



SPORTS A3
14 Baker wrestlers qualify for state



SPORTS A5
Baker swimmer heads to two state events

Baker City Herald

IN THIS EDITION: LOCAL • HOME & LIVING • SPORTS

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QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Cindy Carpenter of Baker City.

BRIEFING

'Night at Old Auburn' scheduled Feb. 26

The Baker Heritage Museum is bringing back its annual "A Night at Old Auburn" fundraiser on Saturday, Feb. 26 at the Baker Elks Lodge, 1896 Second St.

Dinner begins at 6 p.m., followed by gambling games and bingo at 7 p.m. Tickets for dinner are \$40. Entrance tickets (no dinner) are \$15. Tickets are available until Feb. 18 at the Baker Heritage Museum, 2480 Grove St., Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. These can also be purchased online at www.friendsofbakerheritagemuseum.com.

Those who wish to support the museum but not attend the event can purchase dinner tickets and pick up the meal that night.

Brooklyn School Taco Tuesday fundraiser continues

Throughout February, D&J Taco Shop, El Erradero, Delicioso Mexican Restaurant, and MC Taco Bus will donate a percentage of proceeds on Tuesdays to Brooklyn Primary School.

WEATHER

Today
37/19
Mostly sunny

Wednesday
39/13
Mostly cloudy

Full forecast on the back of the B section.



Art Roamers (Susan and Jeff Jentzsch, left) and Snake River Music Gardens (Arthur Sappington and Lindianne Sarno, right) are working to strengthen the connection between Baker County and Uganda.

Baker's Uganda connection

BY LISA BRITTON
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Two organizations with ties to Baker County are extending their reach to Africa.

The most visible is Art Roamers, owned by Jeff and Susan Jentzsch, which brings metal animal sculptures created by African artists to the sidewalks of Baker City every summer. By bringing the artwork — which is for sale — to the United States, Art Roamers makes it accessible to a wider audience.

The other nonprofit is Snake River Music Gardens, founded by Art Sappington and his wife and colleague, music educator Lindianne Sarno.

Snake River Music Gardens has supported His Grace Children's Home, an orphanage in Uganda, for about two years.

Sarno said she was talking about the orphanage at church when a friend mentioned Art Roamers.

"I took that as divine guidance so I got in touch with them," she said.

With their shared connection to Uganda, these two organizations are spreading the word about how Baker County can help the African country.

Sarno and Sappington will join the Art Roamers' First Friday event on March 4, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Art Roamers is at 1902 Main St., with the entrance on the north side of Court Plaza.

100 Families

To gain more support for His Grace Children's Home, Sarno launched the 100 Families Campaign to find sponsors for the 35



Waiswa John Billy is the director of Youth in Act-Uganda, which includes His Grace Children's Home.

orphans who live at the orphanage.

"At this point we have 15 families helping us," Sarno said. "Our support program is unique because 100% of donations go right to the orphanage. Snake River Music Gardens covers all processing fees."

Sarno is in frequent contact with Waiswa John Billy, who is director of the orphanage.

The campaign, she said, will help "stabilize the orphanage budget and find sponsors and grandparents for the 35 children."

"It's not just the money," Sarno said. "It's the love, and the feeling that he can rely on us."

Experts needed

Sarno said another way to help is to share expertise, especially for agricultural practices.

For instance, Sappington is helping the orphanage become food self-reliant with gardens, a permaculture food forest, and beehives.

A capital project at the orphanage is to finish a building as an office for Joseph Mulopi, an agriculturist who took a permaculture design course through Oregon State University.

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COVID cases drop 63.9% in 3 weeks

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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The number of new COVID-19 cases in Baker County continues to decline, and the trend is accelerating.

The county reported 66 cases for the most recent week, Feb. 6-12.

That's a 42.6% drop from the previous week, and the third straight week with fewer cases.

Since the county set a record high with 183 cases from Jan. 16-22, the weekly totals have dropped to 165 (9.8% weekly drop) and to 115 (30.3%).

Over the three-week period, cases have dropped by 63.9%.

"We are seeing less cases," Nancy Staten, director of the Baker County Health Department, said on Monday morning, Feb. 14. "We'll take it."

The most recent weekly total of 66 was the fewest in a week since Dec. 26-Jan. 1, when there were 29 cases.

