

Baker students excel at FBLA competition

Schools combined had 19 regional champions

BAKER CITY HERALD

LA GRANDE — Baker High School had 10 regional champions, and Baker Middle School had nine, at the FBLA regional skills conference on Feb. 3, at Eastern Oregon University.

Four high schools that normally attend the conference were absent this year, as those schools joined a virtual conference rather than the in-person event at La Grande, said Toni Zikmund, Baker High School FBLA advisor.

Dawna Blincoe is the Baker Middle School advisor, and last year's BMS advisor, Nicole Miller, helped chaperone the Baker students.

A total of 188 students from 11 high schools competed. Baker High School had 20 students attend. Baker Middle School had

22 students out of a total of 35 from three schools.

The regional competition was organized by Baker High School and Imbler High School FBLA.

Judges included Bryan Tweit of HatchLab in Baker City, who judged the introduction to event planning, marketing and network design event, and BHS principal Skye Flanagan, who judged the elevator speech event in the middle school competition.

In addition to competing in events, students attended workshops, watched a performance by the EOU Choir and listened to addresses from EOU President Tom Insko and Edward Hedding, dean of the EOU Business College.

The top 10 finishers at the regional competition qualified for the state FBLA business leadership conference April 7-9 in Portland. The top four in each event at state will qualify for the National

Leadership Conference in June in Chicago.

Baker Middle School results

- Business ethics: Cadell Mills, Adelaid Walden and Lilly Wilson, 1st; Alexandria Honsvick, Connor Niday and Adeline Shaw, 2nd
- Career exploration: Adeline Shaw, 1st; Nolan Briels, 2nd; Cadell Mills, 3rd; Alexandria Honsvick, 4th; Taylor Lee, 5th; Connor Niday, 6th
- Critical thinking: Colbi Bachman, Jaxyn Ramos and Elizabeth Timm, 1st; Isaac Berry and Ashlyn Child, 2nd
- Digital citizenship: Gwendolyn Rasmussen, 1st; Colbi Bachman, 2nd
- Elevator speech: Gwendolyn Rasmussen, 5th; Taylor Lee, 9th; Madeline Hassmiller, 10th
- Exploring technology: Harris Gaslin, 1st
- Exploring economics: Harris Gaslin, 1st
- Financial literacy: Nolan Briels, 1st; Isaac Berry, 2nd
- Leadership: Elizabeth

Timm, 1st; Grayson Hawkins, 2nd; Madeline Hassmiller, 3rd

- Learning strategies: Jaxyn Ramos, 1st

Baker High School results

- Accounting II: Taylor Dalton, 1st
- Advertising: Campbell Vanderwiele, 4th
- Business communication: Savannah Brown, 1st; Tristen Tritt, 4th
- Business ethics: Owen Higdon and Abbey Benson, 1st
- Business law: Owen Higdon, 1st; Salissa Chesterman, 4th
- Client service: Maria Guadalupe Rodriguez Sanchez, 2nd
- Entrepreneurship: Salissa Chesterman, Teygan Coley and Taylor Gyllenberg, 3rd
- Health care administration: Tristen Tritt, 3rd; Jozie Ramos, 5th
- Hospitality and event management: Brooklyn Jaca, Jozie Ramos and Campbell Vanderwiele, 2nd

- Human resource management: Taylor Gyllenberg, 1st; Daniel Brown, 3rd; Abigail Benson, 5th; Maria Guadalupe Rodriguez Sanchez, 6th; Meadood Waldrop, 10th
- Intro to business communication: Daniel Brown, 1st
- Intro to financial math: Ashlyn Dalton, 1st; Alex Wise, 2nd
- Intro to public speaking: Ashlyn Dalton, 4th
- Marketing: Savannah Brown, Caitlin Lien and Phoebe Wise, 1st
- Personal finance: Macey Moore, 2nd; Teygan Coley, 6th; Brooklyn Jaca, 8th
- Political science: Phoebe Wise, 4th
- Securities and investments: Sarah Plummer, 1st; Caitlin Lien, 4th
- Sports and entertainment management: Taylor Dalton and Macey Moore, 2nd
- Supply chain management: Sarah Plummer, 1st

Field

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The next big fundraiser is Saturday, Feb. 19, at the Elks Lodge, 1896 Second St. It begins at 5 p.m., and the public is welcome.

