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# Baker City Herald

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QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber John Bean of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Trunk-or-treat event scheduled for Oct. 30 at Christian Church

A trunk-or-treat event is planned for Saturday, Oct. 30 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. in the parking lot at the Baker City Christian Church, 675 Highway 7. There will be free, fun activities for the whole family. Chili, hot dogs and s'mores will be available.

County seeks volunteers to serve on boards

Baker County is seeking volunteers to serve on any of the following: Baker County Planning Commission, Ambulance Service Advisory Committee, Transportation/Traffic Safety Committee, Mental Health Advisory Committee, NE Oregon Economic Development District Budget Board, NE Oregon Economic Development District Board, Local Public Safety Coordinating Council, Baker County Budget Board, Museum Commission. Volunteer forms are available at www.bakercounty.org/commissioners or by emailing Heidi Martin at hmartin@bakercounty.org.

WEATHER

Today 52 / 38 Rain showers

Sunday 50 / 39 Rain showers

Monday 55 / 37 Rain showers

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

## How a baseball star ended up in Baker

Joe Rudi, a three-time World Series winner, will be inducted into the Oakland A's Hall of Fame

By JAYSON JACOBY  
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

If not for a bird he'd never heard of, and also a fogbound Seattle airport and a mechanic who worked Sundays, Joe Rudi might never have ended up in Baker City.

And that, from Rudi's perspective almost half a century later, would have been a pity.

"Baker was a wonderful town to raise our kids," Rudi, 75, said in a phone interview on Oct. 19 from the home in Florida where he and Sharon, his wife of 55 years, live most of the year.

"But when you get into your 70s, shoveling snow is not high on your list," he said with a chuckle.

Prior to the pandemic, the Rudis returned to Baker City during the summer.

Mike Rudi, the oldest of their four children, lives here.

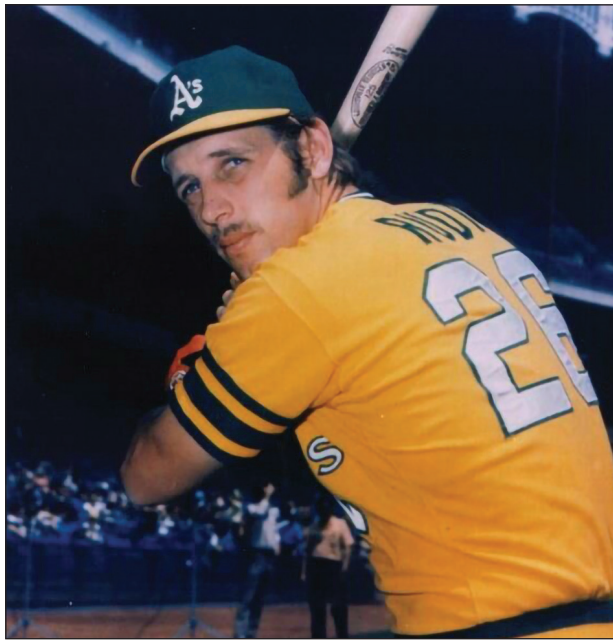
"We love it there," Joe Rudi said. "It'll always be home."

Rudi will have another reason to travel across the country in 2022.

That's when he'll be a member of the third group to be inducted into the Hall of Fame for the Oakland Athletics Major League Baseball franchise.

Rudi, who played left field, was a key player on the Oakland teams that won three consecutive World Series titles — in 1972, 1973 and 1974.

Rudi, who is among the more accomplished athletes to ever live in Baker City, made a leaping catch, against the wall, in the ninth inning of the second game of the 1972 series against Cincinnati, preserving Oakland's 2-1 lead. Earlier in the game,



Joe Rudi was a key player on the Oakland A's teams that won three straight World Series, in 1972, 1973 and 1974.



Ron Riesterer/Oakland Tribune-TNS, File

From left, Mike Epstein, Dave Duncan, Joe Rudi and Sal Bando dump champagne over their heads as the Oakland Athletics celebrate after beating the Cincinnati Reds in the seventh game of the 1972 World Series.

Rudi hit a solo home run.

In the seventh and deciding game of that series, Rudi caught Pete Rose's fly ball that clinched the world championship for the A's.

Rudi hit .333 with four RBI in both the 1973 World Series, when Oakland beat the New York Mets, again in seven games, and in the 1974 Fall Classic when the A's completed their threepeat by beating the Los Angeles Dodgers in five games.

Rudi's individual accolades make for a lengthy list, as well.

