



In SPORTS, A6

Weiser handles Bulldogs

Baker City Herald

September 21, 2021

Serving Baker County since 1870 • bakercityherald.com

IN THIS EDITION:

Local • Home & Living • Sports

\$1.50

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Marty Lien of Baker City.

Local, A3

PORTLAND — The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest will soon have a new leader. Shaun McKinney will take over as supervisor for the 2.4-million-acre Wallowa-Whitman, which is based in Baker City.

Glenn Casamassa, Pacific Northwest Regional Forester for the U.S. Forest Service, announced Monday, Sept. 20 that McKinney will start his new job in late October.

BRIEFING

Baker City seeking candidates for vacancy on Council

Baker City continues to accept applications from people interested in filling a vacancy on the seven-member City Council. To be eligible, you must be a registered voter who has lived within the city limits for at least 12 months. Applications are available on the city's website, www.bakercity.com. The person appointed would serve the remainder of the term for Lynette Perry, who resigned in August due to health issues. Her term continues through the end of 2022.

Cooking, warming fires allowed in city, but not debris or burn barrels

Baker City continues to prohibit debris burning and burn barrels, but outdoor cooking and warming fires are allowed.

WEATHER

Today

74 / 35
Sunny



Wednesday

75 / 38
Mostly cloudy



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

ODFW kills 3 more Lookout Mountain wolves

By JAYSON JACOBY

jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife employees, firing from a helicopter, shot and killed three wolves from the Lookout Mountain pack in eastern Baker County Friday morning, Sept. 17, including the pack's breeding male.

In addition to the breeding male, ODFW employees killed a yearling male, born in the spring of 2020, and

a five-month-old pup from the pack's spring 2021 litter of seven.

The wolves were killed the day after ODFW announced that the agency intended to kill up to four wolves from the pack, which has killed at least six head of cattle, and injured two others, since mid July.

According to a press release from ODFW, agency employees saw six wolves during the Friday helicopter flight.

The three wolves that were killed were near a dead calf, and on private land. ODFW biologists are investigating to determine whether wolves killed the calf. "Initial indications point to another depredation" by wolves, according to the press release.

ODFW announced on Thursday, Sept. 16 that agency workers intended to kill up to four wolves from pack, including the breeding male. ODFW

is not targeting the pack's breeding female. In addition, four ranchers who have lost cattle to the pack are authorized to kill up to two other wolves total.

ODFW estimates the pack consisted of nine wolves, a count prior to Friday's killing of three wolves.

ODFW employees killed two other pups from the 2021 litter on Aug. 1.

By targeting the breeding

male, ODFW hopes to still allow the breeding female to raise any remaining juveniles. Reducing the number of juveniles the breeding female will need to feed increases the likelihood that some will survive, according to a press release from the agency.

The group Defenders of Wildlife criticized ODFW's decision to kill the wolves.

See, Wolves/Page A3



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

A taste of fall as summer wanes

A little late summer snow still clung to the Wallowa Mountains on Monday morning, Sept. 20 in this view from Baker City that takes in the Baker Tower, at right, and Baker City Hall, left.

By JAYSON JACOBY

jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

The clouds parted only briefly during an autumnal weekend in Baker County, but they revealed a sight not seen on the peaks of the Elkhorn and Wallowa mountains since spring.

New snow. It was just a dusting, and on the Elkhorns, at least, the sight was about as ephemeral as the retreat of the cloak of clouds.

But the view confirmed, along with the chilly temperatures and widespread rain, that summer is nearly over.

The season's final weekend was a preview of fall.

The high temperature at the Baker City Airport on Sunday, Sept. 19 was 58 degrees. It was the coolest day at the airport in almost four months. The last time the high temperature was lower was May 22, when it topped out at 53 degrees.

The average high temperature for Sept. 19 is 72 degrees.

On Friday morning, Sept. 17, the temperature dipped to 25 at the airport, the chilliest since April 21, when the low was 20.

Rain — and snow at the highest elevations — arrived Saturday morning along with a cold front that caused temperatures to tumble. And possibly other things tumbled about, propelled

by the gusty northwest wind.

The heaviest precipitation was mainly confined to the mountains.

The Baker City Airport recorded 0.18 of an inch of rain on Saturday, and 0.01 on Sunday.

As is typical when one season gives way to the next, the weather will continue to fluctuate.

The National Weather Service is forecasting summer-like conditions for the season's final two days and continuing into the first weekend of autumn.

The forecast calls for sunny and dry weather, with temperatures rising into the low 80s for late in the week and into the weekend.

