Local

TURNING BACK THE PAGES 50 YEARS AGO

from the Democrat-Herald

February 10, 1972

J. David Coughlin was sworn in Tuesday to take over duties as Baker County's deputy district attorney.

Coughlin, 27, hired under the Emergency Unemployment Act, will take over across-the-board duties to relieve the work load on district attorney Jesse R. Himmelsbach Jr.

25 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

February 10, 1997

Residents in Baker and Wallowa counties reported seeing a fireball streaking across the sky Friday evening, but nothing was reported hitting the ground, sheriff's

The Baker County Sheriff's Department received at least two calls between 9:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. from people who reported a flash of light streaking toward Huntington.

10 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

February 10, 2012

Baker County's biggest industry had a banner year in 2011.

The industry is beef cattle.

And gross sales from the county last year totaled \$50.8

That's the highest figure on record, topping the previous mark of \$49.3 million in 2007, according to the Oregon Agricultural Information Network of the Oregon State University Extension service.

Sales rose by almost \$8 million in 2011 compared to the previous year.

ONE YEAR AGO

from the Baker City Herald

February 11, 2021

A proposal from a Baker City couple calling for the City Council to pass a resolution stating that local business owners should set their own COVID-19 protocols brought the largest audience to City Hall in many months on Tuesday evening, Feb. 9.

Some residents had to wait outside Council Chambers for their chance to address councilors, stepping in one at a time to keep within the occupancy limit for the room.

The topic was up for discussion only.

Councilors didn't take any action on the Jan. 20 letter that Shannon and Whitney Black, who own a fuel distributing firm, sent to the city.

The Blacks asked the City Council to consider passing a resolution declaring the city a "common sense sanctuary."

"Each business would be free to determine the most effective way to keep their unique customer population happy, healthy, stress-free, and contributing to our local economy," the Blacks wrote.

There is no clear legal route for the city to pass a resolution that supersedes COVID-19 rules from the state.

Mayor Kerry McQuisten told councilors that the city had received 23 letters in support of the Blacks' idea, four from people opposed, and one letter from a resident who urged the city to be cautious.

Councilors heard from several residents during Tuesday's meeting, as well as from Whitney Black.

She told councilors that "the constantly shifting state suggestions, mandates, and threats just put a permanent stress on our little town. I think we've all felt it, whether you own a business, run a business, work with a business, shop at a business, it's been pretty bad mentally, physically, it just hasn't worked."

OREGON LOTTERY

MEGABUCKS, FEB. 7

16-21-23-27-44-46

Next jackpot: \$1.4 million

POWERBALL, FEB, 7 5-15-38-47-65 PB 10

Next jackpot: \$158 million

MEGA MILLIONS, FEB. 8 1-17-20-52-54 Mega 2

Next jackpot: \$42 million

WIN FOR LIFE, FEB. 7 15 - 22 - 29 - 62

PICK 4, Feb. 8

• 1 p.m.: 1-1-2-5

• 4 p.m.: 9 - 2 - 7 - 1

• 7 p.m.: 0 – 1 – 4 – 4

• 10 p.m.: 0 – 3 – 1 – 1

LUCKY LINES, FEB. 8 2-6-12-13-20-21-27-31

Next jackpot: \$21,000

SENIOR MENUS

FRIDAY (Feb. 11): Beef pot roast, red potatoes, peas and carrots, rolls, coleslaw, cherry cheesecake

MONDAY (Feb. 14): Chicken cordon bleu, rice, broccoli, rolls, green salad, pudding

TUESDAY (Feb. 15): Roast turkey, stuffing with gravy, carrots, rolls, green salad, apple crisp

WEDNESDAY (Feb. 16): Hot beef sandwich, mashed potatoes, peas, broccoli-and-bacon salad, cake

THURSDAY (Feb. 17): Orange-glazed chicken strips, rice,

Oriental vegetables, rolls, green salad, apple crisp

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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ODOT urges drivers to obey road closures

BY BEN LONERGAN

East Oregonian

MILTON-FREEWATER — Vaun Miller had been dodging winter weather for four days, trying to make it home Jan. 2 to Milton-Freewater following a trip to San Diego.

