

# Baker City Herald

October 9, 2021

Serving Baker County since 1870 • bakercityherald.com



In SPORTS, A5

## Baker holds off Tigers

IN THIS EDITION:

Local • Outdoors • Sports • TV

\$1.50

### QUICK HITS

#### Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Ross Fritz of North Powder.

### BRIEFING

#### Fun run/walk set Oct. 16 to benefit BHS cross-country

The inaugural Oktoberfest 5K fun run/walk, a benefit for the Baker High School cross-country teams, is set for Saturday, Oct. 16. The event is in conjunction with Crossroads Carnegie Art Center's drive-thru Oktoberfest dinner and virtual auction that day.

The run/walk will start at 8 a.m. at Central Park, along the Leo Adler Memorial Parkway between Washington and Valley avenues, and end at the Baker County Fairgrounds. At the midway point, along Hughes Lane, participants will pick up as many potatoes as possible and carry them to the finish line, where the spuds will be donated to the Northeast Oregon Compassion Center for its food boxes.

Costumes are encouraged. Registration will start at 7 a.m. at Central Park on the day of the event, or go to <https://one.bidpal.net/21oktoberfest>.

# Living with polio

## ■ Gloria Schott was diagnosed with the disease 75 years ago today

By LISA BRITTON

lbritton@bakercityherald.com

A virus changed Gloria Schott's life.

Not the virus that has so dramatically affected society today, but one of many years ago — a virus that mostly affected children and is now nearly eradicated from the world.

Schott was diagnosed with polio when she was 3 1/2 years old.

"On Oct. 9, it'll be 75 years. I lived instead of died," she said.

Schott was living with her family in Weiser, Idaho. She's heard stories of how her illness began.

"I've been told it was my uncle's birthday and

I wouldn't eat ice cream. Shortly thereafter I started to fall," she said.

Her parents took her to the local doctor.

"He immediately diagnosed me," she said.

And immediately isolated her.

Schott was admitted to St. Luke's Hospital in Boise on Oct. 9, 1946.

Her parents were not allowed to see her. She said her mom got a job at the Table Rock Cafe in Boise, and would come to the hospital after work to peer at her daughter through a crack in the door.

Schott remembers wanting her mother. She would call out: "Mother, mama,



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Gloria Schott on her front porch in Baker City on Oct. 5, 2021. Schott was diagnosed with polio 75 years ago, on Oct. 9, 1946.

where are you? I need you!" "And she was standing right there," she said.

Schott had contracted the type of polio that caused paralysis. When she regained some movement, the hospital staff would put her on the floor and let her explore.

"I did the army crawl," she said.

She distinctly remembers crawling down the hall and into a room filled with patients in iron lungs — a tube-like machine that provided breathing support

for polio patients suffering paralysis of the diaphragm.

"The whole floor was polio," she said.

Schott had heard the voice of a patient through her wall — the voice was deep and raspy, and she referred to it as "my boyfriend."

But when she crawled in there, and lay beneath the iron lung to see the patient's face, she discovered that her "boyfriend" was in fact a teenage girl.

See, **Polio** / Page A3

### COUNTY TO AWARD CONTRACT FOR OPERATING VISITOR CENTER IN BAKER CITY

## Committee gives A. Lakes proposal slight edge

By JAYSON JACOBY

jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

Baker County's Transient Lodging Tax Committee met Thursday morning, Oct. 7, to review the two proposals for operating a visitor center in Baker City, and the committee, which advises the Baker County Board of Commissioners, gave a narrow edge to the proposal from Anthony Lakes Outdoor Recreation Association.

The other proposal is from the Baker County Chamber of Commerce (under the Baker County

Unlimited umbrella), which had the previous visitor center contract.

The Board of Commissioners, who have the final say on awarding the contract, will meet Thursday, Oct. 14 to discuss the committee's recommendation. Two of the three commissioners, Bruce Nichols and Commission Chairman Bill Harvey, attended the committee's meeting Thursday.

The new contract will continue through Jan. 1, 2024.

The previous visitor

services contract, for about \$77,000 per year, expired Aug. 31.

The Chamber of Commerce has continued to operate its visitors center at 490 Campbell St., near the freeway, since.

Money for the contract comes from the tax that guests at motels, bed and breakfasts and other lodging establishments pay.

County commissioners initially were slated to award a new contract in early 2020.

The same two groups — the Chamber and Anthony

Lakes — were the only applicants then as now.

The lodging tax committee, as well as the county's Economic Development Committee, both recommended commissioners award the contract to Anthony Lakes.

But commissioners decided to postpone a decision, and the contract with the Chamber to operate the visitor center was extended several times over the next 20 months or so.

