



SPORTS A5
Tigers snatch GOL title from Bulldogs



SPORTS A6
Baker girls beat La Grande for GOL crown

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 Lee Swiger of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Speaker to discuss modernizing irrigation systems

The Powder Basin Watershed Council in Baker City will have a guest speaker on March 2 who will talk about ways to modernize irrigation systems.

Julie Davies O'Shea, executive director of the Farmers Conservation Alliance (FCA) based in Hood River, will discuss how her organization has worked throughout the West to modernize irrigation systems benefiting both agriculture and the environment.

Her presentation will start at 6:30 p.m. at the Sunridge Inn, 1 Sunridge Lane.

Davies O'Shea will explain how FCA's Irrigation Modernization Program creates a path forward for irrigation districts to upgrade their infrastructure, saving water and operating costs, while restoring streams, protecting fish, and generating clean, renewable energy. In addition, she will give an overview of recent projects the organization has worked on to give an idea of possibilities and approaches.

"One of our board members thought that given the recent drought, it is an ideal time to share information with irrigators and planners on ways to more efficiently use our limited water resources," said Tim Bailey, the Watershed Council's executive director.

WEATHER

Today
20/3
Partly sunny

Wednesday
21/3
Partly sunny

Full forecast on the back of the B section.

COVID cases down 78% in past month

Baker City Herald

COVID-19 cases have been declining in Baker County for almost a month.

The Baker County Health Department reported 40 cases during the most recent measuring week, Feb. 13-19.

That's a 37.9% drop from the previous week's total of 60.

Since the week of Jan. 16-22, when the county set a record high with 183

new cases, cases have plummeted by 78.1%, dropping for four consecutive weeks.

Weekly case totals, and the percentage decline, for that period:

- Jan. 23-29 — 165 cases, 9.8% drop from previous week
 - Jan. 30-Feb. 5 — 115 cases, 30.3% drop
 - Feb. 6-12 — 66 cases, 42.6% drop
 - Feb. 13-19 — 40 cases, 37.9% drop
- The most recent weekly total of 40

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 tend to drop dramatically after the omicron wave peaks.

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) on Friday, Feb. 18, announced the 45th COVID-19 related death of a Baker County resident.

The 84-year-old man tested positive on Feb. 1 and died Feb. 17 at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center, according to OHA. He had underlying medical conditions.

It was the third COVID-19-related death in the county during February.

Fund honoring Virginia Kostol will maintain Chinese Cemetery

Kostol, who died in 2020 at age 94, was dedicated to historic Baker City site

Baker City Herald

The Baker County Historical Society and the family of Virginia Kostol recently announced The Virginia L. Kostol Fund, an annual fund established through the Oregon Community Foundation that is dedicated to the care and main-

tenance of the Chinese Cemetery on the east side of Baker City.

"Virginia Kostol was a vital member to the Baker County Historical Society's mission, and she served in numerous leadership roles," said Ginger Savage, president of the Baker County Historical Society. "Her dedication to the development and maintenance of the Chinese Cemetery was unwavering."

The cemetery, located on Wind-

mill Lane, east of the Campbell Street interchange on Interstate 84, served as a resting place for members of the Chinese community who resided in Baker County from 1880 through 1940. Many of those remains were returned to their homeland.

Today, the only remaining marked grave belongs to Lee Pak Chue, 1882-1938.

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Kostol



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Baker City's Chinese Cemetery is just east of Windmill Lane. To get there, drive east on Campbell Street under the freeway and past the Super 8 Motel and Chevron service station. Turn right on Windmill Lane and head up the hill. The cemetery is just to the left of Windmill Lane a few hundred yards from Campbell Street.



John Noble Holcomb is the only Baker County resident to receive the Medal of Honor, America's highest military decoration.

State resolution honors John Noble Holcomb

BY JAYSON JACOBY

jjacoby@bakercityherald.com
Baker County's only recipient of America's highest military recognition — the Medal of Honor — could have a stretch of highway near his hometown dedicated to his sacrifice.

John Noble Holcomb, who was born and raised in Richland, was killed during a firefight in Vietnam on Dec. 3, 1968.

Holcomb was 22. Earlier this year, Steve Bates, chair of the Committee on Memorials and Remembrance, which is affiliated with the Vietnam Veterans of America, emailed the two state legislators who represent Baker County — Rep. Mark Owens, R-Crane, and Sen. Lynn Findley, R-Vale — on behalf of John Duggan, commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars post in Halfway.

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

Construction prompts changes to school calendars

School will start a bit later next 2 years, with slightly shorter winter break

Baker City Herald

Some Baker schools will have slightly amended schedules over the next three school years to accommodate construction projects made possible by voter approval of a \$4 million bond measure in the May 2021 election.

The Baker 5J School Board on Thursday, Feb. 17, approved several changes to the calendar for the current school year and for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 calendars.

The alterations will give school staff time to pack and unpack their rooms before and after construction.

"We are thankful for a Board that recognized the need for staff to have some



Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald, File

Students gather outside Brooklyn Primary School in October 2020.

dedicated time to prepare for construction in their schools and to prepare for students to return to the space when con-

struction is completed," 5J Superintendent Mark Witty said in a press release. "This will ease some potential anxiety

and ensure that our students have the best learning environments possible during a construction phase."

The district will meet state requirements for total classroom hours for all schools.

The one school affected in the current year is Brooklyn Primary, which houses students from first grade through third grade.

June 6, 2022, will be the last day of classes for Brooklyn students, two days earlier than for other district schools.

For the 2022-23 school year, the Baker Early Learning Center (in the former North Baker School), Haines Elementary and South Baker Intermediate will have two fewer classroom days than other district schools.

All schools will start the 2022-23 school year on Sept. 6, 2022, one week later than previously planned. All schools will begin the 2022-23 winter break on Dec. 21, 2022, two days later than previously planned, because

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TODAY
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