Attendees can purchase commemorative pint glasses for \$25 (there are only 72 available), and participate in raffles, silent and live auctions, and baseball-themed games.

"We'll see how fast you can put on a set of catcher's gear," Keister said. "We're trying to make a fun night out of it."

Ballpark food will be available to purchase.

Anyone who would like to donate to the event can contact Keister at 541-523-5839 or drop off items at The Windshield Doctor, 2975 10th St.

An account for the foundation has been set up at Banner Bank, or monetary donations can be sent through Venmo (@WadeWilliams2021) or PayPal (email wadewilliams-foundation@gmail.com).

Updates to the event are posted on the Foundation's Facebook page.

Future plans

Keister has two immediate goals: bring back the

parade to kick off baseball season, and create blueprints for new bleachers at Wade Williams.

The field also needs a new irrigation system, fresh dirt for the infield, more sets of bases, fencing, batting cages, gravel, grass, and weed removal.

"Everything has aged," he said.

So far, he said RD Mac has helped a lot with the gravel — the company's logo is featured on the commemorative pint glasses.

And the community, he said, is stepping up.

"I've had a ton of help," he said.



Kenny Keister/Contributed image

This image shows Wade Williams Field before work began in 2021. A fundraiser for the new Wade Williams Foundation is set for Feb. 19 to raise money for upkeep at the field.

Masks

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Baker Superintendent Mark Witty said on Tuesday, Feb. 8, that although district officials will be discussing the issue with the Baker County Health Department and with the school board, he believes, based on the downward trend in COVID-19 cases, that the district will drop the mask requirement on the first day possible.

"I fully anticipate that come March 31 we won't be wearing masks," Witty said. "We've been seeing a dip in cases, and I think there's every chance by the time we get to March 31 that the risk goes way, way down."

Witty noted that in addition to the drop in new cases — down 37% in Baker County over the past two weeks — the level of protection in the community from vaccinations and natural infections is also higher than at any previous point in the pandemic.

Chris Hawkins, chairman of the Baker School Board, agrees with Witty that the situation by the end of March will warrant ending the mask requirement that's been in place since students returned to in-person classes either in 2020 or 2021.



Witty



Hawkins

All students had online classes during the spring of 2020.

The district's elementary students returned to in-person classes on Oct. 14, 2020.

Middle school and high school students began attending classes one day per week on Nov. 9, 2020, moving to two days per week on Jan. 25, 2021, and to a full four-day schedule on April 12, 2021.

All students have had a full in-person class schedule for the current school year starting in August 2021.

Hawkins said he expects widespread enthusiasm about the end of the mask requirement.

"I think the majority of people are going to be very happy and feeling that it's been a long time coming," he said.

Some might have concerns about the removal of masks, Hawkins said.

Witty said he understands that some parents and other district residents think the mask mandate should end immediately, not seven weeks from now.

But Witty said he appreciates that state officials gave school districts time to assess their individual situations and have discussions with health officials and others.

He said he believes that the district's precautions, including enforcing the mask requirement, have "helped us keep kids in school."

Witty said he doesn't want to do away with masks prematurely.

"The last thing I want to do is take off masks and have to shut down a school (due to an outbreak of infections)," he said. "I get the impatience. But I think we're really close to this being an endemic situation."

County's COVID-19 situation

The Baker County Health Department reported 19 new cases on Tuesday, Feb. 8, following three days with cases totals of three, three and six.

That was the lowest three-day total since Dec. 29-31, when there were eight total cases.

Statistics strongly suggest that the record-setting surge in cases driven by the omicron variant has peaked both statewide and in Baker County. Here, weekly cases have dropped 37% over the past two weeks.

