



OUTDOORS B1
Meeting snowshoe hares in the Elkhorns



WORLD A5
Russia pledges not to start war in Ukraine



SPORTS A6
Powder Valley beats Griswold

Baker City Herald

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QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Mindy Sherrieb Baker City.

BRIEFING

Morgan Stone earns academic honors

WALLA WALLA, Wash. — Morgan Stone of Baker City earned academic distinction for the most recent semester at Whitman College. To qualify, students must complete at least 12 credits with a GPA of at least 3.5.

Baker County Garden Club to meet Feb. 2

The Baker County Garden Club will meet Wednesday, Feb. 2 at 10 a.m. at the Senior Center, 2810 Cedar St. Dave Cowan will give a class on lawn care. Lunch is \$5 for 60 and older, or \$7.50 for those younger, or you can bring your own lunch. New members are always welcome.

Public hearing set on North Baker transportation plan

The Baker City Planning Commission will have a public hearing on Feb. 16, at 6 p.m. at City Hall, 1655 First St., to discuss proposed revisions to the city's comprehensive plan related to the Northern Baker Transportation Improvement Plan. That plan covers proposed changes to Cedar Street, Hughes Lane, 10th Street and Pocahontas Road.

WEATHER

Today
26/13
Mostly sunny

Sunday
29/20
Cloudy

Monday
33/17
Partly cloudy

Full forecast on the back of the B section.

'A life-changing experience'

Baker City's Kerry McQuisten talks about her campaign to become Oregon governor

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Kerry McQuisten has met many thousands of Oregonians during her campaign to be the state's next governor, a blur of faces and handshakes and forums and events in each of the 36 counties in the 10th-biggest state.

But one face remains especially vivid in her memory.

And she suspects that it always will be.

McQuisten, a seventh-generation Baker County resident who is seeking the Republican nomination in the May 22 primary, was in Tygh Valley, near The Dalles, for the Wasco County Fair in late August.

An older gentleman approached.

He was wearing a cap identifying him as a military veteran.

The man pulled out his wallet, reached in and extracted the only bill tucked in the folds.

It was a \$5. He handed the bill to McQuisten, insisting that she take it.

"Something has to change in Oregon," the man told her. "I will never forget it," McQuisten said in an interview on Wednesday, Jan. 26.

That moment in the wheat country of Wasco County, one of so many in seven months of campaigning, continues to inspire McQuisten.

It's not the amount of the donation, of course.

But that brief conversation, and the man's insistence that she accept his modest contribution, convinced her then, and reminds her still, that some of her fellow Oregonians believe she can help to fix some of the problems that she — and they — believe are plaguing the state.

"My campaign is steadily gaining traction," said McQuisten, who is Baker City's mayor, elected to that position by her fellow Baker City Council members in January 2021. "I'm reaching out across the whole state."

Amassing the miles

McQuisten didn't anticipate how familiar her favorite oil change place would become.

She doesn't know precisely how many miles she has driven since she declared her candidacy in late June of 2021.

"I didn't even start paying attention until I was at 10,000 miles," McQuisten said with a chuckle.

She's been changing the oil in her car every three or four weeks.

"The people at the oil change place know my first name now," she said. "They didn't before."

McQuisten, 49, said those miles are at least as important, and perhaps even more so, than the dollars her campaign has accumulated.

Although she acknowledges that advertising is vital to any candidate — she's bought space on 11 billboards, is planning TV ads and also uses social media as a platform — McQuisten said there is no substitute for meeting people, shaking their hands and listening to their concerns.

"That's how you excite your base, and you have to do that with Republicans," she said. "You have to have that grassroots support. I'm meeting an awful lot of people."

McQuisten, who grew up on a cattle ranch in Baker County, graduated from Willamette University in Salem and also lived for a year or so in Wilsonville, said she had



Kerry McQuisten/Contributed Photo

Kerry McQuisten stands outside Mahonia Hall, the Oregon governor's mansion in Salem. McQuisten, a Baker County native, is seeking the Republican nomination for governor in the May 22, 2022, primary.

been to each of Oregon's 36 counties before she started her campaign.

But that happened over decades of normal travels.

Now she has been to every county in little more than half a year — and some she's visited four or five times, to meet with residents at informal events or to participate in forums featuring multiple Republican candidates.

