



In SPORTS, A6
Beavers are bowl eligible

Baker City Herald

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QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Allen Cook of North Powder.

Sports, A6

NORTH POWDER — The Powder Valley High School football team is on to the Class 1A state semifinals, thanks to a dominant effort in a win over Myrtle Point. The Badgers came away with a 36-0 win over the Bobcats in the quarterfinals at home on Friday, Nov. 12.

“That was the best football game we’ve played all season on both sides of the ball,” head coach Josh Cobb said.

Powder Valley started the game on a high note, scoring on a five-yard quarterback keeper from senior Reece Dixon early in the game.

The win over Myrtle Point sets up a semifinal rematch pitting Powder Valley against St. Paul on Saturday, Nov. 20 at 6 p.m. at Caldera High School in Bend.

BRIEFING

Pet food collection drive underway

Bisnett Insurance is hosting a pet supply drive to benefit Best Friends of Baker through Dec. 17. Donations of kitten and cat food (wet or dry), dog food, and cat litter can be brought to Bisnett at 2001 Main St. (corner of Main Street and Washington Avenue).

WEATHER

Today

43 / 39
Mostly sunny



Wednesday

56 / 37
Mostly cloudy



Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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

‘NOTHING SHORT OF A MIRACLE’

■ Anthony Leggett, 41, in the hospital since Aug. 22 after contracting COVID-19, is happy to be alive and on the verge of returning to his Baker Valley home

By JAYSON JACOBY

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Kara Leggett was awakened from sleep, and to the awful reality of COVID-19, by a thump from the kitchen of her Baker Valley home.

It was early morning, Aug. 22, 2021.

Kara rushed to the kitchen.

She found her husband, Anthony Leggett, sprawled on the floor.

“He was breathing heavily, like he was hyper-ventilating,” said Kara, 41.

She managed to get her husband, who’s also 41, into a chair.

Kara, frightened by Anthony’s labored wheezing, asked him if that was really the only way he could breathe.

It was.

She called her brother-in-law, Dan Kolilis, who is a nurse.

When he saw Anthony’s condition, he told Kara to call for an ambulance.

The ambulance took Anthony to Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Baker City.

Both Kara and Anthony knew they had been infected with the virus.

Kara had felt ill for about a week, her symptoms gradually accumulating.

Anthony, by contrast, felt fine for several days after his wife became sick.

But when the illness commenced, Kara said, it advanced rapidly.

Both Kara and Anthony had recently had their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. But they recognized that their inoculations had come too late to potentially protect them from the virus.

A few hours before Kara was awakened by



Kara Leggett/Contributed Photo

Kara Leggett gets a chance to kiss her husband, Anthony, in the intensive care unit at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Boise.

the thump, she had to help Anthony walk to the bathroom.

He couldn’t get there by himself.

‘Zero chance of survival’

At the hospital in Baker City, doctors tried to stabilize Anthony so he could be flown by Life Flight helicopter to Saint Alphonsus Hospital in Boise.

That’s the destination for most local COVID-19 patients, and in particular those who are severely ill.

Kara said doctors couldn’t intubate Anthony.

His oxygen saturation dropped to 40% — a level that can quickly prove fatal.

Anthony was placed in a tub of ice to combat his fever.

“They told me, he’s a very sick man,” Kara said. “I didn’t realize that was code for he’s probably not going to live.”

Doctors managed to boost Anthony’s oxygen level to a point where he could be flown to Boise.

But before the helicopter rose into the summer sky, Kara said a doctor told her that Anthony had a “zero chance” of surviving.

The doctor also told her he would happily “eat crow” if Anthony proved him wrong, that it would be the best meal he’d ever eaten.

Kara was left to make arrangements to follow her husband to Boise.

In just a couple of hours their life was irrevocably changed.

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Findley, Owens field questions

By SAMANTHA O’CONNOR
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Baker County’s two state legislators, Sen. Lynn Findley and Rep. Mark Owens, fielded questions from local residents during a town hall on Tuesday, Nov. 9 at Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative in Baker City.

Findley, of Vale, and Owens, of Crane, are both Republicans.

Among the questions the lawmakers took was regarding an initiative petition for a law that would, among other things, criminalize, under animal abuse laws, essential parts of the ranching business, including branding and dehorning cattle, and castrating bulls. Even artificial insemination

could be classified as sexual assault of an animal, which is a Class C felony.

