



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

Baker City Herald

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

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscribers Amy and Nelson Clarke of Baker City.

Local, A3

With winter just around the corner, Baker County Commissioners discussed the homeless situation in Baker County and the possibility of finding a building where people could stay overnight.

During the Wednesday, Dec. 1 meeting, Commission Chairman Bill Harvey said he called the warming center in La Grande and asked operators there about their center.

BRIEFING

Photos with Santa on Saturday

The Kiwanis Club of Baker City is offering the annual Santa photos event on Saturday, Dec. 4, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Baker County Event Center, 2600 East St. There will be an opportunity to write Santa a letter before or after visiting with the jolly elf.

Cost is \$10 per sitting and includes two 5x7 or three 4x6 prints. Prints are normally available for pickup within 15 minutes. Proceeds from this event support the club's community service projects, which focus on supporting children.

WEATHER

Today

52 / 28
Mostly sunny



Friday

49 / 29
Partly sunny



Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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



Sherrie Kvamme/Contributed Photo

The 2020 lighting contest in Eagle Valley brought in 18 entries, but organizer Joy Cole said many more decorated but didn't enter. She's hoping for even more participants this year.

Lighting up Eagle Valley

■ Christmas lighting contest returns to the valley about 40 miles east of Baker City

By LISA BRITTON
lbritton@bakercityherald.com
RICHLAND — Joy Cole's name fits perfectly with her favorite season.

"I love Christmas," she says. And in the latter part of 2020, she felt like her community needed some cheering up.

"COVID stopped all our activities," Cole said. "I was down because of all the events we couldn't have."

Then, an idea surfaced when she was chatting with a friend.

"We were talking about what we can do to make people feel comfortable and give them something to look forward to," Cole said.

The first idea: a car caravan for Christmas caroling.

"We put the loud speaker and music in the back of a pickup," she said. "It was a lot of fun."

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Sherrie Kvamme/Contributed Photo

Joy Cole is excited about the second-annual Christmas lighting contest in the Eagle Valley east of Baker City. Last year's inaugural event brightened the community during the COVID-19 pandemic, Cole said.

DEQ fines county \$7,400

■ County demolished building containing asbestos without survey or permit

By JAYSON JACOBY and SAMANTHA O'CONNOR
Baker City Herald

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is proposing to fine Baker County \$7,400 for failing to do an asbestos survey before demolishing a mobile home in Halfway that the county acquired through a property tax foreclosure.

Part of the proposed fine involves the county disposing of material that contains asbestos in an unapproved pit on private property near Halfway.

In a Nov. 24 letter to the county's attorney, Kim Mosier, the DEQ's office of compliance and enforcement manager, Kieran O'Donnell, wrote that the violations happened in December 2020 when county workers, using heavy equipment, dismantled the 1970s mobile home at 267 W. Church St. in Halfway.

The home's wallboard material was 60% chrysotile asbestos, according to O'Donnell's letter.

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Two COVID-related deaths in county

By JAYSON JACOBY
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

Two more Baker County residents have died after testing positive for COVID-19, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) reported on Monday, Nov. 29.

The two deaths bring the county's death toll during the pandemic to 33.

An 81-year-old woman from Baker County died Nov. 26 at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Boise. The woman, who had no underlying medical conditions, tested positive on Nov. 19, according to OHA.

A 67-year-old woman who tested positive on Nov. 2 died on Nov. 27, also at Saint Alphonsus in Boise. She also had no underlying medical conditions, according to OHA.

"Every death leaves a hole in our community, and I know these losses can be especially hard during

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Baker teachers win national award

By SAMANTHA O'CONNOR
soconnor@bakercityherald.com

Baker School District teachers Bibiana Giff and Nicole Merchant have received the Outstanding Middle/Secondary Agricultural Award for an 11-state region for their agriculture education program.

The pair traveled to New Orleans on Tuesday, Nov. 30 to receive the award on stage at the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) National Conference.

"We were so proud to be announced, especially because there were some other impressive programs across the state in the running as well," Giff wrote to the Baker City Herald.



Contributed Photo

Baker School District agriculture teachers Bibiana Giff, second from left, and Nicole Merchant, second from right, received the Outstanding Middle/Secondary Agricultural Award during a ceremony Tuesday, Nov. 30 in New Orleans.

Giff, an FFA agricultural teacher, said the application process, which started last year at the state level, is arduous. "The application process

includes a very long application, featuring categories including: classroom instruction, experiential learning, student leadership, program marketing, community partnerships, and professional growth of the agriculture instructors," Giff wrote. "We also submit multiple pages of supplemental documents (usually photos and newspaper clippings)."

Merchant, the agricultural science teacher and FFA advisor for the Baker Technical Institute at Baker High School, said in a written statement that she and Giff applied and received the Outstanding Middle/Secondary Agriculture Program for Oregon in 2020.

"After you win your state

then you apply the following spring for the national level," Merchant said. "They select a national winner from each region and we are in region 1 and there are six regions in total."

According to its website, the NAAE is a federation of state agricultural educators associations with more than 9,000 members. They are involved in school-based agricultural education at any level and state and national education leadership.

They advocate for agricultural education, provide professional development for agricultural educators and work to recruit and retain agricultural educators in the profession.



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SATURDAY — BAKER CITY COWBOY COMPETES AT NATIONAL FINALS RODEO