

Local

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

50 YEARS AGO

from the Democrat-Herald

January 24, 1972

Volunteers yesterday afternoon began clearing away rubble from the Church of God building under construction near Highway Seven south of Baker. A wind gust yesterday morning collapsed the partially completed high pitched roof, which fell into the sanctuary. No injuries were reported.

25 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

January 25, 1997

Baker City has received a \$68,873 grant from the state to continue its downtown building rehabilitation project.

Bill Scott, director of the Oregon Economic Development Department, announced the grant earlier this week.

10 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

January 25, 2012

The U.S. District Court in Pendleton issued a decision last week resolving the final sticking point between Baker City and the federal government about the city's easements along its water pipeline running through the Elkhorn Mountains.

"Now everybody's in agreement of what we can and can't do," said City Manager Mike Kee.

ONE YEAR AGO

from the Baker City Herald

January 23, 2021

Baker Technical Institute is starting a Truck Driving and Logistics School that will help students prepare to obtain a commercial driver's license (CDL).

The first four-week course starts March 8 at BTI's main campus in Baker City.

"Having your CDL is key when you're working in the construction trade, running heavy equipment, but you have to haul the heavy equipment there," said Sandy Mitchell, BTI's marketing and program coordinator. "It could do a number of different jobs, it is not tailored only for long haul trucking. There can be so many things done in our agriculture communities that you would need a CDL for."

The impetus for starting the truck driving school was interest expressed by officials from the trucking industry seeking trained and competent drivers, BTI president Doug Dalton said in a press release.

Over the past two years, BTI worked with an advisory board of industry leaders from Oregon, and the Professional Truck Driving Institute, to understand the need.

"They are the experts, and we wanted to listen to industry and build a school that reflects what they need," Dalton said. "One of the biggest things that came from these listening sessions was their focus on producing higher quality drivers than they have traditionally seen from schools, and we'll do this by giving them a more diverse experience."

The course, which costs \$5,900 per student, will include a driving simulator that allows students to practice a variety of scenarios.

"It trains people in efficiency with shifting, we can change the climate, we can put the driver in this virtual reality simulator in a windstorm or we can put them on snowy or icy roads," Mitchell said.

OREGON LOTTERY

MEGABUCKS, JAN. 22

4-14-21-38-44-46

Next jackpot: \$8.7 million

POWERBALL, JAN. 22

8-14-33-36-67 PB 17

Next jackpot: \$82 million

MEGA MILLIONS, JAN. 21

38-45-46-55-67

Mega 18

Next jackpot: \$396 million

WIN FOR LIFE, JAN. 22

13-30-50-63

PICK 4, JAN. 23

• 1 p.m.: 1-7-7-9

• 4 p.m.: 6-7-6-5

• 7 p.m.: 9-3-6-0

• 10 p.m.: 3-5-3-0

LUCKY LINES, JAN. 23

2-8-10-13-17-23-25-32

Next jackpot: \$11,000

SENIOR MENUS

WEDNESDAY (Jan. 26): Hot turkey sandwich, mashed potatoes with gravy, mixed vegetables, macaroni salad, birthday cake

THURSDAY (Jan. 27): Pork roast, baby red potatoes, carrots, rolls, cottage cheese with fruit, brownies

FRIDAY (Jan. 28): Spaghetti, garlic bread, broccoli, green salad, apple crisp

MONDAY (Jan. 31): Chicken strips, mashed potatoes with gravy, corn, biscuits, pudding, fruit cup

MONDAY (Feb. 1): Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes with gravy, corn, rolls, green salad, pudding

Public luncheon at the Senior Center, 2810 Cedar St., from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; \$5 donation (60 and older), \$7.50 for those under 60.

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Bentz: 'The election was not stolen, it was bought'

BY DICK MASON

The (La Grande) Observer

LA GRANDE — Oregon U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, does not believe former President Donald Trump's claim that President Joe Biden won the 2020 presidential election because of voter fraud.

"The election was not stolen, it was bought," Bentz, a first-term congressman, said during a meet-and-greet Thursday, Jan. 6, in La Grande.

Bentz said Democrats had an enormous edge in funding donors with deep pockets, including one who donated \$400 million to Biden's campaign. Bentz said the Democrats spent several times more money per vote than the Republicans did.

Bentz referenced a large donation Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg made and suggested it benefited Biden and Democrats.

According to a 2020 article from the news website Vox, Zuckerberg and his wife, Priscilla Chan, personally made a \$300 million donation to two groups: Center for Tech and Civic Life and the Center for Election Innovation & Research. The money was specifically designated to recruit poll workers, supply them with personal protection equipment and set up drive-thru voting. The rest was distributed to state election officials throughout the country.

Both groups are 501(c)(3) nonprofits, which are legally prohibited from political campaign activity.



Alex Wittwer/The (La Grande) Observer

Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ore., speaks to a group of residents during a meet-and-greet Thursday, Jan. 6, 2022, at Brother Bear Cafe in La Grande.

Bentz is hopeful Republicans can win control of the House of Representatives in mid term elections in November. He noted, though, that that is when heavy lifting will begin for Republicans. He said House minority leader Kevin McCarthy, R-California, issued this warning earlier when speaking at a gathering of about 40 Republican freshmen in Congress.

McCarthy said members of the minority party have it easier because they often find themselves just voting no. McCarthy said, however, they will find when they are in the majority party the situation can be more challenging.

"He told us, 'When you are in power you have to make things happen, it is hard,'" Bentz said.

New law automatically expunges youth arrest records

BY GARRETT ANDREWS

The (Bend) Bulletin

Starting this month, Oregon teenagers who have been in trouble with the law will receive notices on their 18th birthday.