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has reported Baker County's first COVID-19-related death during February.

A 78-year-old woman who tested positive on Jan. 20, died Feb. 4, at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Boise. She had underlying medical conditions, according to OHA.

Theft

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Williams' bail was set at \$65,000. He could be released by posting 10% of that amount.

The investigation started with a call to the Baker County Dispatch Center at about 7 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 4, about what was initially reported as an attempted car theft at the Super 8 Motel on Campbell Street just east of Interstate 84.

Baker City Police Sgt. Mike Regan and officer Koby Essex went to the motel and found one man, Robert Hartley, chasing another man.

Hartley told police that the other man had taken his room key card.

The other man gave police two different names, both of which were false, according to Regan's report.

Regan referred to the suspect as John Doe, but he was later identified as Williams from fingerprints, Baker City Police Chief Ty Duby said.

While Essex was investigating the alleged robbery of Hartley, Regan had information from dispatch about a separate

incident in which a Honda vehicle had been reported stolen from The Sunridge Inn, on the other side of the freeway.

The car's owner, Erickson Blair, reported that between 11 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 3, and 7:15 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 4, someone had entered his motel room, taking his vehicle keys and a backpack containing a laptop computer and headphones with a value of about \$1,300.

Blair told police that the theft might have happened while he and his girlfriend were having breakfast on Friday morning, Feb. 4. They were gone for about half an hour. The sliding glass door to their room was unlocked.

They discovered that both the car, which had Utah license plates, and the backpack, were missing when they returned from breakfast.

Regan, who was still at the Super 8, saw a Honda, which matched Blair's description of his vehicle, including Utah plates, parked in the Super 8 lot.

Blair arrived at the Super 8 and confirmed that the Honda was his.

Regan wrote in his report

that the Super 8 manager showed him video from a security camera that showed Williams — identified as John Doe in the report — getting out of the Honda at about 7:08 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 4.

While arresting Williams, Essex had taken a black backpack that matched Blair's description of his missing pack.

Later on Friday, Feb. 4, police examined the backpack at the police department and found a MacBook Air laptop computer and a pair of Sony headphones that matched Blair's description of his missing items.

Police also have identified Williams as a suspect in the theft of a Jeep Renegade and cellphone belonging to Jason Brown. That vehicle was taken from the Maverik store in Baker City about 5 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 4, about 2 hours prior to the report from the Super 8.

Duby said police, who were alerted to the theft of the Renegade, found that vehicle in the Sunridge parking lot while investigating the theft of Blair's Honda.

Both vehicles were returned to their owners.

Survey

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Commissioner Bruce Nichols is a member of the task force.

"And based off of the findings they will prioritize what the housing needs are for people that have behavior health issues, and that is what goes forward to OHA, what their recommendations are for the county," Walsh said.

New Directions is required to file a report to OHA by August 2022, with a summary of the county's priorities and recommendations for meeting housing needs.

That report will help determine how the state allocates money for housing projects, said Sara Haynes of Farallon Consulting, co-coordinator on the project with New Directions.

"And the task force will actually prioritize what those needs are. So the data goes back to the task force," Walsh said.

During Walsh's presentation to commissioners, Commission Chairman Bill Harvey urged New Directions to consult with the Baker City-County Planning Department regarding the possible zoning conflicts if new housing is proposed.

"OHA may say put it anywhere you want but our codes don't allow that as of yet," Harvey said.

Walsh emphasized that the survey is the initial step, and that New Directions will present its findings from the survey to commissioners and to city councils in the county before any actual housing construction projects are proposed.

Harvey said he will ask the Northeast Oregon Housing Authority, which operates many subsidized housing projects in the region, to communicate with the Baker County Housing Task Force.

"They are requesting funding for all of these levels of housing and they can't get the contractors in the area because these projects that they have designed are so large," Harvey said.

Harvey said he is concerned about having the right contractors available.