But an early January snowstorm spelled trouble for the 72-year-old Miller, bringing his drive to an end about 2 miles short of his home.

"I stopped — and the next thing I know a gust of wind hit me and it swirled and took me off the side of the road," he said.

While the highway had been closed for hours before, Miller said he didn't encounter a barricade when leaving Pendleton and a few gas station employees he had talked to were unaware of a closure at the time. Miller said he recalls seeing a barricade parallel to the highway at the road's usual closure point — the intersection with Highway 331 — but thought the sign referred to a closure of Highway 331 based on the way it was positioned.

"So on I went," he said. "And within 3 miles it was getting crazy, crazy, crazy winds – I would guesstimate at least 60 (mph)."

Despite the inclement weather, Miller pushed on. He said he encountered several other vehicles and was traveling about 20-25 mph for most of the distance. As he was approaching milepost 24, the wind kicked up higher, and Miller said he slowed to a stop as he was no longer able to see the road. The next thing he knew, the wind pushed his car into the gully.

"I had a few people stop and ask me if I was OK," he said. "And then it was about an hour before (Oregon Department of Transportation) got there."

Robin Berheim, district operations coordinator for ODOT in Pendleton, was responding to a stuck snowplow in the area when she came across Miller and gave him a ride home to Milton-Freewater.

"I was real surprised when



An abandoned vehicle sits in a roadside snow drift Jan. 14, 2022, near milepost 24 on Highway 11 near Milton-Freewater. Oregon Department of Transportation staff picked up the vehicle's driver, Vaun Miller, 72, of Milton-Freewater, after the car became stuck in the snow Jan. 2.

she said, 'Oh, you know it's closed," he said.

The next morning, snow had buried Miller's car to its roofline.

"It was buried for four days and we couldn't find it," Miller said.

Conditions among worst in 28 years

While Miller returned a week later to dig out his belongings from the car, it was not until Wednesday, Jan. 26, that he was able to free his vehicle. Miller said he spent several days digging and received some help from passing motorists as he tried to free the car in the weeks since.

"I hate even thinking about what we would've found the following day had she not gotten to that car," said Robert Cash, ODOT transportation maintenance manager in Pendleton.

Berheim said road conditions the night of Jan. 2-3 were among the worst she had seen in her 28 years with the department. High winds and heavy snowfall resulted in snow drifts several feet high and obscured visibility.

"It was almost the whole

length of Highway 11," she said. "I've seen it probably that bad around the Athena area, but I've never seen it go from one end to the other?

According to Tom Strandberg, ODOT Region 5 public information officer, the department reported more than $\bar{2}0$ abandoned or stuck vehicles and tow trucks were brought in the following day to help clear the road so snow removal could resume.

'We were worried sick about what we would find the following day with all of those vehicles that weren't following the road closure," Cash said.

Cash said the high wind speeds meant plow operators were forced to plow into the wind, putting them against the road's direction of travel. He added this practice is usually not a problem when the roads are closed, but the number of people ignoring the closure meant plows would have to stop and back up to allow for oncoming traffic.

Generally speaking in the evenings and wee hours of the night we don't have a lot of traffic and most of the traffic we do have is locals who understand the closures — that night it just

seemed like we had a nonstop parade of vehicles," Cash said.

The road closure, which began at roughly 4:45 p.m. and lasted 24 hours, came about as high winds and heavy snowfall made it too dangerous for ODOT employees to maintain the road to safe conditions, according to the department.

"We closed the highway and started putting signs out," Cash said. "Once we got the closures put up, I told my crew that we were going to get off of that section of road."

Follow road closures to stay safe

Cash urged people to obey road closure signs where posted and check tripcheck. com frequently when inclement weather arrives.

