



INSIDE
Go! Magazine
Arts and entertainment magazine



SPORTS A5
Tigers best Bulldog boys, 76-44



SPORTS A6
Baker tops Tigers to claim GOL title

Baker City Herald

IN THIS EDITION: LOCAL • BUSINESS & AG LIFE • SPORTS Serving Baker County since 1870 • bakercityherald.com THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2022 • \$1.50

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Ken Donicht of Baker City.

BRIEFING

GOP candidate to speak Feb. 12 in Baker City

Marc Thielman, Republican candidate for Oregon governor, will speak Saturday, Feb. 12, in Baker City.

Thielman will speak at the Baker County Events Center, 2600 East St. Doors open at 5 p.m. and the event starts at 6 p.m.

Thielman, who is being hosted by Baker County United, is the superintendent of the Alsea School District in Western Oregon, where he decided in late January to make face masks optional, in defiance of an executive order from Gov. Kate Brown.

Valentine's Day dinner at Wolf Creek Grange

NORTH POWDER — The Wolf Creek Grange in North Powder is planning a Valentine's Day dinner on Monday, Feb. 14, with seatings at 4 p.m., 5 p.m. and 6 p.m.

The romantic, seven-course meal costs \$25 per couple, or \$15 for an individual.

To make a reservation, call 541-786-3927.

WEATHER

Today
36/18
Mostly sunny

Friday
40/15
Partly sunny

Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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



This photo of Wade Williams Field, in the summer of 2021, was after the community pitched in to revitalize the field. The newly formed Wade Williams Foundation will raise money to maintain this property for Little League games.

Kenny Keister wants to revamp Wade Williams Field, where he grew up playing baseball

BY LISA BRITTON
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Kenny Keister has great memories of playing baseball at Baker City's Wade Williams Field, and he wants to give future generations the same experience.

"I was a baseball kid — I marched in all the parades. A lot of my childhood memories are of Little League," he said.

Keister, 31, grew up in Baker City. After moving back as an adult, he began volunteering with Little League — umpire, coach, board member.

"I've been very involved for the last 10 years," he said.

Wade Williams, which is between Myrtle Street and the Powder River in south Baker City, is owned by the Baker Elks Lodge, but maintenance and improvements are the responsibilities of Little League, Keister said.

He wanted to help improve the property, and in April 2021 he organized a work party.

"I had hundreds of volunteers show up for community clean up day," he said.

Another volunteer, Nick Carey, was inspired by the baseball facility in John Day, and has helped at Wade Williams.

"He's done great," Keister said of Carey.

But maintenance takes money, as does the dreams Keister has of renovating Wade Williams to the field he remembers from his youth.

"It's going to take an army and a lot of community support," he said.



Volunteers at a community clean up day in April 2021 spruced up Wade Williams Field. Work included fixing the irrigation system.

As a solution, Keister has helped form the Wade Williams Foundation.

This nonprofit's first fundraiser was a cornhole tournament in November 2021. Proceeds from that will purchase benches for the teeball and farm fields.

See, Field/Page A3

School chief expects masks will go away March 31

BY JAYSON JACOBY
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Baker School District students and staff likely will start classes on April 4 without something that's been a fixture in classrooms and hallways for more than a year.

Face masks.

The Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Department of Education announced on Monday, Feb. 7, that the indoor mask requirement for schools will end March 31.

That's the last day of the first week of classes following spring break for the Baker School District, which is scheduled from March 21-25.

The first school day scheduled after March 31 is Monday, April 4.

See, Masks/Page A3

Florida man accused of stealing 2 cars

Suspect who gave false names identified by fingerprints

BY JAYSON JACOBY
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A Florida man whom Baker City Police initially identified as "John Doe" before confirming his identity through fingerprints is accused of stealing two vehicles, in separate incidents, and threatening a man in a motel on Friday, Feb. 4.

Joshua Brandon Williams, 37, of Panama City Beach, is in the Baker County Jail on robbery, theft and burglary charges, among others.

See, Theft/Page A3

CORRECTION

BAKER CITY HERALD

A story in the Jan. 22 issue of the Baker City Herald mistakenly stated that the Baker County Wolf Depredation Compensation Committee had approved \$87,000 in payments to county ranchers whose cattle were killed by wolves last year, who have missing cattle, or as compensation for work they have done to deter wolves.

The committee did approve requests for that money, but in most cases the amount the ranchers receive will depend on how much money the state allocates, something that hasn't happened, said Mark Bennett, county commissioner and a member of the wolf compensation committee.

The committee did award \$13,500, distributed among five applicants, to help pay for range riders who try to deter wolves from attacking livestock on grazing allotments. That's out of \$41,145 that was requested.

With other applications, the committee:

- Agreed to request \$8,480.80, for deaths or injuries to cattle, a total of four applications.

- Agreed to request \$66,450 for deaths and injuries to cattle, a total of five applications.

Bennett noted that in the past decade, the state has typically awarded only a portion of the money the Baker County committee has requested on behalf of local ranchers.

The biggest differences between the amount requested and the amount awarded typically involves cattle that ranchers report as missing, rather than animals that were killed or injured by wolves in incidents confirmed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and in requests for range riders and other work designed to prevent wolf attacks on livestock.

In 2021, for instance, the county requested \$45,000 for prevention, and \$13,500 was awarded.

In 2019 the county requested \$48,199 for missing cattle, but the amount awarded was \$5,891.

In 2016 the county requested \$15,724 for missing cattle, and \$11,793 was awarded.

New Directions to conduct housing survey

Focus is on people with behavioral health issues, including the homeless

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR
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New Directions Northwest of Baker City is planning to survey local residents with behavioral health issues, including those who are homeless, to figure out what their housing needs are.

New Directions has received a \$44,000 grant from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) for the survey.

Andi Walsh, the grants and public relations manager for New Directions, gave a presentation about the survey to the Baker

County Commissioners on Feb. 2, and sought their ideas about the project.

"It's a housing survey, to find out what their housing needs are," Walsh said.

The survey is scheduled to take place during March and April.

New Directions will use a variety of tactics to reach people who are the focus of the survey, Walsh said.

"We'll put that out through a variety of different means whether it's through Facebook, our community partners working with their clients, as well as trying to be visual in different settings where people might be that we can hand out the paper copies of (the survey), through radio, things like that," she said in a phone interview.

Walsh said the survey is intended to reach people who have housing needs, including homeless people who have behavioral health issues.

"The target audience are the folks with a behavioral health condition as well as those service providers. So, in a sense, it's two surveys in one," Walsh said.

The timeline is for officials to compile survey responses during May, in conjunction with the Baker County Housing Task Force, Walsh said.

That group includes local government officials as well as people from agencies that work with people who have behavioral health issues.

See, Survey/Page A3

TODAY
Issue 115
28 pages

Business.....B1 & B2
Classified.....B2-B4
Comics.....B5
Community News.....A2
Crossword.....B2 & B4
Dear Abby.....B6
Horoscope.....B3 & B4
Letters.....A4
Lottery Results.....A2

News of Record.....A2
Opinion.....A4
Senior Menus.....A2
Sports.....A5 & A6
Turning Backs.....A2
Weather.....B6