



SPORTS A5
Baker wrestlers go 5-2 at Oregon Classic



SPORTS A5
Baker senior sets swim meet record



SPORTS A6
Bulldogs best Pioneers

Baker City Herald

IN THIS EDITION: LOCAL • HOME & LIVING • SPORTS

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QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Mark Ward of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Wolf depredation compensation committee to meet

The Baker County Wolf Depredation Compensation Committee will meet Wednesday, Jan. 19, at 2 p.m. at the Courthouse, 1995 Third St.

The committee will review applications for compensation for livestock killed or injured by wolves, or that are missing.

A Zoom link for the public is available at <https://www.bakercounty.org/online/meetings.html>.

Library book sale starts Jan. 28

The Friends of Baker County Library will have the Winter Book Sale from Friday, Jan. 28, to Sunday, Feb. 6, in the Riverside Meeting Room during library hours. A bag sale will take place Sunday, Feb. 6. Proceeds support the Friends, which in turn support the library.

Open house Jan. 21 at Blue Mountain CC

Blue Mountain Community College will have an open house at its Baker City campus on Friday, Jan. 21, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The campus is at 3275 Baker St., between Broadway and Campbell streets.

There will be door prizes, a campus tour, social hour and the opportunity to meet the BMCC director and staff.

WEATHER

Today
34/23
Partly sunny

Wednesday
36/27
Mostly cloudy

Full forecast on the back of the B section.

Making Readers

Program at Baker County Library encourages parents to read at least 1,000 books to children before they start kindergarten

BY LISA BRITTON

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Claire Hobbs can't stay away from the book.

Even after storytime is over, she clutches her cup of snacks and pulls the "Poke-A-Dot" book into her lap.

This series of board books is full of plastic circles that can be pushed in for a satisfying "pop."

Every time Claire, who is almost 2, pushes the plastic dot, she looks up and grins.

She is, says her mom Makayla Hobbs, a reader who gathers stacks of books at home.

And this — a child drawn to books and reading — is what Missy Grammon hopes to encourage with a new program at the Baker County Public Library.

Grammon is the library's youth services specialist. This month she is promoting a program called 1000 Books Before Kindergarten.

The goal is simple: read 1,000 books to a child before he or she enters kindergarten.

"A thousand books is a really good goal," Grammon said. "That's like two to three books a day."

Paper forms to track books are available at the library, 2400 Resort St.

"Eventually it will be online," Grammon said.

The program flyer breaks down how to reach the goal of 1,000 books:

- One book per day for three years: 1,095 books
- 10 books per week for two years: 1,040
- Three books a day for one year: 1,095

There aren't many rules for this program. For instance, the flyer explains: "Any age appropriate books count. No matter where you get them or how many times you read them — they all count."

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Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Missy Grammon reads a book to, from left, Calvin Hobbs, Briley Ebell and Claire Hobbs during storytime at the Baker County Public Library. Grammon is promoting the program 1000 Books Before Kindergarten, which encourages the goal of reading 1,000 books before a child enters kindergarten.

ATV wash station planned at Virtue Flat

Aims to reduce spread of weeds that can harm grouse habitat

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Motorcycles and four-wheelers don't pose an immediate threat to sage grouse, given that the birds are pretty nimble, but motor vehicles can potentially cause indirect problems for the grouse, a longtime candidate for federal protection.

Vehicles can carry seeds of noxious weeds on their tires or undercarriages, spreading invasive species over wide areas and making habitat less usable for sage grouse.

To reduce that risk in the most popular riding area near Baker City — Virtue Flat Off-Highway Vehicle



S. John Collins/Baker City Herald, File

Work at the parking lot at the Virtue Flat Off-Highway Vehicle Area several years ago. The area is popular with motorcycle, ATV and mountain bike riders.

Area, about seven miles east of town — a local team tasked with preserving sage grouse habitat plans to build a wash station at Virtue Flat where riders can clean their vehicles for free.

The goal is to reduce the spread of noxious weeds, including annual grasses such as cheatgrass and medusahead that already grow in parts of the area, said Dallas Hall Defrees, coordi-

nator of the Baker County Sage Grouse Local Implementation Team (LIT).

That team, which includes private landowners as well as officials from local, state and federal agencies, is overseeing a \$6.2 million, six-year grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to help sage grouse in the county.

The Watershed Enhancement Board gets its money from Oregon Lottery revenue.

Cheatgrass and other noxious weeds can crowd out the sagebrush and native grasses and other plants that sage grouse depend on for shelter and for food.

The Virtue Flat OHV area, which includes more than 50 miles of trails, also encompasses sage grouse habitat.

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Pedestrian hit, killed on I-84

A pedestrian was hit and killed on Interstate 84 near Baker City early Sunday, Jan. 16.

Oregon State Police troopers responded about 12:12 a.m. to the scene near the Baker Valley Rest Area, at Milepost 295.