See, **Proposal** / Page A3

### WEATHER

#### Today

60 / 33  
Sunny



#### Sunday

57 / 31  
Rain showers



#### Monday

47 / 25  
Rain showers



Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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

## COVID cases continue to drop

By JAYSON JACOBY

jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

The rate of new COVID-19 cases in Baker County during the first week of October was down by about half compared with the record-setting pace in September.

The percentage of breakthrough cases — infections in people who are fully vaccinated — has more than doubled since mid-September.

But Nancy Staten, director of the Baker County Health Department, pointed out that vaccinated people who do test positive are much less likely to have severe symptoms or to require hospital treatment.

"Vaccine is still our best tool," Staten said on Friday morning, Oct. 8.

For the first seven days of

October, the county reported 51 new cases, an average of 7.3 per day.

September's total was 465 cases, a daily average of 15.5.

The previous records were both set in August, with 300 total cases and an average of almost 10 per day.

After two consecutive record-setting weeks, with 128 cases from Sept. 5-11 and 139 cases from Sept. 12-18, the county's weekly total dropped in two straight weeks, to 86 from Sept. 19-25, and to 69 from Sept. 26-Oct. 2.

With two days left, the current week, Oct. 3-9, was on pace to make it three consecutive weekly declines in total cases.

"It looks better than it did a few weeks ago," Staten said.

During September, 23 of the 30 days had at least 10

cases, including eight days with more than 21 cases.

Two of the first seven days of October had double-digit cases — 10 on Oct. 4, and 18 on Oct. 6.

From the start of the pandemic through Thursday, Oct. 7, Baker County has reported 1,940 cases. That's about 11.5% of the county's population.

### County's 26th and 27th COVID-related deaths

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) reported on Friday afternoon, Oct. 8, that two Baker County residents had died in the past week after testing positive for COVID-19.

A 70-year-old Baker County woman died on Oct. 5, after testing positive on Sept. 23.

The presence of underlying medical conditions hadn't been confirmed.

A 71-year-old man from Baker County died Oct. 4 at Providence St. Mary Medical Center in Walla Walla, Washington. He tested positive on Sept. 21, and had underlying conditions.

The deaths were the 26th and 27th during the pandemic in Baker County, and the first two in October.

### Breakthrough cases

Baker County's rate of infections in fully vaccinated people had been much lower than the statewide average during most of the surge in cases, driven by the more contagious delta variant, that started in late July.

See, **COVID** / Page A3

## Locals win two Main St. awards

Baker City Herald

A local organization's creative way to replace an annual holiday event thwarted by COVID-19 has won statewide recognition.

CASA of Eastern Oregon's Gingerbread Tour in Baker City was named the outstanding promotion during the Oregon Main Street Excellence on Main awards, announced on Thursday, Oct. 7.

And it wasn't the only local winner.

Tom Novak, a Baker City artist, was also awarded as a volunteer for his work with Baker City Downtown, the promotional group he has helped since 2017, including serving, with perfect attendance, on its design committee.

Baker City Downtown nominated both Novak and CASA of Eastern Oregon for their respective awards.

### Gingerbread tour

CASA of Eastern Oregon, a nonprofit that helps represent the interests of children who are in state care, usually sponsors a holiday tour of some of Baker City's historic homes.

But the pandemic prompted CASA to cancel the event in 2020.

As an alternative, CASA invited residents to create gingerbread structures.

See, **Awards** / Page A2

## County discusses use of federal aid

By SAMANTHA O'CONNOR

soconnor@bakercityherald.com

Baker County Commissioners on Wednesday, Oct. 6 approved a general concept for how the county will spend the \$3.13 million it will receive over the next two years from the American Rescue Plan Act.

President Joe Biden signed the COVID-19 aid bill into law in March 2021.

Commissioners didn't discuss specific dollar amounts for any of the projects; those budgeting decisions will be made later. They heard from several county department heads about potential uses for some of the federal money.

Commissioner Mark Bennett said he, along with Christena Cook, the county's administrative service director, and Heidi Martin, the human resource director, have worked with department heads to put together a list of possible projects.

"We believe that the most appropriate thing is to use these funds for long term benefits and enhancement of livability of the county and it's our role as commissioners to also put forward a vision and to use these funds," Bennett said.

See, **County** / Page A3



TODAY  
Issue 65, 12 pages



Calendar.....A2  
Classified..... B2-B4  
Comics..... B5

Community News.....A3  
Crossword.....B2 & B4  
Dear Abby..... B6

Horoscope.....B2 & B4  
Jayson Jacoby.....A4  
News of Record.....A2

Opinion.....A4  
Outdoors.....B1 & B2  
Senior Menus.....A2

Sports.....A5  
Turning Backs.....A2  
Weather..... B6

TUESDAY — LOCAL COWBOY PREPARING FOR NATIONAL FINALS RODEO