That's just before the surge caused by the highly contagious omicron variant began to spread across Oregon, resulting in record numbers of cases statewide.

But as has been seen in other countries where omicron spread earlier, as well as in the eastern part of the U.S., cases plummet after the omicron wave peaks.

Oregon's trends prompted the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to announce last week that the state's mask mandate for indoor public spaces will end by March 31, and potentially earlier if the number of COVID-19 patients in hospitals dips below 400.

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Haines city councilor runs for governor

Peter Hall is seeking the Democratic nomination

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Peter Hall is a Democrat running for Oregon governor who wants to distinguish himself not only from Republicans in the race, but also from candidates from his own party.

Hall, 69, has lived in Haines since 2004 and is a member of the Haines City Council.



Staten



Hall

See, Hall/Page A2

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

Season for stubborn inversion waning

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Jay Breidenbach augments the traditional symbols of Valentine's Day with something you won't find a card for, or printed on one of those molar-crunching candy hearts.

But it's a celebration that many Baker County residents likely would appreciate, and perhaps as much as a flower bouquet or box of chocolates.

"Valentine's Day is what we like to call the end of the inversion season," said Breidenbach, the warning coordination meteorologist at the National Weather Service's Boise office.

And what an inversion season it has been for Baker Valley and some other valleys in Baker and southern Union counties.

An inversion, as its name implies, inverts — which is to say, reverses — the usual atmospheric situation in which

the air gets colder as you gain elevation.

Typically the temperature drops by 3.5 to 5 degrees for every 1,000 vertical feet. Which explains why it's generally chillier at Anthony Lakes, elevation 7,100 feet, than at the Baker City Airport, 3,373 feet.

But when certain ingredients come together — snow on the ground, clear skies, light winds and no significant storms rolling inland from the Pacific — inversions can form in the mountain valleys of Eastern Oregon and Western Idaho, Breidenbach said.

And the weather is most likely to whip up that recipe between Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day, those two holidays serving as bookends for the unofficial inversion season.

Inversions can form earlier and later, he said.

But one of the ingredients — solid snow cover — isn't common in valleys earlier in autumn, and after Valentine's

Day cold fronts that bring strong winds usually are more frequent.

The gusty winds that both precede and follow late winter and spring storms prevent cold, dense air from pooling in the valleys, Breidenbach said.

During midwinter weather doldrums, however, when a ridge of high pressure sometimes loiters over the Northwest, those scouring winds tend to be absent, he said.

That ridge has been atypically persistent since the second week of January, Breidenbach said.

After Jan. 7, when the high temperature was 47 at the Baker City Airport, it didn't get as warm as 40 for the rest of January.

February has brought only slight relief from the omnipresent chill.

The high at the airport on Feb. 9 was 41, starting a run of four days in five with temperatures of 40 or higher. The

peak, as of Feb. 13, was 45 degrees on Feb. 11.

But even with that modest respite, Baker Valley was notably colder than most of the rest of Eastern Oregon, including places, such as Burns and La Grande, that typically have comparable temperatures over an extended period.

For the first 13 days of February, the average high temperature at the Baker City Airport was 33.4 degrees.

At the Burns Airport the average high was 48.9 degrees. The high temperature was 49 or higher on nine straight days, Feb. 5-13, topping out at an April-like 62 on Feb. 10.

The difference in nighttime lows was similarly dramatic — 7.6 degrees at Baker City, 21.2 at Burns.

So why did Burns bask in spring warmth while Baker City continued to shiver?

Breidenbach said the chief factor likely was snow — Baker had (and has) it, while

much of the snow around Burns melted earlier.

Without widespread snow cover, the ground in the Burns area could absorb more heat, Breidenbach said.

That prevented a thin, dense layer of chilly air from forming near the ground — a key aspect in an inversion, he said.

In Baker Valley, meanwhile, the persistent snow cover reflected much of the sun's heat, and at night, with mostly clear skies, what little heat there was easily and quickly radiated back into the atmosphere, Breidenbach said.

This fortified the inversion here, he said, while the lack of snow, and the resulting warmer temperatures in the Burns area, prevented the inversion from forming there.

The prospect for relief arrived, appropriately enough, on Valentine's Day in the form of the strongest cold front in more than a month that should dissipate the inversion.



TODAY
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