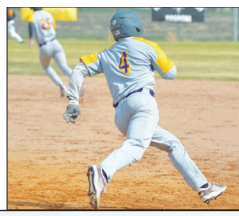




**LOCAL A2**  
Oregon braces for possibly hectic fire season



**STATE A3**  
Trio will vie for Oregon governor in November



**SPORTS A6**  
Baker baseball prepares for postseason with win

# Baker City Herald

IN THIS EDITION: LOCAL • OUTDOORS & REC • SPORTS

Serving Baker County since 1870 • bakercityherald.com

SATURDAY, MAY 21, 2022 • \$1.50

**QUICK HITS**

**Good Day Wish To A Subscriber**

A special good day to Herald subscriber Phyllis Badgley of Baker City.

**BRIEFING**

**Sophomores, juniors can apply to attend Rotary conference**

May 23 is the deadline for high school sophomores and juniors to apply to attend the RYLA conference, a Rotary-sponsored camp that teaches team building, leadership skills and personal growth. The camp will take place July 28-31 in Twin Falls, Idaho, and the Baker City Rotary Club will pay all expenses for attendees from a high school in Baker County or Powder Valley High School. Applications are online at <http://ryla5400.weebly.com/>. Students can call 541-519-2012 for more information, or see the Baker City Rotary Facebook page.

**REGION A5**  
**Oregon forecasts a record \$3 billion tax kicker in 2024**

Taxes kept rolling into Oregon's coffers at record amounts this year, but state economists say much of that money is likely to go back to taxpayers in 2024 in record credits against their state tax bills.

**WEATHER**


**Today**  
59/34  
Mostly sunny



**Sunday**  
63/36  
Rain showers



**Monday**  
63/39  
Mostly cloudy



Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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

## PICKING and PLANTING

Baker High School science students plant ponderosa pines in a burned area, and collect morel mushrooms while they're at it

BY LISA BRITTON  
lbritton@bakercityherald.com

**C**ierra Lafferty pats the soil around the newly planted ponderosa pine seedling, then gives the needles a gentle tug to make sure it's secure in the ground.

"Welcome to your new home," she says, her words nearly whisked away by the wind whipping across Dooley Mountain, about 15 miles south of Baker City.

Then she stands, pulls her phone from a pocket and holds it close to the tree.

"Blog moment!" she says, snapping a picture of the seedling, then photos of her buddies.

On Wednesday, May 18, science students from Baker High School helped plant ponderosa seedlings along the Skyline Road in an area burned by the Cornet-Windy Ridge fire in August 2015.

The lightning-sparked blazes, which burned together during hot, windy weather, spread over 104,000 acres, the largest wildfire in Baker County history.

Bill Mitchell and Noah Erickson, who both work in the silviculture department for the U.S. Forest Service, gave the students a quick lesson on the proper way to plant a tree.



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Jordynn Scholl shows off her bounty of morel mushrooms collected during a field trip for Baker High School science students on Wednesday, May 18, 2022.

See, **Planting**/Page A3



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Jaylyn Baird, left, Joy Murphy and Tessa Potter plant a seedling beside a fallen log, a technique called "micrositing" that uses natural vegetation as protection for new trees.

## Presbyterian Church donates \$15,000 to aid for Ukraine

Baker City Herald

A fundraising effort by Baker City's First Presbyterian Church to aid humanitarian work in Ukraine resulted in a \$15,000 donation to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

The local campaign started in late March, a little more than a month after Russia invaded Ukraine.

Jean Simpson-Geddes, a member of the local church Session, the Presbyterian governing body, said donations from members of the Baker City and La Grande congregations, along with donations from other Baker County residents, totaled \$7,500.

Baker City's First Presbyterian Session matched that amount, for

a total donation of \$15,000, Simpson-Geddes said.

The Baker City church will be sending thank you notes to people from outside the church congregation who contributed to the campaign, she said.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has been working in Ukraine and bordering countries to provide shelter, meals, medicines and hygiene products to residents affected by the war.

"We're happy to match whatever we can," said Jean Simpson-Geddes, a member of Session.

According to its website, <https://pda.pcusa.org>, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance focuses on these areas:

- The long term recovery of disaster impacted communities.

- Provides training and disaster preparedness for presbyteries and synods.

- Works collaboratively with church partners and members of the ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) internationally, and nationally with other faith based responders.

- Connects partners locally and internationally with key organizations active in the response — United Nations, NVOAD (National Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster), World Food Program, Red Cross, FEMA and others.

To learn more about the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance work in Ukraine, visit <https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/ukraine/>.

## School chief: Mask mandate not likely to return

### State issued advisory, but Baker County risk remains low

BY JAYSON JACOBY  
jjacoby@bakercityherald.com

Baker School District Superintendent Mark Witty thinks it's a "very remote" possibility that the district would revert to requiring students and staff to wear face masks before the school year ends in early June.

"I don't foresee that, with only a few weeks left in the school year," Witty said on Tuesday, May 17.

The Oregon Department of Education issued a statewide advisory on May 13, which is effective through Aug. 31, recommending, but not requiring, that schools mandate masks in counties where the COVID-19 risk level is high based on criteria from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Witty

See, **Masks**/Page A6

## Fresh look inside the Baker High gym

### New paint scheme, other changes are now underway

BY IAN CRAWFORD  
icrawford@bakercityherald.com

The Baker High School gymnasium has been the site of many triumphs, and this spring and summer it's undergoing the first round of renovations including a stylish paint job on the interior north and south walls.

By next year the gym will gleam like the awards in the trophy case in the hallway.

The Baker School District contracted the current project for less than \$10,000. Work includes a new paint scheme and the installation of "crash pads" — the pads on the walls behind the baskets designed to prevent injury to players leaping after a loose ball.

One pad will have the words "Bulldog Nation" with the snarling Bulldog logo in the middle. The other will have the Bulldog pawprint on one side, "Welcome to Baker" in the middle, and "BHS" on the other side.

Replacing the pads was overdue, BHS Principal Skye Flanagan said.

"We don't know exactly how old they were," he said. "But they were old."

The north and south walls are being repainted with a stark, semigloss black, which will match the design

See, **Gym**/Page A6



**TODAY**  
Issue 5  
12 pages

Classified .....B2-B4  
Comics .....B5  
Community News.....A2

Crossword .....B2 & B4  
Dear Abby .....B5  
Horoscope .....B2 & B4

Jayson Jacoby .....A4  
Lottery Results .....A2  
News of Record.....A2

Opinion .....A4  
Outdoors .....B1 & B2  
Senior Menus.....A2

Sports .....A6  
Turning Backs .....A2  
Weather .....B6