

FireMed

Continued from A1

Baker City members will continue to have Life Flight coverage under their existing memberships, according to Ian Philips of Life Flight.

He said no new contracts are required and customers needn't take any additional steps to ensure LifeFlight coverage.

The situation is different, though, for ground ambulance coverage.

Baker City will send refunds to people who have FireMed ground ambulance coverage, the amount depending on the length of their membership after Oct. 1, when the city will stop operating ambulances.

Until then, FireMed subscribers will have their ambulance bill paid if they are transported by a Baker City Fire Department ambulance.

But that's not the case for residents who are taken by an ambulance owned by Metro West, the Hillsboro company that Baker County commissioners have contracted with to replace the Baker City Fire Department as the ambulance provider for the Baker Ambulance Service Area, which includes Baker City and about two-thirds of the rest of the county.

(Metro West will also cover the Huntington Ambulance

Service Area in the southeast part of the county.)

Metro West, which has been operating an ambulance in Baker City and the rest of the Baker Ambulance Service Area since early June, is not part of the FireMed system. Metro West is the "first call" ambulance, which means a Baker City Fire Department ambulance, which is still covered by FireMed, will respond only if the Metro West ambulance is already on a call.

From June 16 through July 5, Metro West transported 52 patients to Saint Alphonsus Medical Center-Baker City, while the Baker City Fire Department transported 13 patients.

Metro West does have a separate membership program similar to FireMed that covers ground ambulance transports. It's called Life-Guard, and according to a letter from J.D. Fuiten, Metro West president and owner, the company will offer Life-Guard memberships to Baker County residents for \$59 per year, which covers ground ambulance transports "anywhere in Oregon."

But currently Metro West does not have its membership service available here, as Cannon noted in a July 1 memo to city employees that's also available on the city's website, bakercity.com.

Rally

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Wasteland Kings will be playing at the Corner Brick, 1840 Main St., at 8 p.m. as well.

On Saturday, July 9, the Ison House, at Washington and Resort, will have Trailer Hitch at 6 p.m. and Journey cover band Wheel in the Sky NW at 8 p.m. Gates open at 5 p.m., and tickets are \$20.

At the Corner Brick Andy Zikmund will play combination blues, country and rockabilly at 8 p.m. on Saturday.

Camping

The Dead Ox Ranch, east of Baker off of Ritter Loop Road, will be allowing camp access to attendees, asking only for

donations.

The football field at Baker Bulldog Memorial Stadium will also be opening to private camping for a fee, with proceeds benefiting the BHS Class of 2023.

Shameless Tees, 1921 Main St., will be giving out ice-chilled water at their Main Street stop and has extended the use of their on-site cooler for essentials such as medications.

Poker run

The run begins Saturday at 8 a.m. at the VFW, and goes until 5 p.m. Routes are supplied on thebcmr.com and entry fees are \$15 solo or \$20 as a pair, at the end of the route the poker hand winners will take half the pot.

Warrants

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He also had two felony arrest warrants from Lake County, for parole violation and failure to appear.

The incident started when the Baker County Sheriff's Office dispatch center received a call about a suspicious vehicle in the ditch along Old Highway 30 near Ebell Creek, several miles southeast of Baker City.

As deputies were en route, the initial caller reported that another vehicle had arrived and pulled the first vehicle out of the ditch.

The first vehicle, a 2006 Ford Taurus, was heading toward Baker City on the highway at a high rate of speed, according to the press release.

Deputies learned that the driver was Schulte, and that

he had two felony arrest warrants.

Deputies saw Schulte's car on Highway 30 at West Sutton Creek Road, where he initially turned. Schulte then made a U-turn and continued driving toward Baker City on Highway 30, said Ashley McClay, public information officer at the sheriff's office.

Deputies turned on their overhead lights and started following Schulte.

He failed to stop at a stop sign and entered Baker City on Elm Street. Baker City Police Department officers joined the deputies in pursuing Schulte.

Police found the Taurus, empty, along a dead end on Church Street near the river. After searching for about 30 minutes, police found Schulte "partially submerged" in the river, apparently trying to

Baker City bear was released in Wallowas

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Baker City's most famous black bear — or at least the most photographed — is likely roaming today somewhere in the southern Wallowa Mountains.

Which is better bear habitat than a birch tree between two apartment buildings.

The bear, which ran through part of Quail Ridge Golf Course on Sunday morning, July 3, then crossed Foothill Drive and climbed that tree, ended up tranquilized and in a cage later that morning.

Brian Ratliff, district wildlife biologist at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Baker City office, fired the tranquilizer dart that gave the yearling male bear a temporary nap.

The sleeping bear got stuck, however, in the tree about 25 feet above the ground.

Jeff Smith, who owns J2K Excavating and lives on Foothill Drive, offered the use of his bucket lift to retrieve the bear.

Ratliff said the bear awoke in the cage about 11:30 a.m. on July 3, a little more than an hour after he fired the tranquilizer dart.

"By noon it was mobile," Ratliff said of the bear.

He released the bear in the Eagle Creek area northeast of Baker City.

"It ran straight down a hill," he said. "It did not want to stick around, which is exactly what we like to see."

That behavior is typical of a truly wild animal that is not accustomed to being around people, Ratliff said.

He suspects the bear, which weighed about 150 pounds, had separated from its mother, as bears tend to do after their first birthday.

"I think it just wandered into town and got caught af-



Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald photos

This yearling male bear recovered quickly from its ordeal in Baker City on Sunday, July 3, 2022, and was released later in the day in the Wallowa Mountains.



Brian Ratliff, left, district wildlife biologist at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Baker City office, talks with Sheriff Travis Ash while filling a dart with tranquilizer on Sunday, July 3, 2022. Ratliff tranquilized the bear.

ter daylight where it didn't want to be," Ratliff said.

He said there were no reports of the bear nosing into garbage cans or other behavior that could suggest the bear was comfortable around people.

In those cases, ODFW officials are likely to kill the bear rather than trap it and release it in the wild.

Ratliff said the foothill

above the city's southwest corner probably is a travel corridor for wildlife, including the occasional bear.

Another yearling bear was tranquilized in November 2015 in a backyard near 11th and Myrtle streets, less than half a mile from Foothill Drive.

ODFW biologists also tranquilized and released that bear.

hide from officers, McClay said.

Schulte was in the river near the two bridges along the Leo Adler Memorial Parkway behind Ace Hardware, McClay said.

Baker City Police officer Matt Rosin wrote in a probable cause affidavit that Schulte was in the river with tree branches covering him.

Rosin wrote that while searching Schulte he found "metal knuckles" in his right rear pocket, as well two plastic baggies of what Schulte admitted as meth, weighing a total of 4.2 grams.

Based on a conviction in February 2021 in Crook County for being a felon in possession of a firearm, Schulte can't legally have metal knuckles, according to a court record.

Schulte is scheduled to enter a plea to the charges on

July 18 at 1:45 p.m. in Baker County Circuit Court.

Previous chases and arrests in Baker County

This wasn't the first time Schulte has been arrested after being pursued by police in Baker County.

On Jan. 22, 2021, he was arrested for attempting to elude a police officer and reckless driving.

Those charges were dismissed July 12, 2021, due to a violation of his right to a speedy trial. Schulte had made a motion seeking the dismissal on June 6, 2021, when he was incarcerated in the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville.

In July 2015 Schulte, who was then living in Baker City, drove away after police tried to stop the 2007 Kia Spectra he was driving in Baker City.

During a subsequent chase

on Interstate 84, Schulte reached 125 mph. He was arrested near Durkee when the car ran out of gas.

Schulte pleaded guilty on July 29, 2015, to attempting to elude a police officer, reckless driving and driving under the influence of intoxicants. He was sentenced to probation.

Schulte also pleaded guilty to two counts of attempting to elude a police officer on Dec. 14, 2020, in Lakeview. He was also sentenced to probation in that case.

Greg Baxter, Baker County district attorney, said the presumptive penalty for a conviction on attempting to eluding a police officer is 10 days in jail.

Maria Dennis

October 17, 1962 – June 11, 2022

Maria Dennis, 59, formerly of Richland, Oregon, died at her home in Baker City on June 11, 2022.

Maria Dionisia was born on Oct. 17, 1962, to Leon and Lucille (Williams) Ortez in Los Angeles, California. She was raised and schooled in Estacada and Richland, Oregon. She attended Pine Eagle High School, later meeting and marrying Roscoe "Bimbo" Dennis. They made their home in Sparta, Oregon, and had four children.

Maria worked at the local restaurant as a cook, and found enjoyment in doing farm and ranch work. Maria was a caregiver, she would give you the shirt off of her back if needed and would help anyone that needed help, however she could.

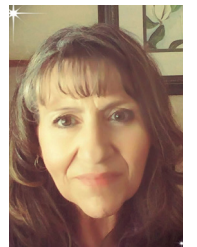
Living in Sparta, she was able to enjoy the mountains, she grew a big garden, loved to cook and enjoyed all kinds of music. Maria also had a great sense of humor in any situation. Maria was a daughter, sister, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and Aunt Mimi to several nieces and nephews.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Bimbo; grandma, Margaret; stepdad, Bill; brother, Paul; nephews, Brian and Jeremy.

Maria is survived by her daughters, Roxanne Fisher, LaVaughn Hull, Starr Dennis and son, Jake Dennis; 10 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; mother, Lucille (Roger) Burk; eight sisters; three brothers; numerous nieces and nephews; and very good friend and caregiver David McKechnie. Maria had a very special four-legged dog named "Shorty," who died two days after Maria.

Her daughter said, "She was a great mother, grandmother, amazing cook, best mother that one could ask for." Until we meet again

Online condolences may be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.



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