

Baker City Herald

September 9, 2021

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GO! Magazine
Your weekly guide to arts and entertainment events around Northeast Oregon

IN THIS EDITION:

Local • Business & AgLife • Go! magazine **\$1.50**

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber David Justus of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Red Cross plans blood drive in Baker City on Monday, Sept. 13

The American Red Cross has scheduled a blood drive for Monday, Sept. 13, 2021, at the Baker City Nazarene Church, 1250 Hughes Lane, from noon to 6 p.m. To schedule an appointment, call Myrna Evans at 541-523-5368, or go to redcrossblood.org. Donors can still donate after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Please note which vaccine you received.

Fishing time limits lifted in Oregon

With water temperatures dropping, the "hoot owl" restriction that banned fishing after 2 p.m. for some species and some waterways has ended in Oregon.

The restriction was intended to protect salmon, steelhead, trout and sturgeon. Fishing is now allowed for those species from one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset.

Other in-season fishing regulation changes are still in effect including a number of salmon and steelhead closures or special restrictions.

WEATHER

Today

90 / 53
Mostly sunny



Friday

68 / 43
Rain and storms



Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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

FOREST OWNERS' GROUP REVIVED



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald, File, 2019

Caleb Hawkins drills a core sample on a tree at Steve and Mickey Edwardses' property near the Elkhorn Mountains west of Baker City in 2019. Managing private forests is the main goal of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association, which is a local chapter that has recently been revived and expanded to include Baker, Grant, Union and Wallowa counties.

Local chapter of Oregon Small Woodlands Association now includes Baker, Grant, Union and Wallowa counties

By **JAYSON JACOBY**
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Private forest owners in Baker County are reviving an organization

that helps members better manage their timber ground, and this version has expanded its geographic boundaries considerably.

The newly constituted Northeast Oregon chapter of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association covers four counties, said Jacob Putney, extension forester for the Oregon State University Extension Service in Baker and

Grant counties.

Besides those two adjoining counties, the new chapter includes members in Union and Wallowa counties.

"We all share the Blue Mountains, and although there are differences, for the most part the forest types are somewhat similar," Putney said.

See, **Forest** / Page A3

City consults with attorneys on possible suit

City Council voted Aug. 24 to look into legal challenge to governor's vaccine mandate

By **SAMANTHA O'CONNOR**
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Baker City Manager Jon Cannon has been busy over the past week carrying out the City Council's order to look into a possible lawsuit challenging Oregon Gov. Kate Brown's mandate that health care workers be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Councilors voted unanimously during their Aug. 24 meeting to have Cannon investigate the city's possible options.

Councilors heard during that meeting from residents who object to both the vaccine mandate, which also applies to teachers and other school workers, and to the requirement that students wear face masks

while indoors at school.

Councilors discussed options including filing a lawsuit, or joining a lawsuit filed by another city or county.

Cannon said on Tuesday, Sept. 7 that he has been speaking with attorneys.

"I have a couple potentials for them to think about, but I haven't gotten anything that the council has wanted to call a meeting for and talk about," Cannon said.

He said he is gathering information to present to councilors at a future meeting.

The Council's next regular meeting is set for Tuesday, Sept. 14.

Cannon said he has also received many phone calls from city, county and school district officials from across the state who are also interested in possible legal avenues to challenge the governor's executive orders.

"From east to west, north to south, from a lot of different entities," Cannon said.

See, **Lawsuit** / Page A3

No growth on Rock Creek fire

By **JAYSON JACOBY**
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The Rock Creek fire in the Elkhorn Mountains about 13 miles northwest of Baker City is 75% contained, and it has not grown beyond the estimated 60 acres that burned on Aug. 30, the day the blaze was reported.

The 25% of the fire perimeter that lacks control lines is in rocky terrain so steep that it's not accessible, Peter Fargo, public affairs officer for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, said on Tuesday, Sept. 7.

Firefighters will continue to check for hotspots every other day this week, with help from a helicopter, Fargo said.

The Rock Creek Lake trail, No. 1626, remains closed.

The fire was reported about 3 p.m. on Aug. 30 in the upper part of the Rock Creek canyon, a remote section near the center of the Elkhorns about 1 1/4 miles northwest of Rock Creek Lake.

There are no roads within one mile of the fire, and it was too dangerous on the afternoon and evening of Aug.

30 to bring in firefighters by helicopter, fire officials said.

But five airplanes dropped fire retardant, and two helicopters dumped water on the flames that day, the pilots taking advantage of cliffs and rockslides that served as natural fire barriers.

The Rock Creek canyon, which runs roughly north-south, is bordered on the west by cliffs, with the Elkhorn Crest trail running just on the west side of the ridgetop.

See, **Fire** / Page A3

Brown: curtailing school activities could curb COVID

By **GARY A. WARNER**

Oregon Capital Bureau

Schools should cancel or curtail some extracurricular activities to help Oregon maintain what appears to be the beginning of a decline from record high numbers of COVID-19 infections, Gov. Kate Brown said Tuesday, Sept. 7.

Multiple forecasts over the past week showed a peak in the two-month surge of infections driven by the highly contagious delta variant.

Hospitals remain nearly



Brown

full and case reports are still 12 times what they were in early July.

The fragile ebb in the worst of the crisis will be challenged by the flood of school-children returning to class.

"It is with mixed emotions that we are welcoming our kids back to school at this time," said Brown during a Tuesday morning press call.

Brown was joined by health and education officials to announce additional, voluntary efforts to go along

with the mandatory vaccination of school employees and mask mandates for students and staff.

The state will issue School Health Advisories on a regular basis. The first one, announced Tuesday, asks schools to cancel or curtail extracurricular activities through at least Oct. 1.

Back-to-school events should be done online, if possible.

Schools should hold as much activity outdoors as possible, including school meals and physical education classes.

"The safety protocols put in place by your school not only make it safer for everyone, but they also help ensure that our kids actually get to stay in school," said Colt Gill, Oregon Education Department director.

While children can get ill from COVID-19, they rarely get severely sick, Gill said. But they can bring the infections home with them and spread it to at-risk people such as the elderly and immunocompromised.

Brown confirmed her order for mandatory vaccinations, saying that staff who are not

fully vaccinated cannot have contact with students or other school employees.

Dr. Dean Sidelinger, the state's epidemiologist, said the Oregon Health Authority was looking into an 8.8% increase in the number of new COVID-19 infections in Marion County.

The uptick comes as the Oregon State Fair in Salem has just concluded. Brown had ordered that crowded outdoor events have mandatory masking rules, but television reports from the fair showed

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SATURDAY — TRAILHEAD STEWARDSHIP PROJECT'S SUMMER WORK