Initiative Petition 13 would also in effect outlaw hunting, fishing and trapping.

Findley said promoters are gathering signatures in an attempt to put the matter to Oregon voters.

He called the effort the most fundamental challenge, by a small group, to Oregon business and recreation.

“So, please don’t sign IP13 and tell everybody you know



Owens



Findley

not to sign IP13 because that would be crippling to a guy that runs cows and calves,” Findley said.

Owens predicted the signature-gathering effort will fail this year. But he believes the promoters would not give up.

“It’s dead for now because it didn’t make it but it will be back,” Findley said.

Another question had to do with water rights, and the effects of irrigation on fish habitat.

See, *Questions* / Page A3

Newsroom tax credit will empower local journalism

By HEIDI WRIGHT

Imagine this page was blank except for one question: “What if there were no local reporters?” That was the front-page question posed by our friends at Pamplin Media last week.

It’s a good question, and regardless of how you get local news — by watching TV, listening to local radio or reading a story in the newspaper or on a news organization’s website — it’s not hyperbole to say communities suffer when there is no local news coverage or when independently owned media companies are gobbled up by hedge funds that gut newsrooms.



Wright

And it’s a timely question because there is a bipartisan provision in the federal budget reconciliation bill working its way through Congress that will give media companies a temporary payroll tax credit to hire and retain journalists. Oregon’s Sen. Ron Wyden chairs the Senate Finance Committee that will have a great deal of say on whether this provision makes it through to the finish line.

Wyden is a co-sponsor of the bill written by Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash. Being the son of a prominent journalist, he is a longtime champion of a free press. In a recent interview with the Seattle Times,

Wyden responded to a question about the potential for some to dislike government helping the press. He said, “This is not the government putting its hand on certain types of speech. This is about generally empowering local journalism in a big way. By the way, there are plenty of local journalism outlets that span across the political spectrum, left, right, center, you name it.”

On the House side, the bill was co-authored by Rep. Dan Newhouse, R-Wash., and Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, D-Ariz., and it is strongly supported by two key Oregon representatives — Peter DeFazio and Earl Blumenauer.

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COVID cases take slight rise

By JAYSON JACOBY

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Baker County’s number of new COVID-19 cases took a slight increase last week after dipping the previous week to the lowest total in more than three months.

For the week Nov. 7-13, the county reported 24 new cases.

That compares with 20 cases during the week Oct. 31-Nov. 6, the fewest in any Sunday-through-Saturday period since July 18-24, when there were six cases in the county.

Through the first two weeks of November, the month is on pace to have the lowest case rate since July, when the much more contagious delta variant started contributing to a major spike in infections.

Cases more than tripled during August — from 91 in July to 300, the most, at that point, in any month during the pandemic.

The surge continued in September, with a record 465 cases, and a record six deaths.

Weekly case totals topped 127 on two consecutive weeks during September — 128 from Sept. 5-11, and a record 139 from Sept. 12-18.

Cases have dropped sharply since.

October’s total was 168 cases, down 62% from September, and an average of 5.4 cases per day compared with September’s 15.5.

For the first 14 days of November, the daily average was 3.1 cases per day.

Baker County’s test positivity rate dropped to 4.6% for the week Oct. 31-Nov. 6, the lowest since 1.7% the week of July 11-17.

The test positivity rate increased to 8.8% for the week Nov. 7-13.

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Man kneeling on train tracks hit, killed

By JAYSON JACOBY

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A 30-year-old Baker City man was hit and killed by a freight train Sunday evening, Nov. 14 in what police said appeared to be an intentional act by the man.

Michael Steven Myers-Gabiola died at the scene.

The 200-car freight train, which was traveling at about 40 mph, hit Myers-Gabiola at about 5:29 p.m., said Sgt. Wayne Chastain of the Baker City Police Department.

Chastain said police don’t believe the incident was either accidental or a result of foul play.

He said Myers-Gabiola, based on what the train crew saw, was kneeling on the tracks near a trestle across the Powder River southeast of Wade Williams Park.

Chastain said the train was rounding a corner when the crew saw something on the tracks.

When the crew realized it was a person, they initiated an emergency stop procedure, but the train had no chance to stop quickly enough to avoid hitting Myers-Gabiola.

None of the train crew was hurt, said Robynn Tysver, a spokesperson for Union Pacific Railroad.

The train was stopped for about three hours before being allowed to resume its trip, Chastain said.



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THURSDAY — GO! MAGAZINE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE