparent that many important pieces of evidence would not be available at trial due to the lead police investigator listen-

ing to privileged telephone conversations between the defendant and his attorney. The Parrish family members and the other victim, Nathaniel Brown, supported this decision given that this was the best possible sentence under the circumstances and that Greenwood was willing to accept some responsibility for the crimes he committed."

"The state believed that at trial, that the defense would have focused on the actions of Baker City Police Detective Shannon Regan thereby clouding the evidence concerning the crimes committed by Greenwood. A forensic investigation by the

Department of Justice caused the state to determine that it could not ethically call the detective to testify at trial. Key evidence that she touched was either suppressed or would not have been able to be presented since she could not testify."

Basically, the prosecution was in a position of potentially taking to a jury a murder case without being able to call as a witness the lead detective, or show the jurors key pieces of evidence, or, potentially, calling witnesses who could testify about the collection of that evidence.

See, Plea/A5

HIGH-RISE HOPES



Samantha O'Conner/Baker City Herald

The former Baker House building, at 2330 Fifth St., is being renovated into condominiums.

■ New owner renovating former Baker House into condos

By SAMANTHA O'CONNOR

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The former Baker House building at 2330 Fifth St., near St. Elizabeth Towers, is getting a make-over, inside and out.

Gordon Holman, who bought the three-story building three months ago, plans to turn the structure into six condominiums.

"When I had an opportunity to see the building for the first time, I liked the way the building felt when I walked into the entry way," Holman said. "I thought there were great opportunities despite the fact that we were looking at so much debris, so much clutter."

The renovation will not be an easy or quick process, he emphasized.

The building was constructed in 1939 and has passed through many hands, including being used as a mental health center focusing on addiction and recovery, when it was known as Baker House.

See, Condos/A5

Health officials answer COVID questions

By SAMANTHA O'CONNOR

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Baker County officials had a one-hour virtual town hall Thursday evening, Sept. 2, to discuss the current surge of COVID-19 cases and concerns regarding hospital capacity.

The panel consisted of:

- Dr. Eric Lamb, Baker County public health officer
- Dr. Lily Wittich of St. Luke's Eastern Oregon Medical Associates

• Priscilla Lynn, president and chief nursing officer for Saint Alphonsus Medical Center-Baker City

• Nancy Staten, director of the Baker County Health Department

• Mark Bennett, a Baker County commissioner and the county's incident commander during the pandemic.

The town hall followed a question-and-answer format, with many questions submitted by email prior to the event.

See, Health/A5

Official implores people to talk with contact tracers

By JAYSON JACOBY

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Nancy Staten is imploring Baker County residents who test positive for COVID-19 to help stem the virus, which spread more rapidly here during August than in any other month.

And all they have to do is answer a few questions.

Unfortunately, in Staten's estimation, some people refuse to do so.

And their reluctance to talk to contact tracers is dulling what should be one of the

See, Tracing/A3

West Nile virus found in more mosquitoes

Baker City Herald

Four more groups of mosquitoes trapped in the Keating Valley area, east of Baker City, have tested positive for West Nile virus, the Oregon Health Authority announced Friday morning, Sept. 3.

So far this summer, a total of 19 "pools" of mosquitoes collected in the county have been infected with the virus.

Mosquitoes can transmit the virus to people through bites.

Most people infected with the virus have no symptoms, according to the state health officials, but about 20% will have symptoms such as a fever, headache, body aches, vomiting, diarrhea or a rash.

In rare cases the virus

can be fatal.

Of the four most recent pools of infected mosquitoes — a pool usually consists of 10 to 50 insects — two were collected in a trap in Keating Valley on Aug. 25, and the other two were taken from traps near Keating Valley on Aug. 25 and 26, said Matt Hutchinson, manager of the Baker Valley Vector Control District.

Hutchinson is responsible for controlling mosquitoes in the 200,000-acre district, which includes most of Baker, Keating and Bowen valleys. The district's budget comes from two property tax levies.

The Vector Control District maintains a network of traps across the district.

Mosquitoes from those traps are mailed to a laboratory at Oregon State University, where they're tested for West Nile virus.

Another group of traps is monitored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, as part of a campaign to protect sage grouse, an upland bird that can also be infected with the virus through mosquito bites.

Hutchinson said mosquito populations — including the culex tarsalis species, which is most likely to carry West Nile virus — are dropping in the area due to cooler temperatures and a scarcity of standing water.

But trapping will continue, along with measures

to kill adult mosquitoes and their larvae, as long as necessary, Hutchinson said.

Most of the infected mosquitoes this summer have been trapped in or near Keating Valley. The one exception is a trap about four miles north of Baker City, which also collected infected mosquitoes in early August.

So far this year there have been no cases of people being infected with West Nile virus in Oregon.

The virus has been detected in mosquitoes in five counties — Morrow (21 pools, also one bird); Baker (19 pools); Jackson (three pools); Malheur (two pools); and Umatilla (one pool). The virus also was found in one horse in Klamath County.



TODAY
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INSIDE — MAGAZINE PROFILING THE PENDLETON ROUND-UP