Their preliminary investigation found that a westbound Volkswagen Passat, driven by Karli McKim, 21, of La Grande, struck a pedestrian who was standing in the freeway.

The person, whose name had not been released by press time on Monday, Jan. 17, was pronounced dead at the scene.

OSP was assisted at the scene by the Baker County Sheriff's Office, Baker City Fire Department and Oregon Department of Transportation.

COVID cases set weekly record

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Baker County reported a record number of COVID-19 cases last week as the extremely contagious omicron variant continues to spread.

But as has been seen elsewhere in the state and country, the less virulent variant has not resulted in a proportionate increase in hospitalizations and deaths.

As of Monday, Jan. 17, the Oregon Health Authority hadn't reported any COVID-19-related deaths in Baker County since Dec. 31.

For the seven-day period Jan. 9-15, Baker County reported 176 cases.

That exceeds the previous weekly record of 139 cases from Sept. 12-18, during the local peak of the surge driven by the delta variant.

Case counts dropped off substantially starting in late September.

Baker County didn't have any days with as many as 20 cases during October, November and December.

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

Baker's Cinderella hoops team to be honored

1972 BHS boys team finished second at state tournament

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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A basketball team that captivated Baker residents perhaps more than any before or since will be honored a half century after its improbable achievements.

The 1972 Baker High School boys team, which finished second in the state, will be recognized later this winter during a game at BHS.

The ceremony was initially planned for Friday, Jan. 21, when the Baker girls and boys are slated to play host to Ontario in the BHS gym.

But with COVID-19 cases potentially causing postponements — Baker's girls and boys games against La

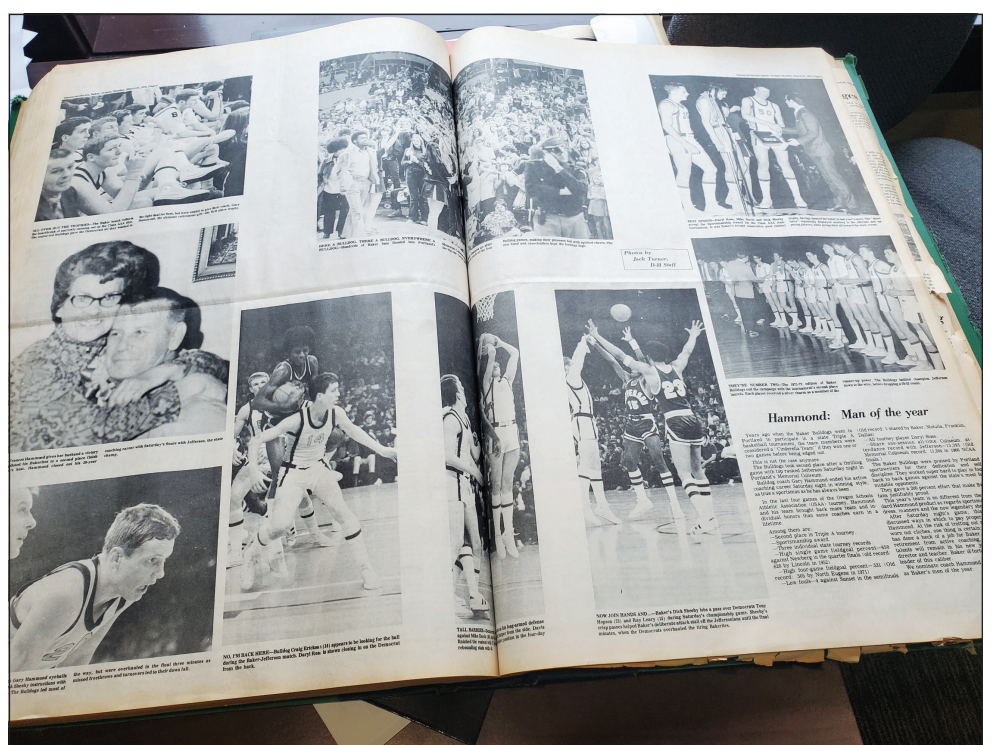
Grande set for Jan. 11 were moved to Feb. 8 due to virus issues in the La Grande teams — the ceremony likely will take place some time in February, said Randy Daugherty.

That date will be announced later.

Daugherty, who lives in Baker City, was a junior on the 1972 team.

He broke his leg against Bend with four games left in the regular season and had to watch from the bench as his teammates nearly pulled off a major upset against Jefferson, the powerful Portland team, in the championship game on March 25, 1972, at Memorial Coliseum in Portland.

Jefferson, which finished with a 26-1 record, won 59-52 over the Bulldogs in a game that had a record attendance of 13,395.



A feature in the March 27, 1972, issue of the Baker Democrat-Herald chronicled the Baker boys basketball team's improbable run to a second-place finish at the state tournament.

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TODAY
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