



Baker City Herald

IN THIS EDITION: LOCAL • BUSINESS & AG LIFE • SPORTS Serving Baker County since 1870 • bakercityherald.com THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2022 • \$1.50

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Larry Plumbtree of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Baker Relief Nursery plans open house on March 30

The Baker Relief Nursery, 1925 16th St., will be celebrating its first year of operation during an open house on Wednesday, March 30, from noon to 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The public is invited to tour the facility and visit with the team. Staff will also be sharing their first Annual Impact Report.

For more information call 541-523-5054 or email at info@bakerreliefnursery.org.

Lenten Retreat at St. Francis de Sales Cathedral

St. Francis de Sales Cathedral Parish is presenting a Lenten Retreat with Fr. Bailey Clemons, starting with Stations of the Cross on Friday, April 1 at 5 p.m. and continuing on Saturday, April 2 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. If you would like attend, call the St. Francis parish office at 541-523-4251 or email to office@sfdcsc.org.

Open house April 9 at Baker Rural fire station

The Baker Rural Fire Department will have an open house on Saturday, April 9, at its new station, 3855 23rd St., from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

WEATHER

Today
62/34
Mostly sunny

Friday
67/35
Mostly sunny

Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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



City might stop ambulance service Sept. 30

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR AND JAYSON JACOBY
Baker City Herald

Citing an unsustainable and unfair financial burden on city taxpayers, the Baker City Council on Tuesday, March 22, voted 6-0 to tell City Manager Jon Cannon to notify the Baker County Board of Commissioners that the city intends to cease providing ambulance services, including within the city limits, as of Sept. 30, 2022.

"Baker City finds itself unable to demand more from its taxpayers to provide a service that is the state-mandated responsibility of Baker County," Cannon wrote in a letter to commissioners dated March 22.

The city would continue to respond to fires even if it ceased ambulance service.

Councilor Shane Alderson said the situation "is an awful position to fall on this council."

Whether the city will actually end ambulance service Sept. 30 is uncertain.

Cannon said in a phone interview on Wednesday, March 23, that his conversation with councilors might have been different had the county sent a proposed one-year contract for ambulance services, including a proposed county contribution of \$130,000, prior to Tuesday's meeting. County Commissioner Bruce

Nichols said in a phone interview on Wednesday morning, March 23, that the county had prepared the proposed one-year contract, starting with the new fiscal year on July 1, 2022, that would maintain the Baker City Fire Department as the local ambulance service provider and include the \$130,000 county payment to the city.

See, **Ambulance**/Page A3



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Oliver Brown, left, and siblings June and Colton Weaver joined a crowd of other youngsters at Geiser-Pollman Park on March 22, 2022.

Spring surprise

After a typical dismal start, with wind and snow, the season quickly turns balmy

BY JAYSON JACOBY
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

Spring, that most treacherous of seasons, put on a predictable debut.

First a chilly north wind on the equinox itself.

Then the first full day — of spring and of the weeklong vacation for Baker students — started with snow flurries.

But unlike some previous breaks marred by similarly dismal weather throughout, the 2022 version quickly turned tranquil.

See, **Spring**/Page A2



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Oliver and Sydney Brown spent a sunny afternoon at Geiser-Pollman Park on March 22, 2022. It was the warmest day in Baker City since October 2021.

Kenyon Damschen appointed to Baker City Council

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR
soconnor@bakercityherald.com

The Baker City Council's latest vacancy didn't remain vacant nearly as long as the previous one.

Councilors appointed Kenyon Damschen on Tuesday evening, March 22, during their regular meeting at City Hall.

Damschen replaces Heather Sells, who resigned March 1 because she is moving out of the city and is no longer eligible to serve as a councilor.

Damschen will be sworn in at the next council meeting, set for April 12.

The City Council was missing its seventh member for about four months last year after Lynette Perry resigned in August 2021 due to health issues. After several 3-3 votes on motions to appoint a replacement, councilors picked Dean Guyer on Dec. 14.

