

# Baker City Herald

October 16, 2021

Serving Baker County since 1870 • bakercityherald.com



In **SPORTS, A8**  
Baker ties  
La Grande

IN THIS EDITION:

Local • Outdoors • Sports • TV

\$1.50

QUICK HITS

**Good Day Wish To A Subscriber**

A special good day to Herald subscriber Dick Micka of Baker City.

BRIEFING

**Woodland owners planning field tour**

The newly revitalized Northeast Oregon chapter of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association is planning a free field tour at the Defrees Ranch in Sumpter Valley on Oct. 30. Although admission and lunch are free, participants are required to register online at <https://beav.es/> UYC. The link also includes directions to the Defrees ranch and other details.

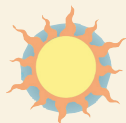
The tour will run from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Members of the Defrees family will talk about their ranch, which includes expanses of second-growth ponderosa pine forests. Other speakers will include Jana Peterson of the Oregon Department of Forestry, Misty Beals from the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, and an employee from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The tour will be outdoors, rain or shine, and includes moderate walking, of about a tenth of a mile, over uneven terrain.

WEATHER

Today

66 / 36  
Sunny



Sunday

66 / 40  
Sunny



Monday

54 / 30  
Partly sunny



Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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



## Old building's new life

Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald

From left, Bob Moon, Shannon Moon and Kyra Rohner look over historic photos and information that local historian Gary Dielman assembled for the Baker Loan and Trust Building at the corner of Main and Broadway streets. The Moons and Rohner, who is Shannon's daughter and Bob's stepdaughter, bought the 110-year-old building in 2018.

**Renovation of 110-year-old downtown structure in Baker City a family affair**

By **JAYSON JACOBY**  
[jjacoby@bakercityherald.com](mailto:jjacoby@bakercityherald.com)

Once they saw the ceiling, they were sure.

The real ceiling, that is. Not the nondescript dropped ceiling of acoustic tiles and fluorescent lights, the sort of anonymous and arguably ugly feature you would expect to see, but scarcely notice, in any of thousands of office buildings.

Once that banal addition had been pulled down, and the 110-year-old, decorative pressed tin ceiling 16 feet above the floor was revealed, Bob and Shannon Moon and Kyra Rohner — Shannon's daughter and Bob's stepdaughter — were

convinced that the first stage of renovation for the historic Baker City building they had bought must be the first floor.

"When we discovered how beautiful the ceilings were, we couldn't do anything but restore this space," Bob Moon, a Baker City attorney, said while sitting in his office in the Baker Loan and Trust building at the southwest corner of Main and Broadway streets.

"To me it's just a work of art."

That revelation changed the renovation schedule the new owners had planned after buying the building in September 2018.

The trio — Kyra is also an attorney, in practice with her stepfather — initially intended to start with the second floor of the building. The structure, with an exterior that features Pleasant Valley tuffstone as well as granite, was assembled, in less than a year, to replace a structure destroyed in a Jan. 26, 1910, fire that devastated half a block on the west side of Main Street between Broadway Street and Washington Avenue.

(A story in the Jan. 27, 1910, issue of The Evening Telegraph, a Portland newspaper, described the fire, which started in the basement of the Weil Mercantile Company's store, as the "most destructive fire Baker City has ever known," with

losses exceeding \$300,000, of which only a bit more than one-third was insured. The loss equates to about \$8.3 million today, adjusted for inflation.)

But once they had seen that tin ceiling, they decided to start with the first floor.

Bob said the office space was "a complete disaster" when they acquired the building.

But the challenge of renovating the structure wasn't nearly as daunting as it would have been if not for fortunate familial connections.

Shannon's son and Kyra's brother, Josh Rohner, is project manager for Sid Johnson & Co. in Baker City.

See, **Renovate** / Page A3

**County to award visitor center contract to Chamber**

By **SAMANTHA O'CONNOR**  
[soconnor@bakercityherald.com](mailto:soconnor@bakercityherald.com)

The Baker County Commissioners voted unanimously on Thursday, Oct. 14 to give notice that they intend to award a new contract to the Baker County Chamber of Commerce to operate a visitor center in Baker City.

The Chamber, operating under the Baker County Unlimited corporation, had the previous contract as well. It operates a visitor center at 490 Campbell St., near Interstate 84.