"You are now able to say that no juvenile record ever existed and no (police) contact ... ever occurred," the notices read.

Deschutes County justice officials expect around 20-30 people each month will receive the notice that explains how their juvenile arrest records will be expunged under a new process enacted by another new law aimed at criminal justice reform in Oregon.

But the law, the Youth Expunction Reform Act, also deepens a dilemma for young people.

Despite the fact an expunged arrest never happened in the legal sense, it still shows up on federal criminal background checks. So young adults starting out in the world have to consider voices telling them to disclose everything, and voices telling them they don't have to.

"It definitely puts people in a difficult situation," said Aliza Kaplan, director of the Criminal Justice Reform Clinic at Lewis and Clark Law School. "I have advised youth clients to be open about it. But there isn't one right way to handle it."

Under Senate Bill 575, which passed the Oregon Legislature on June 26 and was enacted this month, Oregonians who qualify to have a youthful arrest expunged upon their 18th birthday will have that done automatically rather than via a voluntary application process. Under the old applica-

tion process, only around 4% of eligible youth successfully received an expungement.

Arrests create a paper trail, and expunction is the process of destroying or sealing evidence of a person's involvement with law enforcement and the court. It's expected that each year the new law will automatically clear the records of more than 5,000 people who have records with law enforcement but weren't convicted in juvenile court.

Arrested but not convicted

The new law applies only to people who were arrested as youths but not convicted. The law does not apply retroactively to people whose 18th birthday took place prior to 2022, though those people may still submit an application for their arrest records to be expunged. People convicted as youths may still apply for expungement under the existing application process.

Supporters say Youth Expunction Reform Act is a long-overdue attempt to simplify the expunction process. People unable to clear their records face challenges acquiring employment, housing, occupational licenses and entry into the military and college.

The youth reform act is one of many Legislative bills developed by the CJRC at Lewis & Clark Law School.

Efforts there have lately shifted to getting the word out about expunction. To reach young people, Kaplan said they've focused on schools. The CJRC, in partnership with the group Youth, Rights & Justice, is now holding clinics to

assist youth with expunging their criminal records.

Prior to the new law, the county would often receive expunction applications from youth also attempting to enter the military, according to Community Justice director Deevy Holcomb.

"Sometimes, they're applying simultaneously, and it puts us in a really weird spot, because once a record is expunged, that youth may legally assert it never occurred, and we don't have the right to say if it did or didn't," Holcomb said.

Sgt. Kyle Conner of the Bend Marine recruiting office said he advises recruits to disclose everything. He tells them it's a lesson he had to learn personally when he joined.

"I had a thing and not being very familiar with the military at the time, I didn't think it'd pop up. And the recruiter found it," he said. "So that's one thing I tell everybody: even if you got it expunged, it definitely will still show up."

It's not uncommon that a recruit will have a blemish or two on his record, Conner said. Local Marine and Navy recruiters estimate around half the people they see have an arrest in their past. The Marines typically don't take people with felonies on their record, though, ultimately, it comes down to the individual, Conner said.

Conner puts it to young people in terms of green and red weights. The green represents all the good things a person has done in their life — community service, good grades, etc. — and the red stands in for problems like arrests.

"We just want the green weights to outweigh the red weights," he said.

In 2021, Oregon lawmakers passed numerous laws aimed at strengthening police oversight and rehabilitating offenders. Since the pandemic began, Gov. Kate Brown has released more than 1,000 inmates prior to their scheduled release date.

Former Clatsop County District Attorney Josh Marquis, an outspoken supporter of law-and-order, said he's watched state leaders pass sweeping changes he says most people are unaware of. He called the Oregon District Attorney's Association, which declined to take a position on SB 575, "milquetoast," and the law itself, a "catastrophe." He thinks many people identify with a young person who slips up in minor ways, like stealing, while ignoring those who commit heinous acts that permanently injure others.

He expects Oregon-based youth arrests will eventually stop showing up on federal background checks. "There's no accountability anymore," he said. "What if there are numerous allegations they've raped somebody, or that they've committed numerous acts of domestic violence? Should that really be hidden?"

Kaplan said these law changes reflect changing public opinion. "They're all indications that our society gets it," she said. "I think there's a much better understanding of how people can transform and rehabilitate and move on with their lives."

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"They're all indications that our society gets it," she said. "I think there's a much better understanding of how people can transform and rehabilitate and move on with their lives."

News of Record

DEATHS

Pearl DuMars: 87, of Richland, died Jan. 21, 2022, at St. Luke's Hospital in Nampa, Idaho. Per her request, there will not be a service. Donations in Pearl's memory can be made to the Eagle Valley Ambulance or a charity of your choice through Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services, P.O. Box 543, Halfway, OR 97834. Online condolences can be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

FUNERAL PENDING

Dwight Brooks: Friends are invited to join the family for a graveside service at the Union Cemetery on Friday, Jan. 28, at 11 a.m. To make a donation in Dwight's memory, the family suggests the Union Ambulance Service or a charity of your choice through Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services, P.O. Box 543, Halfway, OR 97834. Online condolences can be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

POLICE LOG

Baker City Police

Arrests, citations

PROBATION VIOLATION: Caleb Colton Flint, 36, Baker City, 1:40 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 22, on David Eccles Road; jailed.

Baker County Sheriff's Office

Arrests, citations

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF INTOXICANTS: Craig Thomas Youngblood, 47, North Powder, 12:49 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 23, on Neil Peck Road north of Haines; jailed and later

released after posting bail.

FAILURE TO APPEAR (Malheur County warrant, Sherman County warrant):

Kathleen Lee Pickthorne, 63, Rufus, Oregon, 8:27 a.m. Friday, Jan. 21, at the Sheriff's Office; cited and released.