He was named to the All-Star team three times, won three straight Gold Gloves (an award given to the best defensive player at each position) and finished second on the Most Valuable Player ballot for the American League in both 1972, when he led the American League in hits with 181, and 1974.

Rudi hit 179 home runs during his 16-year Major League career. He retired after the 1982 season, when he returned to Oakland after playing from 1977-80 for the California Angels, and the

1981 season with the Boston Red Sox.

Rudi said he actually learned in January 2020, just before the pandemic started, that he had been picked to join the Athletics Hall of Fame.

"I was really surprised," Rudi said.

His first phone call was to Sal Bando, his teammate on all three World Series-winning teams who is also part of the Class of 2022 for the Athletics Hall of Fame.

The induction ceremony was postponed in 2020 and again this year.

Rudi said he expects it will be scheduled for September 2022, just before the 50th anniversary of the first of the A's three straight World Series titles.

"I'm looking forward to it," he said.

Becoming acquainted with Baker

Rudi marvels now at the series of events, some of them coincidental, that brought him to Baker City.

He was born in Modesto, California, and grew up in Waterford, a town about 20 miles from Modesto, before his family moved to Modesto in 1961.

In a 1997 keynote speech to the Oregon Community Foundation's annual convention, Rudi talked about how his dad, Oden, who was of Norwegian descent, worked from dawn to dusk as a dairy farmer and never saw his son play baseball, or any other sport, until he made it to the major leagues.

After serving in the Marine Corps, his first professional baseball assignment was to a Class A minor league team in Modesto, an affiliate of the Oakland A's.

Rudi said 14 players from that team went on to play in the major leagues — an almost unheard of success rate for a single minor league squad.

See, Rudi / Page A5

## COVID cases rise again

By JAYSON JACOBY  
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

Baker County's month-long decline in weekly COVID-19 cases ended this week.

From Sunday, Oct. 17 through Thursday, Oct. 21, the county reported 45 new cases.

There were 37 cases for the previous week, Oct. 10-16.

The number of weekly cases had declined in each of the previous four weeks, from the record high of 139 from Sept. 12-18.

Even with this week's rise in cases, October's rate remains well below both those of September and August, when the county's cases, driven, as elsewhere in Oregon and the nation, by the more contagious delta variant, rose rapidly.

September set records for total cases, with 465, and for daily average, at 15.5.

August ranks second in both categories, with 300 total cases and a daily average of almost 10.

October, through the first 21 days, has a total of 137 cases and an average of 6.5 cases per day.

That would rank as the third-highest daily rate during the pandemic. Prior to the surge that started the last week of July, the monthly record was 6.3 cases per day, in December 2020.

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## Future of Lookout wolves unsure

Breeding female could stay in area, or disperse to find another mate

By JAYSON JACOBY  
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

The Lookout Mountain wolf pack, which has killed at least nine head of cattle and injured three others in eastern Baker County since July, has been pared from an estimated 11 wolves to three.

But how the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) killing of eight wolves from the pack over the past two and a half months will affect its behavior in the future can't be forecast with confidence, according to the agency's state wolf coordinator.

"When wolves hunt they are looking for vulnerable prey and relying upon instinct and experience," Roblyn Brown, who works at ODFW's La Grande office, wrote in an email to the Baker City Herald in response to questions about the future of the pack. "We cannot predict what a wild animal will do in every different situation, so I will not predict whether or not the breeding female will depredate in the future."

See, Wolves / Page A3

## Volunteers nourish Backpack Program

By SAMANTHA O'CONNOR  
soconnor@bakercityherald.com

The Baker City Backpack Program, which provides food to Baker School District students during weekends, has continued its efforts during the pandemic.

"We're doing pretty well," said Jess Defrees, volunteer coordinator for the program. "We're building our numbers but we're at around 120 backpacks."

The project, designed to replace meals that students receive at school, was serving about 250 students weekly at the end of the 2020-21 school year this past spring, and Defrees expects the weekly tally will



Contributed Photo

Volunteers gather at the First Presbyterian Church in Baker City on Sept. 30 to fill bags with food for distribution to Baker 5J School District students during weekends. The Backpack Program started in 2010.

continue to increase in the final two months of 2021.

That's been a typical progression in the past, De-

frees said. Students learn about the program when classes start and begin to sign up.

"We're having counselors do that so they can identify families at any point during the year who might benefit," Defrees said.

The main difference last year, she said, is that middle school and high school students didn't start attending in-person classes four days per week until April.

Last school year, volunteers delivered food packages to students at their homes.

But this year the Backpack Program has returned to its usual system of delivering food to each school, where the packages are given to students.

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