



OUTDOORS B1
The story of the stumps



LOCAL A2
Museum open house April 1



SPORTS A5
Baker loses last 2 in Arizona

Baker City Herald

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SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2022 • \$1.50

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Jerry Yencopal 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.

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

March 31 last legal day to use studded tires

Oregon's legal studded tire season continues through March 31. Starting April 1, it's illegal to drive a vehicle equipped with studded tires. Drivers with studded tires on their vehicles after the March 31 deadline can be charged by law enforcement with a Class C traffic violation.

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 to attend, call the St. Francis parish office at 541-523-4251 or email to office@sfdcsc.org.

WEATHER

Today
66/40
Partly sunny



Sunday
70/42
Mostly cloudy



Monday
59/40
Rain showers early



Full forecast on the back of the B section.



Linda Smith, founder of Shared Hope, a group that fights human trafficking, speaks at a rally.

WALKING FOR AWARENESS

Baker City event will raise money to combat human trafficking

BY LISA BRITTON

A community event this spring in Baker City will help raise awareness about the issue of child sex trafficking, and raise money to combat the problem.

Baker County Soroptimists are sponsoring the inaugural Walk for Awareness, a 5K walk or run, on Saturday, May 14, starting at the

Baker Sports Complex. The Complex is north of the Baker High School track. Access is via Fifth Street.

Registration starts at 9 a.m. that day, and the event begins at 10 a.m.

Participants can pre-register at walk-for-awareness.ticketleap.com/registernow.

Entry is \$30 with a shirt (register by April 14 to guarantee shirt size), or \$10 without a shirt.

A family can register for \$25. Shirts will be sold at the event for \$25.

All proceeds will be donated to Shared Hope International, which was founded in 1998. This orga-

nization aims to end sex trafficking by raising awareness about the problem, provide services to survivors of sex trafficking, and help states improve laws for this crime.

Shared Hope representatives will be at the Walk for Awareness, as well as local law enforcement. Local cheerleaders will be selling hamburgers.

"We want everyone to be a part of it and help fight this fight," said Sheryl Blankenship of Baker City, who is spearheading the event with her daughter-in-law, Macey Blankenship.

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City buying replacement for burned sewer truck

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR AND JAYSON JACOBY

Baker City Council has dealt with the most immediate effect of a March 16 fire at the city's public works shops, approving the purchase of a new sewer jetter truck for \$87,000.

The fire, which started in the engine compartment of the city's former sewer jetter truck, destroyed the truck and caused extensive damage to the building in which it was stored.

Michelle Owen, the city's public works director, told councilors during their Tuesday, March 22, meeting that the city used the jetter truck, a 1998 model, to clear sewer lines on a daily basis, so replacing it quickly is important.

Owen said that if the city ordered a brand new truck, it probably wouldn't arrive for at least a year.

Instead, city officials searched online for a used model and found a 2012 truck, which is similar to the burned truck, in Kansas City, Missouri.

"The issue is that in fact there aren't very many of these for purchase," Owen said.

She said the city's insurance will pay an estimated \$40,000 of the cost of the replacement truck.

The rest of the money will come from the city's equipment fund.

Owen didn't have an estimated date for when the new truck will arrive.

Fee schedule approved

During Tuesday's meeting councilors also approved a resolution setting fees for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2022.

The resolution includes increases of 3.75% for water and sewer rates for residential and commercial customers.

The city staff proposed that increase, which is half the amount of the federal consumer price index increase of 7.5% as of January 2022.

The base monthly bill for a typical residential service will increase from \$46 to \$47.73. The base rate includes three units of water (one unit is about 750 gallons). The cost for each additional unit will increase from 97 cents to \$1.01.

The residential sewer rate will rise from \$29.06 per month to \$30.15.

See, *Truck*/Page A2



Shared Hope/Contributed Photo

Baker City recognized as Tree City USA for the 37th straight year

Just 5 cities in Oregon can boast longer runs

Baker City Herald
Baker City's run as a Tree City USA is closing in on four decades.

The Arbor Day Foundation has announced that Baker City has achieved the Tree City USA designation for the 37th straight year.

To qualify, a city must create a tree board or department, adopt a tree care ordinance, spend at least \$2 per resident each year on community forestry work and have an annual Arbor Day observance and proclamation.

City officials are planning an observance for later this year. The city is also sponsoring a poster contest for students from kindergarten through sixth grade.

Baker City's tree projects over the past decade or so include replacing flowering plum and cherry trees that were dying along Main and Broadway streets in the downtown historic district, and having arborists examine all the trees in the city's largest park, Geiser-Pollman.

Just five Oregon cities have been Tree Cities longer than Baker City: Salem (46), Portland (45), Eugene (43), Sunriver (42), and Rogue River (39).

Baker City grapples with ambulance costs, revenue

BY JAYSON JACOBY AND SAMANTHA O'CONNOR

Baker City Manager Jonathan Cannon is proud of the ambulance service that the city's fire department provides within the city limits and in about 70% of Baker County outside the city.

But pride and professionalism, he said, don't pay the bills.

Cannon said on Thursday, March 24, that although he will consider all possible options, he believes "there's some pretty big hurdles" to overcome for the city to be able to continue operating ambulances.

The tallest of those obstacles, he said, is money. The city isn't collect-



Cannon



Guyer



Alderson

ing enough from its ambulance billing to cover its costs, Cannon said. That's been the case for more than a decade, but Cannon said he is concerned that the shortfall is increasing, and along with it a growing burden on city property taxpayers that is neither fair nor sustainable.

Although Baker County has been giving money to the city for ambulance service for the past four years, Cannon said the amounts aren't enough. The city doesn't receive property tax dollars from outside the city limits to support ambulance operations.

On Tuesday, March 22, the City Council, after hearing a presentation

from Cannon, voted 6-0 to notify Baker County commissioners, who have the legal responsibility to ensure there is ambulance service in the city and elsewhere in the county, that the city intends to discontinue its ambulance operation Sept. 30, 2022.

If that happens, the county would need to find another ambulance provider to replace the Baker City Fire Department. Under Oregon law, the county has the sole authority to choose ambulance services.

Baker City does not have the option, at this point, of providing ambulance services only within the city limits because the current service area includes much of the rest of the county, and the provider must cover the entire area.

The county has not proposed a smaller service area including Baker City only.

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



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