

Local

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

50 YEARS AGO

from the Democrat-Herald

April 9, 1972

Setting three school records, the Baker High School girls powered by second-place Pine-Eagle Friday 61-40 to win their tri-meet track opener.

The Bulldogs compiled eight firsts in the 13-event meet, including record efforts in the javelin, 440 and high jump.

25 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

April 9, 1997

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management has chosen Trail Tenders Inc. to receive the agency's "Making a Difference" award.

Trail Tenders, a nonprofit volunteer organization that helps the BLM operate the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, is one of just three groups in the nation to receive the award this year, said Dave Hunsaker, the center's director.

The center's staff nominated Trail Tenders for the award, Hunsaker said.

10 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

April 9, 2012

Baker City councilors will devote a great deal of their meeting this week to infrastructure matters.

The engineer's report for the burying of utility lines beneath Resort Street has been given to the councilors for their review and possible approval.

Cost for the work is estimated to exceed \$1 million. Property owners along Resort from Auburn Avenue to Campbell Street would be asked to pay for roughly \$301,000 of the total through an assessment of \$7.150 per linear foot of their property facing Resort.

Either money from the general fund or a loan from a financial institution would be needed to make up the remainder of the nearly \$1.1 million utility line upgrade.

ONE YEAR AGO

from the Baker City Herald

April 10, 2021

The Baker Little League, which canceled the 2020 season due to the COVID-19 pandemic, is set to return May 1.

Jason McClaughry, Baker Little League president, said preparation for the 2021 season started not long after the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 schedule.

"The first thing we do every year is to work on getting new board members or filling the board to help run league operations for the next year," McClaughry said.

One of the board's bigger challenges, not surprisingly, was working closely with the Oregon Health Authority and the Baker County Health Department to ensure this long-awaited season can be played safely.

"Putting a procedure and protocol together for how we are going to get kids back on the field, and doing it safely with all the expectations that we have these days," McClaughry said.

McClaughry recognized that this offseason, following the 2020 cancellation, was not going to be like previous ones.

"Before, we would be looking at putting teams together, registering players, looking at equipment purchases, and uniforms; we've been having to look at other things under the current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and guidelines on how we would operate a season," he said.

OREGON LOTTERY

MEGABUCKS, APRIL 6

16-25-38-40-42-45

Next jackpot: \$3.9 million

POWERBALL, APRIL 6

6-42-45-47-64 PB 18

Next jackpot: \$268 million

MEGA MILLIONS, APRIL 5

22-43-60-63-64

Mega 18

Next jackpot: \$94 million

WIN FOR LIFE, APRIL 6

24-58-59-70

PICK 4, APRIL 7

• 1 p.m.: 9-0-0-3

• 4 p.m.: 6-2-1-5

• 7 p.m.: 6-9-8-7

• 10 p.m.: 7-0-7-0

LUCKY LINES, APRIL 7

3-8-12-16-19-21-28-30

Next jackpot: \$19,000

SENIOR MENUS

MONDAY (April 11): Baked ziti, garlic bread, zucchini and tomatoes, ambrosia, brownies

TUESDAY (April 12): Hot turkey sandwich, mashed potatoes, peas, green salad, cookies

WEDNESDAY (April 13): Chicken broccoli fettuccine, green beans and tomatoes, garlic bread, fruit and cottage cheese, ice cream

THURSDAY (April 14): Beef stew, broccoli, rolls, green salad

FRIDAY (April 15): Baked cod, clam chowder, capri vegetables, rolls, coleslaw, bread pudding

MONDAY (April 18): Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes with gravy, mixed vegetables, rolls, fruit cup, brownies

Public luncheon at the Senior Center, 2810 Cedar St., from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; \$5 donation (60 and older), \$7.50 for those under 60.

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How?: Preparing for primary election

BY MARK BOGART

For the Baker City Herald

A delivery truck pulled up behind an old building on a prearranged day in March. The driver called a contact person inside the building to notify her of the arrival. Two people came out to the truck to check the cargo before it was moved into the building. From that time on, it was monitored both in person and by surveillance cameras until it was secured in a metal cage behind locked doors.



Bogart

The shipment in this scenario consisted of ballots for the upcoming May 17 primary election delivered to the Baker County Courthouse. Receiving the ballots were County Clerk Stefanie Kirby and Deputy Elections Clerk Yvonne Nork. The delivery is just one step in a tightly regulated process for conducting elections in Oregon.

Most of the extensive details of the election process are covered by the Oregon Vote by Mail Procedures Manual, which Kirby calls the "Elections Bible." It is available to the public through the Secretary of State website. As county clerk, Kirby is the county's chief election official responsible for overseeing the process throughout the county. The state's election website lists her responsibilities, which include checking ballot measures, ensuring that elections are conducted according to state law and procedures, maintaining voter and candidate records, ensuring uniform application of election laws, and assuring that the public receives complete and accurate information regarding elections.

To illustrate the complexity of the election process, Kirby pointed out that she ordered 57 different "ballot styles" this year. Because this is a "closed primary election," Democrats, Republicans and nonaffiliated voters will receive different ballots so they can only vote within their party for the partisan races, such as governor, senator, and representatives in both Congress and the Oregon Legislature.

Ballot styles also depend on residence in different communities and special districts (such as a rural fire district) with their own local races. Party precinct chairs will also be included on the ballot this year, rather than being printed on a separate page. All of the ballots will include state ballot measures and local nonpartisan offices, including two county commissioner positions. All of this customization is tracked using the Oregon Centralized Voter Registration Software which uses identification numbers and bar codes.

Kirby emphasized that voters have until April 26 to check and update their voter registration status, including address and party affiliation, in order to receive the correct ballot in the mail. Voters can check this information using the Oregon Secretary of State website or by contacting the County Clerk's office at 541-523-8207.