Replacing Sells took less time, but it did require more than one round of voting before one candidate received at least the four votes needed to be appointed.

Councilors had five candidates to consider Tuesday — Damschen, who applied earlier in the week, along with Matthew Diaz and Danika Sinram, both of whom applied March 7, and Ray Duman and Marvin Sundean, who applied in December.

On the first vote, Councilors Joanna Dixon, Johnny Waggoner Sr. and Shane Alderson voted for Damschen.

Mayor Kerry McQuisten voted for Diaz. Councilors Guyer and Jason Spriet voted for Duman.

After those results were tallied, both McQuisten and Spriet decided to change their votes to Damschen, giving him five votes.



Damschen

See, **Council**/Page A2

Baker City man arrested on sex abuse charges

BY JAYSON JACOBY
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

A Baker City man was arrested Monday afternoon, March 21, on multiple sex crime charges that, were he convicted on all or most counts, could result in a prison sentence of more than 30 years.

Jerry Ray Shaw Jr., 40, was arrested at the Baker City Police Department at about 4:30 p.m. and taken to the Baker County Jail, according to a press release from the Police Department.

The alleged victim is a juvenile girl, according to the press release. According to court records, Shaw knew the alleged victim. The investigation is continuing.

Shaw is charged with 10 total counts — four counts of first-degree sodomy, four counts of first-degree sex abuse, and two counts of unlawful first-degree sexual penetration with an object.

Shaw was arraigned on Tuesday afternoon, March 22, in Baker County Circuit Court. Baker City attorney Bob Moon was appointed to represent Shaw, who requested a court-appointed lawyer.

Greg Baxter, Baker County district attorney, said he will present the case to a grand jury.

Judge Matt Shirtcliff set Shaw's bail at \$1 million. Shaw could be released by posting 10% of that amount — \$100,000. Shirtcliff also re-

quired that if Shaw posts bail, a hearing will take place prior to his release.

Shaw is scheduled to enter a plea in Baker County Circuit Court on April 14 at 1:30 p.m.

The alleged abuse happened between Jan. 1, 2012, and Dec. 31, 2015, in Baker City, according to court documents. The victim was younger than 14 throughout the period, and younger than 12 in some instances.

According to Oregon Revised Statutes, first-degree unlawful sexual penetration involves a victim younger than 12 or a victim who is "incapable of consent by reason of mental incapacitation, physical helplessness or incapability of appraising the nature of the

victim's conduct."

First-degree sexual abuse involves a victim who is younger than 14 or is "incapable of consent by reason of mental incapacitation, physical helplessness or incapability of appraising the nature of the victim's conduct."

Each of the three charges is a felony, and all are Measure 11 offenses, meaning they carry mandatory minimum prison sentences on conviction.

First-degree sodomy and first-degree sexual penetration both have mandatory minimum sentences of 8 years and 4 months for each count on which a defendant is convicted.

First-degree sexual abuse has a mandatory minimum of

6 years and 3 months on each count.

In addition, the case could potentially involve "Jessica's Law for Oregon," which the Oregon Legislature passed in 2006. That law includes a 25-year mandatory minimum prison sentence for people convicted of first-degree sex crimes against a child younger than 12.

According to a report from Detective Zach Thatcher of the Baker City Police, the investigation started on the morning of March 15, 2022, when he received a child welfare report from the Department of Human Services documenting the victim disclosing past sexual abuse during an interview earlier that day.

TODAY Issue 132 28 pages	Business.....B1 & B2	Community News.....A2	Horoscope.....B2 & B4	Opinion.....A4	Sudoku.....B5
	Classified.....B2-B4	Crossword.....B2 & B4	Lottery Results.....A2	Senior Menus.....A2	Turning Backs.....A2
	Comics.....B5	Dear Abby.....B6	News of Record.....A2	Sports.....A6	Weather.....B6