September tops for COVID cases

By JAYSON JACOBY

jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

September has surpassed August as the month with the most COVID-19 cases in Baker County.

The 16 new cases reported on Friday, Sept. 17 pushed the monthly total to 309.

There were 300 cases during August.

The previous monthly record was 196 cases in December 2020.

Ten more cases were reported during the weekend — eight on Saturday, two on Sunday — bringing September's total, through the 19th, to 319.

The weekend total of 10 cases was the fewest in a two-day period since late August, but Nancy Staten, director of the Baker County Health Department, is not convinced the county's record-setting rise in infections is dissipating.

"I wish that we could see a downward trend," Staten said.

She noted that the somewhat lower weekend case totals might reflect a lag in reporting rather than an actual drop.

Case numbers generally have been lower on weekends recently, Staten pointed out.

See, COVID/Page A3



Nancy Staten

Baker man gets prison for COVID aid fraud

By JAYSON JACOBY

jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

A 32-year-old Baker City man who pleaded guilty in June 2021 to receiving a \$145,200 federal COVID-19 relief loan on behalf of a fictitious company and then using the money for personal purposes, including buying a \$49,000 car, was sentenced to 10 months in federal prison on Thursday, Sept. 16.

Jeremy Michael Clawson pleaded guilty on June 8 to one count of theft of public money.

As part of the plea agreement, Clawson also agreed to pay \$125,200 in restitution to the U.S. Treasury.

Prosecutors and Clawson's attorney stipulated a two-year prison term, but they recommended that U.S. District Court Chief Judge Marco A. Hernandez reduce Clawson's federal sentence to

10 months because he is serving a 19-month sentence at the Snake River Correctional Institution in Ontario.

The state prison sentence came after Clawson pleaded guilty on Sept. 29, 2020, in Baker County Circuit Court to attempting to elude a police officer and driving under the influence of intoxicants on Aug. 21, 2020. Baker City Police officer Justin Prevo arrested Clawson at 11:45 p.m. on Aug. 21, 2020, at the intersection of Second Street and Auburn Avenue, according to court records.

Clawson, who was driving the 2016 Dodge Challenger he bought with part of the federal COVID-19 loan, failed to stop and drove south, running through two stop signs.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Secret Service in cooperation with the Small Business Administration

Office of Inspector General and Baker City Police Department. Clawson was prosecuted by Ryan W. Bounds, assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

"This case shows the American people that their law enforcement and Attorney's Office are taking CARES Act fraud seriously," Justin Bourne, resident agent in charge of the Secret Service Portland Resident Office, said in a press release. "This investigation is a prime example of the Secret Service's investigative mission; to protect the United States financial infrastructure. This case illustrates the strong partnership between the Secret Service, U.S. Small Business Administration Office of Inspector General, the Baker City Police Department and the U.S. Attorney's Office."

Clawson's arrest in Baker

City happened 10 days after he deposited \$145,200 from a federal loan into an account at Umpqua Bank that Clawson and his girlfriend had opened.

Clawson received the Economic Injury Disaster Loan through the Small Business Administration (SBA), according to U.S. Attorney Billy J. Williams.

That was one of the financial aid programs included in the CARES Act that Congress passed in late March 2020.

According to court documents, shortly after depositing the \$145,200, Clawson made multiple large cash withdrawals at the drive-thru window of the Umpqua Bank branch in Baker City.

On Aug. 17, 2020, he received a \$49,905 cashier's check from the bank to buy the Dodge Challenger.

Umpqua Bank investigators noted the

unusual activity on Clawson's account and reported it to the SBA.

Federal agents seized the Dodge Challenger and approximately \$50,000 in cash derived from the fraudulent EIDL pursuant to seizure warrants issued by the federal court and voluntary abandonment of funds in third parties' possession.

SBA loan documents showed that the loan was made to benefit Halperin Manufacturing Company in San Diego, California. Though there is no record of any such company, the loan application listed the company's owner and claimed it employed 350 people. Investigators contacted the person listed as the owner, but that person denied owning or being affiliated with any such company.

See, Fraud/Page A3



TODAY
Issue 57, 14 pages

CalendarA2
Classified B4-B6
Comics B7

Community NewsA3
Crossword B5 & B6
Dear Abby B8

HomeB1-B3
HoroscopeB5 & B6
Letters A4

Lottery ResultsA2
News of RecordA3
ObituariesA2

OpinionA4
Sports A5 & A6
Weather B8

THURSDAY — GO! MAGAZINE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE