

Hardrath

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But then came 2015 and a car accident. He tore up a knee, broke his shoulder, broke ribs, collapsed one lung and damaged internal organs.

His doctor told Hardrath he'd probably never run again.

"He said, 'yeah, you're probably going to let that part of your life go.'"

Hardrath was 25.

"I remember my spirit sinking at first," he said.

Then came the spark, and his determination, and this thought:

"You don't know me. You just wait and watch."

From physical therapy to mountain peaks

His recovery wasn't easy — he had physical therapy, and worked on his own to improve his range of motion.

"Finding every which way to keep moving forward," he said.

Running didn't work, but he could walk. And then he started hiking.

"I can't run, but what can I do? I guess I'm a hiker now," he said.

Part of Hardrath's story is about having ADHD — attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

"I still don't sit still well," he said.

He said his mom, Kathy, researched as much as she could about ADHD when he was a child.

"Her support was huge to my resilience," he said. "She hunted to find every bit she could learn to understand this crazy little kid she had."

With ADHD, Hardrath said he can experience extremes: ranging from being completely unfocused (when he has to fill out paperwork, for instance), or hyper focused on a task.

It was that latter approach that surfaced when he started hiking.

"Hills led to small mountains. Small mountains led to big mountains," he said.

Next came technical climbs, so he joined a climbing gym to learn this new skill.

He struggled at first.

"It was a lesson in being brave enough to suck at something new," he said with a laugh. "11-year-olds were better than me."

But he persisted to learn rope skills and climbing movements, and gain upper body strength.

"That was a long, hard process," he said.

Eventually he returned to running, but he moved at a slower pace than during his triathlon days.

But as he ran trails, and hiked mountains and scaled peaks, he started thinking bigger.

"Let's see if I can climb one or two in a day," he said.

Then Hardrath discovered something called FKTs — Fastest Known Times.

Essentially, these are a log of routes and the person who recorded the fastest known time to reach a peak.

Suddenly he had a new challenge.

The way he orients his life, he said, is "by pursuing challenges, growth, the next big goal."

Chasing FKTs, he said, helped him "reclaim personal power and independence."

"Physical pursuits is how I expressed myself," Hardrath said.

So he started "bagging" peaks and finding routes to top multiple mountains in one day.

"I did five peaks in a day — can I do seven?" he remembers thinking. "Nothing but me, and nature, and the clock."

He set a goal: to log 100 FKTs.

Some were to best another hiker's record; others were new routes he submitted with his time.

"I love that every bit as much — that element of exploration," he said.

Hardrath had recorded about 50 FKTs when he discovered the Washington Bulger List — the top 100 peaks in Washington. The FKT to complete the list was 410 days, recorded in 2018.

"In my head, I thought 'that record will get demolished.' At the very least, it should be 100 peaks in 100 days," he said.

Hardrath, who teaches P.E. in the Bonanza, Oregon, near Klamath Falls, didn't have that much time — he only had 70 days at the most, during his summer vacation.

"No one had ever done it in a single season," he said.

He wanted to do it in 50 days.

"They're big, but also remote," he said. "It was a wild logistical challenge, as well as a physical challenge."

A connection

As he logged FKTs, Hardrath was invited to participate in several podcasts. One of those episodes caught the notice of the founder of Athletic Brewing Co.

They exchanged messages, and Hardrath learned that the company wanted to support his journey.

Soon Hardrath had help with gas money.

"That really helps, on a teacher's salary, to make these adventures happen," he said.

He shared sharing detailed trip logs, and soon the idea emerged to document his journey to logging 100 FKTs.

That footage, gathered leading up to his 100th FKT, resulted in the film "Journey to 100," which just released this spring by Athletic Brewing Co. and WZRD Media.

The 30-minute documentary will be screened Saturday, June 4, at Churchill School in Baker City. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the film begins at 7 p.m.

Admission is \$5 at churchillbaker.com and at the door. Proof of vaccination or a negative COVID test is required.

Hardrath will be there, and welcomes questions about his experiences.

He's happy to share — he often talks about his adventures with his P.E. students, who range from kindergartners to sixth graders.

He hopes to instill the belief that anything is possible.

"I've been doing this, in part, to inspire students," he said. "To mentor and encourage the next generation — I went and did this thing that was supposedly impossible."

And he keeps moving forward — his next idea, for the summer of 2023, is to complete the Rockies Grand Slam of 120 peaks.

He'd be joined by Nathan Long-

hurst, who accompanied him on some Bulger List hikes and is now working on the Sierra Peaks Section list of bagging 247 peaks.

"To see an athlete fall in love with what I love — I want to support that," Hardrath said.

Museum

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"We appreciate the county's willingness to provide a venue for us to continue to tell the story of the Oregon Trail, the settlement of Eastern Oregon, and the history of the Bureau of Land Management while we update the center for the next 30 years," Wayne Monger, Vale District manager, said in a BLM press release.

In addition to the display, NHOTIC is planning special programs and performances this summer at Geiser-Pollman Park, just west of the museum across Grove Street.

Explore the trail

The exhibit begins with an introduction to the Oregon Trail, including the chance to pack a wagon with supplies for two adults and two children during the journey. A basket is full of magnets marked with items and the corresponding weight, and visitors can choose up to 2,400 pounds.

"Do your math carefully," the instructions read. "Too much weight and the wagon will be too heavy for your oxen to pull."

Grads

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Megan Hurley is the class salutatorian.

Other academic and athletic awards were handed out during senior awards night on May 25.

BHS honor students, top 10% of graduating class

Emma Baeth, Caitlin Lien, Sarah Plummer, Phoebe Wise, Megan Hurley, Brianna Stadler, Sydnee Hallett, Sydney Lamb

BHS honors diploma, 3.5 GPA or above for 7 1/2 semesters with six honors courses

Emma Baeth, Caitlin Lien, Sarah Plummer, Phoebe Wise, Megan Hurley, Brianna Stadler, Sydnee Hallett, Sydney Lamb

Academic excellence award, 3.5 GPA or above for 7 semesters

Emma Baeth, Caitlin Lien, Sarah Plummer, Phoebe Wise, Megan Hurley, Brianna Stadler, Sydnee Hallett, Sydney Lamb, Owen Higdon, Savannah Brown, Gauge Bloomer, Silas Carter, Julie Robinson, Alexis Conant, Jesse Maldonado, Daniel Wachtel, Wyatt Hawkins, Iriana Rosales, Gavin Stone, Katherine Wilde



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

A basket of magnets allows visitors to the Baker Heritage Museum choose items they'd like to bring in their wagon on the Oregon Trail, but without exceeding the weight limit for their team of oxen.

The display continues with "Across the Wide Prairie," which details why emigrants came west, as well as who embarked on the trail.

Other panels cover adventures and obstacles the pioneers encountered, the displacement of Native Americans, and early preservation efforts, such as markers placed by Ezra Meeker.

The story then winds through trail preservation efforts by the Bureau of Land Management, including the building of the Interpretive Center, which opened May 23, 1992.

Other information in the exhibit details the Baker County Culture and Heritage Passport,

which encourages everyone to visit participating locations in Baker County and obtain a special stamp in the provided passports.

Locations are the Baker Heritage Museum, Adler House Museum, Crossroads Carnegie Art Center, Sumpter Valley Railroad, Sumpter Valley Dredge, Sumpter Municipal Museum, Eastern Oregon Museum in Haines, Hunting-ton Historical Museum and Pine Valley Museum in Halfway.

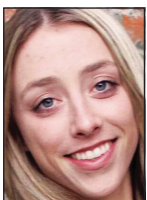
Baker Heritage Museum is open Mondays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sundays from noon to 4 p.m.

About the renovation

The \$6.5 million renovation of the Interpretive Center includes new cement board siding, insulation, roofing, windows and doors, along with a new heating and cooling system.

Although the main road to the top of the hill is closed during the renovation, the Oregon Trail Ruts Access on Highway 86 will remain open to the public.

For more information and to learn more about the Oregon Trail, visit oregontrail.blm.gov or call 541-523-1843.



Baeth



Hurley



Plummer



Wise



Lien

Outstanding Senior Girl Athlete

Brianna Stadler

Outstanding Senior Boy Athlete

Silas Carter

Outstanding Senior Girl

Savannah Brown

Outstanding Senior Boy

Gauge Bloomer

PATHWAY AWARDS

Agriculture

Emma Baeth, Ronald Borello, Lacy Churchfield, Gerardo Gonzalez, Majestic Grove, Quinton Johnson, Zach Morrison, Emrie Osborn, Kadence Parsons, Ricardo Rodriguez-Duran, Iriana Rosales, Kevin Stellman, Katherine Wilde

Business

Jose Arenas, Caitlin Lien, Phoebe Wise

Computer Science

Jose Arenas, Zach Morrison, Sarah Plummer

Construction

Adrian Allen, Gerardo Gonzalez

Culinary Arts

Desmond Dommeyer, Alex Hobbs

Engineering

Caitlin Lien, Zack Morrison

Health Services

Emma Baeth, Lacy Churchfield, Promise Hughes, Sydney Lamb, Iriana Rosales, Gavin Stone, Katherine Wilde

Performing Arts

Dakota Ballou, Promise Hughes, Sebastian Penning, Aiyana Radford, Alanda Torres, Ayden Welk

Visual Arts

Alexis Conant, Kaillyse Fuss, Sydnee Hallett, LaKota Horal, Megan Hurley, Jasmine Martell, Brianna Stadler, Phoebe Wise

Manufacturing, Welding & Metal Technology

Adrian Allen, Gauge Bloomer, Ronald Borello, Connor Chastain, Connor Chavis, Mariano Duran-Puente, Quinton Johnson, Marco Rosales, Cody Skidgel, Austen Zemmer

Land

Continued from Page A1

Commissioners on Wednesday directed Kim Mosier, the county's attorney, to work with the Ward family on the agreement.

Tyler Brown, a member of the Economic Development Council, said the Council discussed multiple possible uses for parts of the property, including an indoor sports facility that could potentially ease the pressure on Baker High School's gym during the Class 1A state basketball tournaments and host other, new sports tournaments, as well as additional parking.

In addition to voting to pursue the property purchase, commissioners said the county will conduct a economic development needs assessment for the community which will include projects, such as structures, for which the 70-acre property could be used.

Commissioner Bruce Nichols said he thinks acquiring the

property is "an excellent opportunity" for the county. He noted that the county would not have to pay interest while making lease payments leading to the county acquiring the land.

Commissioners voted to pursue the lease-purchase agreement after discussing the matter during an executive session, which was closed to the public as allowed under Oregon's Public Meetings Law.

Deliberating about property transactions is one of the topics for which the law allows executive session discussions. The law requires public bodies to make any final decision in a public session, as commissioners did Wednesday.

Bennett and Nichols said none of the money for the property will come from the county's general fund.

Instead, the county will use dollars from the lodging tax that guests at motels, bed and breakfasts, vacation rental homes and other lodging facilities pay. Baker County's lodging tax is 7% of the rental rate.

The lodging tax budget has

a \$400,000 reserve for economic development projects, Bennett said.

The county's lodging tax revenue has risen substantially over the past two years after dipping to its lowest level in several years during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020.

In April 2020, when many businesses were closed, lodging tax revenue was \$8,360, the lowest monthly total in more than 15 years.

The total tax collections for the 2019-20 fiscal year, which ended June 30, 2020, was \$408,776. That was the lowest annual total since 2013-14, when revenue was \$404,462.

Lodging tax collections rose during the 2020-21 fiscal year to \$537,860 — a nearly 32% increase.

Revenue has continued to rise during the current fiscal year, and at current rates this year's revenue will be the highest in at least 2003-4.

For the first eight months of the current fiscal year, revenue was up by 58% compared with

the previous year — \$508,337 compared with \$320,871.

Nichols said he believes one of the best possible uses for the 70-acre parcel is a new location for the Baker County Fairgrounds, which are currently near the center of town, north of Campbell Street.

"There are multiple concepts that could be done with this property," Nichols said.

In addition to voting to pursue the property purchase, commissioners said the county will conduct a economic development needs assessment for the community and ways in which the 70-acre property could be used to help meet those needs.

In other business related to the lodging tax, commissioners on Wednesday decided to offer a two-year contract to Jessica Hobson, for \$65,000 per year, to serve as tourism marketing director for the county.

That money also comes from the lodging tax.

Hobson will replace Timothy Bishop, who left the position in October 2021 to take a sim-

ilar job in La Grande. Bishop had been the county's tourism marketing director for 11 years.

The county's transient lodging committee, which advises commissioners, recommended Hobson over two other applicants.

Brown, who is chairman of the lodging tax committee, said he's glad the county has picked Bishop's successor.

The county's current lodging tax ordinance, which dates to

2006, requires that the county spend 70% of the revenue for tourism marketing — which includes the marketing director and operation of a visitors center in Baker City — and 25% for economic development. The county can keep up to 5% for administrative costs.

The Baker County Chamber of Commerce has the contract for operating the visitors center.

Bryan Tweit is the county's economic development director.

Jamie Arlene Hunt

October 28, 1960 - May 20, 2022

Jamie Arlene Hunt, age 61, of Sumpter, Oregon, passed away on May 20, 2022, at her residence with her loving husband Bob by her side. A celebration of her life will be planned at a later date.

Jamie Arlene (Little) Hunt was born October 28, 1960, in Hood River, Oregon, to James Little and Ava (Hunsaker) Russell. She attended school in Baker City, Oregon. On July 25, Jamie married Bobby Hunt in Winnemucca, Nevada.

Jamie loved cooking food for her family and friends; she could open the cupboards, pull a few items, and cook a 5-star meal. She was a chef in her own right! She waited tables and loved being around people. Jamie loved spending time with her family, playing card games, and putting together puzzles. Jamie was trying to collect shot glasses from all 50 states plus other countries, and she also collected earrings for the last 45 years.

Jamie loved gardening, and she helped tend to the Haines Park. Jamie and Bobby loved to travel and see many different parts of the United States. She enjoyed mushroom picking, fishing, and camping. Her family nicknamed her Flames. She also enjoyed walking the flea markets and thrift stores, looking for unique pairs of earrings to add to her collection.

She was a member of the Sumpter Rough and Ready side-by-side club. Jamie traveled most if not all the trails in and around Sumpter plus the surrounding mountains.

Jamie is survived by her husband, Bobby Hunt; her two sons, Tony Myers and Eric Myers; one stepdaughter, Tonya Ray; four grandchildren, Ethan, Dominic, Haley, and Onyx; her brothers, Lance (Starla) Holt, Rusty (Kerri) Little, and Stuart Little; her sisters, Laura (Brian) Love, Darcy (Travis) McCauley, she is also survived by her aunt, Linda Blankley, numerous nieces and nephews; and her stepdad, Paul Russell.

She was preceded in death by her father, James Little, her mother, Ava Russell, and her brother, Danny Little.

To leave online condolences for Jamie's family, please visit www.grayswestco.com.

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