Mark Bogart/Contributed Photo

Baker County Clerk Stefanie Kirby is preparing for the May 17, 2022, primary election.

Oregon has an automatic voter registration process through the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for those who qualify. Kirby explained that this is an "opt out" program in which the new registrants are notified by mail so they can fill out a form to select a party or have their name removed from the system. Voter lists are updated on an ongoing basis using several sources, Kirby explained. Residents can also register at the County Clerk's office in the Courthouse, 1995 Third St.

The ballots remain locked up until the prescribed time to bring in the local Election Board, a pool of volunteers representing both major parties and nonaffiliated voters, who work in teams to match bar-coded envelopes with the correct ballot styles. The surveillance requirements continue during this process and until ballots are delivered to the post office for mailing. Ballots will be mailed between April 27 and May 3 for most voters. Military and other out-of-state Oregon voters have probably already received ballots.

Voters can complete and return their ballots anytime on or prior to election day, May 17, by placing them in the mail (postage is now prepaid) or in the designated drop boxes at the Courthouse, at Community Connection in Baker City or at the city halls in Richland, Halfway, or Huntington. Ballots can also be taken directly to the County Clerk's office. There will also be a voting booth at the Clerks office for anyone wishing to vote there in person.

This year ballots will be counted if postmarked by election day, May 17. Voters need to check collection times at the post office to be sure the ballot is postmarked by that day in order to be counted. Voters using county drop boxes or voting at the courthouse must submit their ballots by 8 p.m. on election day.

As ballots are received, the envelopes are scanned and the signatures are verified. Then they are stored, unopened, until election day. Kirby and her staff have received special training in signature verification. If envelopes are unsigned or the signature can't be verified, the voters are contacted and allowed to come to the clerk's office to make a determination that the ballot is valid.

On election day the election board is again called into service. Under the supervision of Kirby and Nork, and with video monitoring, they work in pairs, representing different parties. They open the envelopes and separate them from the ballots so votes remain anonymous. Ballots are then inspected to make sure they are ready to tabulate. Part of that job is to determine if the voter's intent is clear. For example, some people may have marked two candidates. Others may have put a small dot instead of filling in the oval to indicate their choice. If the intent seems clear, the ballot can be counted; otherwise it will be set aside and an election official will attempt to contact the voter so they can complete a new ballot.

The county uses an automated tabulator to count votes. Kirby said this machine undergoes preventive maintenance and practice runs to be sure results will be accurate. Some ballots are run through the tabulator and then counted by hand to be sure the results match. She also emphasized that the counting is done locally, and the tabulator is not connected to the internet.

Procedures in the ballot processing room are strictly managed. For example, a political party or individual candidates may request to have an observer in the room, but they

How? An occasional feature

Mark Bogart, a Baker High School graduate and retired Baker School District teacher and principal, is writing an occasional feature for the Baker City Herald explaining how things work.

must follow specific policies so as not to interfere with the verification and counting processes. Media tours are also allowed within strict guidelines. Space is a factor in allowing observers, which was especially true during the 2020 election due to high COVID-19 rates.

Unofficial results are announced when all accepted ballots have been counted on election day. However, the final results will depend upon completion of counting votes that arrive late but are postmarked by election day as well as provisional ballots that were damaged or where voter intent was not initially evident.

There are many more dates on the election calendar involving recounts, challenges, write-in candidates, etc. The final step in the process, however, is for election officials in each county to certify the results and report them to the secretary of state on June 23.

Kirby stressed the necessity of accuracy and adherence to procedures. She said the process requires "lots of checks and balances and lots of proof-reading."

Oregon's first statewide vote-by-mail (VBM) special election was held in 1993. Then in 1998 voters overwhelming approved expanding VBM to primary and general elections. In November of 2000, Oregon became the first state in the country to conduct an all vote-by-mail general election.

News of Record

FUNERALS PENDING

Mardelle LaDorise Webb Allen

Ebell: A traditional funeral service will take place Saturday, April 16, at 2 p.m. at the Pine Valley Presbyterian Church in Halfway. Interment will follow at Pine Haven Cemetery. Online condolences can be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

Ron Anderson, Sharon Joy Anderson:

They passed away in November 2021 in Las Vegas. They lived in Baker City for most of the year, escaping the cold weather of Eastern Oregon to their property in Pahrump, Nevada, during the winter. Ron and Sharon loved to travel and pan gold, and they were avid rockhounds. They enjoyed taking walks, morning coffee with friends, Copper Belt Winery and dances at the VFW. Ron and Sharon are very much missed by their friends and family who they both loved and cherished dearly. There will be a celebration of their lives on April 14 at 2 p.m. at the Eagles, 2935 H St. in Baker City.

Agnes Bird: A celebration of Agnes' life and graveside service will take place Saturday, May 21, at 1 p.m. at Pine Haven Cemetery in Halfway. A reception will follow immediately at the Halfway Lions Hall. Those who would like to make a donation in memory of Agnes can do so to the Hells Canyon

Junior Rodeo through Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services, P.O. Box 543, Halfway, OR 97834. Online condolences can be made at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

Ivan Harry Bork: A celebration of his life and potluck will take place Saturday, May 28, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the ballroom at the Baker Heritage Museum, 2480 Grove St. For those who would like to make a donation in honor of Ivan, the family suggests Hunt of a Lifetime through Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services, P.O. Box 543, Halfway, OR 97834. Online condolences can be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

POLICE LOG

Baker City Police

Arrests, Citations
DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF INTOXICANTS: Scott Roy Harris, 47, Baker City, 11:47 p.m. Wednesday, April 6, on Clark Street near Broadway; cited and released.

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