A unique opportunity for a Republican

After so many miles and so many meetings, McQuisten said she is even more confident now than she was when she started that 2022 presents an opportunity that Republicans haven't had in Oregon for more than four decades.

No member of her party has been elected governor since November 1982, when Victor Atiyeh won the second of his four-year terms.

But McQuisten believes that voters are more dissatisfied with their state's condition under the leadership of Democratic governor Kate Brown than at any time since Atiyeh's tenure.

Brown's executive orders during the pandemic, with their effects on businesses and schools in particular, have seriously weakened the Democrats' once-indomi-

table electoral foundation, McQuisten believes.

"The more Kate Brown mandates, the worse it gets for the Democrats," McQuisten said.

And although Brown can't run for reelection due to term limits, McQuisten contends that the Democratic nominee, whoever that is, will be linked to Brown's legacy, to the benefit of the Republican on the November general election ballot.

(McQuisten thinks Tina Kotek, the former Speaker of the House in the Oregon Legislature, is the Democratic frontrunner.)

McQuisten said she has talked with, and received emails from, many Democrats and nonaffiliated voters who are troubled by what's happening in Oregon.

She was surprised to receive a \$25 donation from an Ontario Democrat who voted for, and formerly supported, Brown.

"That's when you know something is really shifting," McQuisten said.

She said a few issues have come up at virtually all of her campaign events, concerns that seem universal in the state.

Public safety is one of these.

See, Campaign/Page A3

Two COVID-related deaths reported

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Two more Baker County residents have died after testing positive for COVID-19.

The Oregon Health Authority reported on Thursday, Jan. 27, that an 82-year-old man who tested positive on Jan. 22 had died Jan. 25 at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Baker City.

The presence of underlying medical conditions has not been confirmed.

The man was the 41st county resident to die after testing positive for COVID-19.

The Baker County Health Department on Thursday, Jan. 27, reported another COVID-19-related death, but details about that death, including gender, age and date of death, were not available by press time.

Four county residents have died during January after testing positive.

The number of COVID-19-related deaths during December was three, following four deaths in November, five in October and six, the most in any month during the pandemic, in September.

The Health Department reported 33 new cases on Thursday, Jan. 27, and 36 the previous day.

For the first five days of the current measuring week — Jan. 23-29 — the county reported 134 new cases. That's on pace to set a new weekly record high for the third straight week.

Previous weekly totals were 183 (Jan. 16-22) and 176 (Jan. 9-15).

With 596 cases in January through the 27th, the month has set a new record. The previous record was 465 cases during September 2021, the peak of the surge driven by the delta variant.

Baker schools continue in-person

Despite the record number of cases this month, the Baker 5J School District has continued to have in-person classes.

See, COVID/Page A2

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

City planning pipeline work



Baker City Public Works Department/Contributed Photo, File

Baker City crews install new water pipe in the Elkhorn Mountains in the summer of 2020. The long-term project to replace old, leak-prone concrete pipe will continue this summer between Elk and Salmon creeks.

Long-term project to replace water pipeline set to continue

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR

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The Baker City Public Works Department will be busy this summer with the continuation of a long-term project to replace the city's main water supply pipeline.

Michelle Owen, the city's public works director, said the pipe for this summer's project, which will cover about half a mile, was delivered recently.

"We're just going to kind of take off where we left off last go around," Owen said.

City crews will start near Elk Creek and move north toward Salmon Creek.

Those are two of the streams in the 10,000-acre watershed, on the east slopes of the Elkhorn Mountains, that the city taps for drinking water.

Owen said the pipe is slated to be installed before July 1, when the city's new fiscal year starts.

"We may do a second project that would basically finish out the mile (north from Elk Creek) after July 1 but we're going to see what the bid numbers come in at," Owen said.

See, Pipeline/Page A3

Wolves kill calf near Keating

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Wolves killed a 500-pound, year-old calf near Keating late Monday, Jan. 24, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) confirmed after an investigation the following day.

A rancher found the dead calf on the morning of Tuesday, Jan. 25, on a 25-acre private pasture near Tucker Creek, according to ODFW.

Tucker Creek flows into the Powder River near Keating School, at the intersection of Keating Cutoff Road, Keating Grange Road and Miles Bridge Road.

Brian Ratliff, district wildlife biologist at ODFW's Baker City office, said on Friday

See, Wolves/Page A3



TODAY
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12 pages

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