



Baker City Herald

September 14, 2021

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In SPORTS, A6
Bulldogs cap busy week

IN THIS EDITION:

Local • Home & Living • Sports

\$1.50

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Doug Schwin of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Ribbon cutting planned at new floral business

A ribbon cutting is planned for 1 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 16, at a new business, Baker Floral & Botanicals, 2300 Broadway St. (corner of Broadway and Fourth streets). The event includes refreshments and a raffle drawing for a floral or plant display. Learn more on the shop's Facebook page. The grand opening celebration continues until 5 p.m.

Rummage sale benefits Baker High School Class of 2022

A community rummage sale set for Friday, Sept. 17 and Saturday, Sept. 18 will raise money for the Baker High School Class of 2022 alcohol-free graduation night celebration.

The sale is by donation only. The sale will take place at Leo Adler Field, Clark and D streets, on Sept. 17 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and on Sept. 18 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

People who want to donate items for the sale can drop them off at Leo Adler Field on Wednesday, Sept. 15 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., or on Thursday, Sept. 16 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

WEATHER

Today

78 / 41
Sunny



Wednesday

76 / 32
Partly sunny



Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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

Storm spawns smelly mess



Samantha O'Conner/Baker City Herald

Muddy water pooled at the intersection of Birch Street and Court Avenue on Friday evening, Sept. 10.

Downpour causes mud, manure to flow into eastside neighborhood

By JAYSON JACOBY

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The downpour lasted for less than half an hour but the muddy mess still lingered more than two days later at Kim Nelson's house in east Baker City.

So did the stench.

And the flies.

"It's disgusting," Nelson said on Monday morning, Sept. 13.

A brief but potent deluge in Baker City on Friday evening, Sept. 10 turned streets into streams, created temporary lakes at several intersections and washed a sticky mixture of debris, including livestock manure, down a hillside and into an eastside neighborhood.

Nelson, who lives at 730 Valley Ave., between Plum and Birch streets near the base of Spring Garden Hill, said the smelly stuff washed into her yard and garage.

"We could see it coming down the road," said Nelson, who has lived there for nine years.

She said her son tried to clear catch basins to allow the mucky water to drain, but the volume was too great and the basins too thoroughly clogged.

She said water reached to the door handles of a Camaro that was parked at the curb at her home.

On Monday morning, Nelson said the manure aroma was so intense that she kept her doors and windows closed.

There was also an influx of flies, she said.

Nelson said she is angry because most of the mess flowed into her neighborhood from Thomas and Sharon Oliver's property on the nearby hill, which includes a pasture for cattle that is bare of vegetation.

"There's a lot of people over here that are really frustrated," Nelson said. "We need to do something. We shouldn't have to deal with this, living in town."

Michelle Owen, the city's public works director, said this isn't the first time heavy rain has resulted in mud and manure streaming down the hill

from the Oliver's property and into the neighborhood below.

Owen said city officials have talked with Thomas Oliver, but the conditions that create the problem persist, including a hillside largely devoid of vegetation that could catch some of the debris and lacking terracing that could interrupt the debris flow.

Several years ago the city built a catch basin at the base of the hill, including a 2,300-gallon vault intended to intercept and collect debris flowing off the hill, said Tom Fisk, the city's operations supervisor.

But Friday's downpour overwhelmed the basin, he said, in part because the mud and manure clogged it.

Although the Baker City Airport, about three miles northeast of town, recorded 0.24 of an inch of rain Friday, Fisk said he talked with a couple of people who live in town and have rain gauges. One reported about two-thirds of an inch of rain, the other 1 1/4 inches.

"That's a lot of rain in a hurry," Fisk said.

See, Storm / Page A3

Sheriff: Kill all wolves in pack

Lookout Mountain pack killed another calf last week

By JAYSON JACOBY

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Wolves from the Lookout Mountain pack in eastern Baker County killed a calf in the Lawrence Creek area north

of Durkee last week, according to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).



Ash

Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash is calling on the state agency to kill all the wolves from that pack, citing an "unacceptable" level of depredation on livestock.

Wolves from the pack have killed five head of cattle and injured two others since mid July.

ODFW employees shot and killed two wolf pups from the pack on Aug. 1, but the permit that authorized that also prohibits the killing of the pack's breeding pair.

ODFW biologists believe the pack consists of the breeding pair, two yearlings born in the spring of 2020, and the five remaining pups from this spring's litter of seven, two of which were killed Aug. 1.

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Council to discuss \$1 million in fed aid

By SAMANTHA O'CONNOR

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The Baker City Council on Tuesday evening, Sept. 14 will discuss potential uses of almost \$1.1 million the city has received from the American Rescue Plan Act that President Joe Biden signed into law in March.

That's the first of two payments the city will receive. The second, for the same amount, will arrive in 2022.

Councilors will meet at 7 p.m. at City Hall, 1655 First St.

City Manager Jon Cannon suggests councilors approve a resolution that distributes the first federal payment this way:

- \$250,000 to the fire department
- \$200,000 to the police department
- \$150,000 to the administrative services department
- \$150,000 to the water utility construction department
- \$150,000 to the wastewater utility construction department
- \$133,750 to the administrative services department's contingency fund
- \$75,000 to the fire equipment reserve fund

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Helping Smoky find his way home

By LISA BRITTON

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The Sumpter Valley Railroad has a new mascot, but operators of the historic steam train are hoping it goes home soon.

Crew members found the small stuffed puppy after train rides on the weekend of Aug. 28 and 29.

In an effort to reunite the animal with its owner, Depot Manager Kim Svaty made a post on Facebook:

"This precious much loved puppy was left at our Sumpter Depot...Please help me find his home and much loved kiddo..."

"I just did a random first post and the crew went crazy," Svaty said.

Her son, Jace Svaty, started packing the animal around in his pocket as he went about SVRR business.

Soon the animal's adventures were documented with photos.

"From there it's gone wild," Kim Svaty said.

The first post was shared 89 times.

Since then, the animal — Jace named it Smoky — has

been posed in all sorts of places. Kim continues to post photos on Facebook in the hope that the animal's owner returns to claim it.

In the meantime, Smoky has had quite the adventures.

It rode in the engine of the No. 19 steam engine.

Jace took it on the speeder, which pulls all the fire tools and a water tank behind the train.

Smoky posed on the front of the orange diesel engine called the Great Pumpkin. That photo was accompanied by this post:

"This is the engine we will be using for the Halloween Train, The Great Orange Pumpkin. Maybe my family will come again at Halloween and take me home. Have to say I'm really starting to like it here..."

In the last few weeks, Smoky helped clean out the fire box with Loretta Donnelly, and even experienced a staged robbery by the Gold Rush Bandits. Here's what Smoky said about that — with the help of Kim:

"Ok friends tell me this



Sumpter Valley Railroad/Contributed Photo

Smoky, the stuffed animal that Sumpter Valley Railroad operators hope to reunite with its owner, poses on the No. 19 locomotive.

isn't the coolest thing ever!!! I got to meet the Gold Rush Bandits and even ride on one horse. This was their last run of the season but they are coming back next year. You gotta come meet them

sometime, they are just the best."

Anyone who has information about Smoky's owner is encouraged to call the Sumpter Valley Railroad at 541-894-2268.



TODAY
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THURSDAY — GO! MAGAZINE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE