

Baker City Herald

November 18, 2021

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GO! Magazine
Your weekly guide to arts and entertainment events around Northeast Oregon

IN THIS EDITION: Local • Business & AgLife • Go! magazine **\$1.50**

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Bill Quigley of Baker City.

Local, A2

The state of Oregon plans to test 150 drinking water systems across the state for the presence of PFAS, or per- and polyfluorinated substances.

BRIEFING

Turkey Trot set for Thanksgiving Day

The 15th-annual Turkey Trot 5K run/walk, a fundraiser to feed the hungry in Baker County through the Northeast Oregon Compassion Center, is set for Thanksgiving morning, Thursday, Nov. 25. The event starts at 9 a.m. at Kicks Sportswear, 1801 Main St. in downtown Baker City. Entry fee is \$15 per person. A link to online registration is available at the Northeast Oregon Compassion Center's Facebook page.

Halfway tree lighting ceremony set for Nov. 28

HALFWAY — The Halfway Christmas tree lighting ceremony is set for Sunday, Nov. 28 at 5:30 p.m. in downtown Halfway.

A holiday festival and bazaar is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 20 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Halfway Lions Club.

WEATHER

Today

42 / 32
Mostly cloudy



Friday

44 / 29
Rain showers



Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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



Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald

Baker City Police Chief Ty Duby said a woman who is homeless placed many items, including shopping carts, on the sidewalk on the east side of Fifth Street between Madison and Baker streets.

Police chief wants limits on homeless camping

By **JAYSON JACOBY**
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Baker City Police Chief Ty Duby plans to ask the City Council to approve an ordinance limiting where, and when, people can camp on public property within the city limits.

Duby said he was prompted to act by a bill that the Oregon Legislature passed earlier this year and that Oregon Gov. Kate Brown signed into law on June 23.

The law — introduced as House Bill 3115 and passed by the Democratic majorities in both the state House and Senate — is based on a 2019 federal court ruling in a Boise case that in effect prohibited cities and counties from making it illegal for people to sleep outdoors in public spaces if the jurisdiction doesn't provide indoor alternatives.

Baker County's two state legislators, Sen. Lynn Findley, R-Vale, and Rep. Mark Owens, R-Crane, both voted against the bill.

The new Oregon law states that cities or counties which have ordinances that regulate "the acts of sitting, lying, sleeping or keeping warm and dry outdoors

on public property that is open to the public must be objectively reasonable as to time, place and manner with regards to persons experiencing homelessness."

The law also states that "A person experiencing homelessness may bring suit for injunctive or declaratory relief to challenge the objective reasonableness of a city or county law."

The law states that "reasonableness shall be determined based on the totality of the circumstances, including, but not limited to, the impact of the law on persons experiencing homelessness."

Baker City has no such ordinance, Duby said.

Nor does the city have an indoor facility for homeless people to stay. That means they can legally camp on public property with no limitations.

However, Duby said he doesn't believe anyone, including homeless people, has a legal right to keep their possessions indefinitely on public property or to block people from using sidewalks, streets or other public rights-of-way.

"The way I look at it, you have the right to sleep

(on public property), but that doesn't mean you can collect all this stuff and have it strewn about on public property and sidewalks," Duby said. "It's not fair to the neighbors, and it's not fair to the city."

To that end, Duby cited a situation on Fifth Street, between Madison and Baker streets, where a homeless woman, and possibly others, have been storing possessions and, at times, living.

Duby said the woman, Kristi Ann Moudy-Koos, 45, initially placed a shopping cart and many other items on private property on the east side of Fifth Street.

That property is south of the former Baker House building, which Gordon Holman bought earlier this year and is renovating into condominiums.

Holman, who had his property surveyed, said he determined that Moudy-Koos' possessions were on property owned by St. Elizabeth Towers, the condominiums just to the east.

He said he had conversations with Moudy-Koos earlier this month and told her that her items were on private property.

She then moved the

items, which include nine shopping carts, plastic tarps and a tattered piece of a "No Trespassing" sign, onto the sidewalk on the east side of Fifth Street, which is a one-way street, limited to northbound travel, in that area.

Duby noted that under Oregon Revised Statute 166.025, a person who "obstructs vehicular or pedestrian traffic on a public way" could be charged with second-degree disorderly conduct.

He said he has also had multiple conversations with Moudy-Koos, including pointing out that local agencies such as New Directions Northwest can offer her assistance.

"She just declines that," Duby said. "She wants to live the way she wants to live."

No one was at the site Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday afternoon.

On Tuesday, city officials placed a notice at the site, citing the state law Duby referenced. He said 72-hour notice is required by state law before the city removes personal items from public property.

See, **Homeless** / Page A3

State offers help to pharmacies

■ Temporary employee program not open to local pharmacies, however

By **JAYSON JACOBY**
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The Oregon Health Authority is offering to pay pharmacies \$35 for each dose of COVID-19 vaccine they give, a move that possibly could help pharmacies hire employees to deal with the growing workload that has resulted in long lines in Baker City and across the state.

The program, which launched this month, also is intended to boost vaccination rates and to ensure that vaccines are available to all residents, said Rudy Owens, a public affairs specialist for the Oregon Health Authority (OHA).

To qualify for the payments, pharmacies must meet certain standards for "vaccine equity," including such things as offering multilingual signing for COVID-19 vaccinations, "expanded vaccine-related counseling aimed at boosting vaccine confidence," and "a plan for ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement to ensure equitable access," according to a flyer from OHA.

See, **Pharmacies** / Page A3

Bob Harrell inducted into Hereford Hall of Fame

By **JAYSON JACOBY**
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Longtime Baker Valley cattle rancher Bob Harrell Jr. has been inducted into the Hereford Hall of Fame in Kansas City, Missouri.

Harrell, who is the fifth generation of his pioneer family to live in the valley, was inducted Oct. 23 during the American Hereford Association's (AHA) annual meeting and conference.

He was one of four to be inducted, along with Jim Courtney of Alzada, Montana, Lawrence Duncane of Wingate, Indiana, and Dale Micheli of Fort Bridger, Wyoming.

See, **Harrell** / Page A3

OTEC to return \$3 million to members

Baker City Herald

Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative (OTEC) will return \$3 million in capital credits to its members in December.

Members whose return is more than \$15, and who don't have a past-due balance, will receive a check in the mail in mid-December.

Capital credits returns of less than \$15 will be credited to the member's account.

Capital credits are similar to the dividends that a for-profit company returns to its shareholders.

With OTEC, a member-

owned cooperative, each member's share of OTEC's earned margins are allocated to a capital credit account each year after the cooperative's operating expenses have been paid.

OTEC, which was formed in 1988, first returned a share of capital credits to its members in 1996. Since then the co-op has returned \$49 million in capital credits.

"Positive financial conditions allowed for us to return these funds to our members," said Heidi Dalton, OTEC's chief financial officer. "Our

financials are strong, and we're proud to demonstrate the power of the cooperative business model through capital credit retirements."

More information about capital credits, including an explanatory video, is available at www.otec.coop/capital-credit.

If you're interested in donating your capital credit check to the OTEC Member Foundation to support local charitable programs, go to www.otec.coop/member-foundation or email communications@otec.coop.

Herald to publish expanded issue Nov. 23; e-edition only on Thanksgiving

In observance of the Thanksgiving holiday, the Baker City Herald will not publish a print edition on Thursday, Nov. 25.

Because the Herald is delivered by mail, an issue published on Thanksgiving couldn't be distributed that day.

"It's a chance to give our employees an opportunity to spend an uninterrupted holiday with their families," said Andrew Cutler, regional editor for the EO Media Group, which owns the Herald.

The Herald will publish an expanded edition, including additional comics and puzzle features as well as the weekly GO! magazine, on Tuesday, Nov. 23.

An e-edition only paper will be published on Thanksgiving and will be available to paid subscribers through the Herald's website, www.bakercityherald.com.

To make sure you are subscribed to the e-edition, follow these steps:

- Go to www.bakercityherald.com/users/forgot, enter your email address and click I'm not a robot, then Reset Password.
 - An email will be sent to you with a link — click on the link.
 - A website will pop up to enter your new password.
 - You're all set.
- For questions or problems, call our customer service line at 800-781-3214.



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SATURDAY — BEST FRIENDS OF BAKER RESCUES LOCAL ANIMALS