"The contractors are out of Portland, the drywallers and framers are out of Bend, other entities are out of other areas. I'd prefer to try and use local help as much as possible. And even local contractors to run the project," said Harvey, who is himself a building contractor.

ANNIVERSARY

Youngs to celebrate 50th anniversary

Gary and Pat (Barsotti) Young are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on Saturday, Feb. 12.

All friends and family are invited to an open house to help them celebrate that day from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Club, 2005 Valley Ave. in Baker City.

Gary served over five years in the U.S. Army, with three years of active duty, before returning home and beginning his career in banking at Pioneer Federal Savings & Loan.

He began his education at Eastern Oregon College (now EOU). Because at that time EOC did not have a business program, Gary decided to move to Portland to pursue a degree in business.

Lucky for him, (and all of us) Pat had also returned to college that term, after traveling and spending a few years working for the US Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C.

Gary and Pat met at Portland State University on the first day of Spanish class in 1970, and that was it, they've been together ever since. Pat



Contributed Photo

Gary and Pat Young

still tells stories about her inability to speak Spanish due to the distraction of Gary in this class.

Gary and Pat were married in Baker City on Feb. 12, 1972. Gary worked for Pioneer Federal Savings & Loan as a loan officer. He quickly moved up the ranks and his job took him and his growing family to Burns, and then a few years later to Ontario for Gary to manage those branches. In 1987 they returned to Gary's hometown of Baker City as he joined the corporate office of Pioneer Bank.

In 1994 Gary needed a change and took his talents a few blocks away to the Baker County Assessor's office where he worked happily and with a much lower blood pressure for the remainder of his career.

Pat worked as a full-time mom raising their three young children in the early years. In addition to maintaining her full-time job as the family chef and domestic stewardess, she also picked up side gigs as a bookkeeper for the law firm of Yturri, Rose, Burnham, Ebertz and Bentz in Ontario, and then worked as bookkeeper for Ellison Motors, and then as a receptionist/bookkeeper for Mike Garchar, CPA in Baker City until she retired from being paid for her labor.

Gary and Pat have three children — Anne (Barry) Nemeck of Baker City, Craig (Leslie) Young of Eugene, and Chris (Amy) Young of Baker City. They have eight grandchildren — Isaac, Isabella and Lincoln Nemeck; Jackson, Lauren and Ben Young; and Otis and Zea Young.

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Barbara Lee Sherman

March 15, 1941 - January 31, 2022

Barbara Lee Sherman, 80, of Baker City, Oregon passed away peacefully on January 31, 2022 surrounded by her family. Barbara grew up in Baker City, a town she loved and never left.

Barbara Lee Sherman, born to William T.H. and Peggy Sherman on March 15, 1941. Barbara was a force to be reckoned with from the get go, graduating from Baker High School in 1960 and Links School of Business in 1963. She pursued and was awarded a degree in Junior Accounting.

While Barbara never married, her nephews and nieces meant more to her than words can describe. She had many loving pets that she absolutely adored; Licorice, Buddy and Squirrel. She dedicated her entire working career to The Record Courier where she worked for 40+ years.

Barbara was an active member of her 1960s class reunion committee and the Republican Central Committee. When Barba-

ra retired, she spent her mornings with a cup of coffee and good fellowship at the Baker Truck Corral.

Barbara was preceded in death by both parents, sister Mary Germond, and nephew Patrick Germond.

She is survived by her brothers, Bill and wife Donna Sherman, Dick Sherman, and Jim Sherman. Nephews Mike Germond, Kenneth Sherman, Richard Sherman. Nieces Ruth Germond, Brenda and husband Billy Buck, Nancy Sherman, Kim Huntley, Sandy and husband Buzz Harper, Jody and husband Jeff Colton, Patty and husband Brandon Ruiz. Numerous great nephews and great-nieces who loved giving Aunt Barb a hard time.

Services will be held at Coles Tribute Center on Saturday, April 23, 2022 at 11:00 AM. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Best Friends of Baker City, OR.