While ODOT was struggling with staffing shortages heading into the winter months, Cash said more people would not necessarily have helped reopen the highway any quicker, but rather equipment limitations were a more prominent concern. "Our resources are so thin,"

he said. "We have 450 lane miles to take care of with five snowplows." In addition to plow con-

cerns, Cash said the depth of some of the snowdrifts necessitated bringing in snowblowers from Elgin, Meacham and Bend to help clear the highway completely. 'Just being able to get

enough equipment in to open up the highway as quick as possible was a challenge," he said. "That all took time."

ODOT encouraged drivers to be cognizant of road conditions and be prepared for inclement weather when traveling in the winter months. Berheim advised drivers thinking of going past road closures to think about the consequences of their actions on their safety and the safety of those working.

"They're putting themselves at risk," she said. "And anyone who has to go retrieve them."

Man accused of stealing car from dealership

BAKER CITY HERALD

A Baker City man is accused of using a machete to break two windows at the Baker City Auto Ranch on Monday, Feb. 7, taking two car key fobs and driving away in one vehicle from the dealership at 2514 10th St.

Tracy Blaze Crum, 21, was arrested at 11:48 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 7, at 3435 Eighth Drive in Baker City, and taken to the Baker County Jail, according to a report from Talon Colton of the Baker County Sheriff's Office. Crum's bail was set at \$15,000. He could be re-

News of Record

DEATHS

Carolyn Louise Thom: 78, of Baker City, died Feb. 4, 2022, at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Boise. Arrangements are under the direction of Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel. To leave an online condolence for Carolyn's family, go to www.grayswestco.com.

Raymond Earl Carter: 93, of Huntington, died Feb. 3, 2022, at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Ontario. Arrangements are under the direction of Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel. To leave an online condolence for Raymond's family, go to www.

BIRTHS

DeVore: Chelsea and Justin Smith, Baker City, a boy, Colson Maxwell DeVore, Jan. 29, 2022, 8 pounds, 4 ounces. grandparents are Bert and Shelley DeVore of Baker City, Krista Smith of Pilot Rock, and Aaron Smith, Greatgrandparents are Ron and Rochelle Stoaks of Baker City, Andy and Ella DeVore of Baker City, Carol and Jerry Hansen of North Powder, Linda and Roger Smith of Haines, and Kris Still of La Grande

POLICE LOG Baker City Police

Arrests, citations

HARASSMENT, STRANGULATION: Shan Christian Bruland, 28, Baker City, 1:21 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 8, in the 1500 block of Indiana Avenue; jailed. PROBATION VIOLATION, ATTEMPTED SECOND-DEGREE ASSAULT, FOURTH-DEGREE ASSAULT: Joshua Ryan Brown, 39, Baker City, 4:28 a.m. Friday, Feb. 4, in the 1600 block of Valley Avenue; jailed after allegedly threatening another man with a knife and punching the man in the face. Brown is scheduled to enter a plea in Baker County Circuit Court on Feb. 14 at 1:15 p.m.

leased by posting 10% of that amount.

Crum is accused of second-degree burglary, second-degree theft, second-degree criminal mischief and unlawful use of a motor vehicle. He is scheduled to enter a plea on Feb. 25 at 1:15 p.m. in Baker County Circuit Court.

Baker City Auto Ranch employees reported the burglary at 5:51 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 7, according to Colton's report.

Baker City Police officers responded.

Colton wrote in his report that Baker City Police Officer Justin Prevo told him, at about 11:24 p.m., that Crum reportedly was at 3435 Eighth Drive.

Colton said he and Deputy Chad Mills drove to the address and saw a grey 2015 Honda CRV with Auto Ranch dealer plates and no temporary registration, in the driveway of the home.

Colton said he and Mills talked to Crum, and that Crum handed Colton two key fobs one for the Honda and another for a 2014 Chevrolet pickup truck. Both fobs had Auto Ranch ID tags, Colton wrote.

Colton wrote that Crum also admitted using a machete to break windows to get inside the dealership. He told Colton that he initially left on foot, but then returned later and drove away in the Honda.



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