Commissioners had been scheduled to meet Thursday morning to consider two competing proposals, from the Chamber of Commerce and Anthony Lakes Outdoor Recreation Association.

But early Wednesday afternoon, Peter Johnson, Anthony Lakes general manager, emailed a letter to commissioners announcing that the organization was withdrawing its proposal.

Johnson's letter reads, in part:

"We have been persistent in seeing this process through with the goal of enhancing Baker County Visitor Services to better serve our small communities. Unfortunately, actions and statements over the past few months and specifically this past week by Baker County and its affiliates has moved us to withdraw our proposal for Visitor Services. It has become evident that any contractual or other agreement or relationship with Baker County can only be considered a liability to ALORA and its enterprises."

In a phone interview with the Herald on Wednesday afternoon, Johnson declined to elaborate on the references in the letter to "actions and statements."

See, **County** / Page A3

**Council adds to COVID emergency resolution**

By **SAMANTHA O'CONNOR**  
[soconnor@bakercityherald.com](mailto:soconnor@bakercityherald.com)

The Baker City Council on Tuesday, Oct. 12 approved a resolution that expands the scope of the resolution councilors adopted in March 2020 proclaiming a local "public health, mental health and economic emergency" in the city due to the pandemic.

The revised resolution adds another type of emergency — "access to health care provider."

That addition is related to Oregon Gov. Kate Brown's mandate that health care workers including emergency responders, school employees and volunteers, and many state workers be vaccinated or have an approved medical or religious exception if they're to continue working.

The deadline for some workers, including health care and school workers, is Oct. 18.

See, **COVID** / Page A3

**Veterinary student honored**

**Alexandra Colton of North Powder is one of 18 students to win \$5,000 scholarship**

By **JAYSON JACOBY**  
[jjacoby@bakercityherald.com](mailto:jjacoby@bakercityherald.com)

Even before she was tall enough to look a heifer in the eye, Alexandra Colton knew what she wanted to do when she grew up.

A couple decades later, Colton is close to achieving her goal of becoming a veterinarian.

More specifically, a veterinarian who specializes in keeping beef cattle and dairy cows healthy.

Colton, who grew up on her family's FC Colton Ranch near Wolf Creek, northwest of North Powder, said she just five when she decided on what would be her ideal career.

"As long as I can remember I had

a love for animals, from working with calves on our ranch during calving season," said Colton, a 2014 graduate of Powder Valley High School.

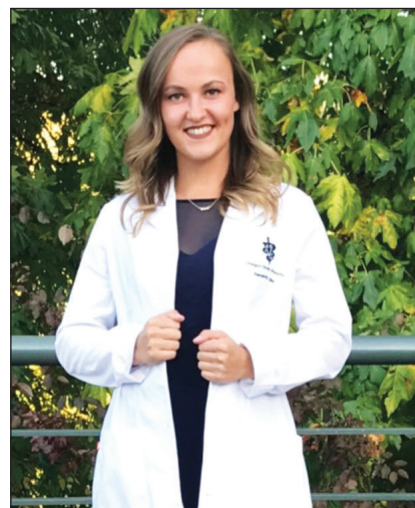
Colton, 25, earned a bachelor's degree in animal sciences at Oregon State University. She's in her fourth and final year at OSU's veterinary school, on pace to graduate in June 2022.

That pace is decidedly hectic.

"I am typically at the hospital anywhere from 10 to 12 hours a day during the week," Colton said.

But Colton recently received a financial boost, and national recognition, when she was picked as one of 18 veterinary students to receive a \$5,000 scholarship from Merck Animal Health.

The company awards the scholarships to students who are interested in beef or dairy veterinary medicine. Recipients were honored during the American Association of Bovine



Alexandra Colton/Contributed Photo

Alexandra Colton, a Powder Valley High School graduate, is in her final year of veterinary school at Oregon State University.

Practitioners (AABP) annual conference Oct. 7-9 in Salt Lake City.

See, **Award** / Page A3



**TODAY**  
Issue 68, 14 pages



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

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

Horoscopes.....B3 & B4  
Jayson Jacoby.....A4  
News of Record.....A2

Obituaries.....A2  
Opinion.....A4  
Outdoors.....B1 & B2

Sports.....A7 & A8  
Turning Backs.....A2  
Weather.....B6