



**OUTDOORS B1**  
Snow hanging on at higher elevations



**LOCAL A2**  
Bull thistle widespread invasive weed



**SPORTS A6**  
Three Bulldogs named to all-state team

# Baker City Herald

IN THIS EDITION: LOCAL • SPORTS • OUTDOORS

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**QUICK HITS**

**Good Day Wish To A Subscriber**

A special good day to Herald subscriber Ross Fritz of North Powder.

**BRIEFING**

**Nominees sought for Baker County Fair Family**

Baker County Friends of the Fairgrounds are seeking nominees for the 2022 Fair Family of the Year. Nominations are due by July 10. Nomination letters can be emailed to bakercity-friendsofthefair@gmail.com.

**Entries sought for Miners Jubilee parade**

There's still time to enter a float in the Miners Jubilee parade, which happens Saturday, July 16.

The theme is "Honoring Our Heritage." The entry fee is \$25. Find a registration form at miners-jubilee.com.

Floats must check in by 9 a.m. at Baker Middle School. The parade starts at 11 a.m.

For more information, call the Baker County Chamber at 541-523-5855.

**CORRECTIONS**

- An item in the News of Record in the July 7 issue of the Baker City Herald contained an error due to a criminal suspect giving police a false name when he was cited and released for second-degree theft and possession of a controlled substance on July 5 in Baker City. Silas Dean Kelly, 36, of Baker City was not involved in the incident in any way.

- A story in the July 7 issue about the Baker Food Co-op contained an error. The annual fee is \$10, not \$25.

**WEATHER**

**Today**  
84/48  
Sunny

**Sunday**  
80/48  
Sunny

**Sunday**  
84/49  
Sunny

**Full forecast on the back of the B section.**

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

## Metro West will honor FireMed memberships

**Subscribers won't have to pay ambulance bill even if they're transported by Metro West**

BY JAYSON JACOBY

Local residents who have a FireMed membership that pays for ground ambulance transports will be covered whether they're taken by a Baker City Fire Department

ambulance or one operated by Metro West.

That issue had been uncertain over the past month or so, since Metro West of Hillsboro started running an ambulance in Baker City.

Baker County commissioners voted June 8 to hire Metro West to replace the city fire department, which will end its ambulance service Sept. 30, 2022.

Although the city continues to staff ambulances, Metro West has been the first ambulance to be dispatched since early June.

The city ambulance is

called out when Metro West is already out on a call.

Between June 16 and July 5, Metro West transported 52 patients to Saint Alphonsus Medical Center-Baker City, while a city ambulance transported 13.

The city fire department is part of the FireMed network, a subscription program that covers the cost of

ground ambulance transports for members.

(Residents can also buy coverage for aerial ambulance transport through Life Flight; that service isn't affected by the transition from the city fire department to Metro West.)

Metro West, though, is not part of the FireMed network. See *Ambulance* / A3

## An Oregon Trail pilgrimage



Clayton Franke/Baker City Herald

Don "Dundee" Martin of Prineville pushes his wagon along Pochontas Road on Wednesday, July 6, 2022.

### Prineville's Don Martin is walking the Oregon Trail, hoping to preserve its culture and history

BY CLAYTON FRANKE

Hundreds of thousands of people traveled the Oregon Trail in the 19th century, and Don "Dundee" Martin is honoring their journey.

Like his pioneer counterparts, Martin travels with a wagon and an ox.

He eats Oregon Trail foods — steel cut oats, rice, nuts and dried meats and fruits.

He wears traditional pioneer white canvas pants with suspenders, camps in thunderstorms and carries enough water to last him a week.

But unlike those of his forebears, Martin's wagon is a single-wheeled cart — aesthetically similar to a pioneer wagon, covered in canvas supported by curved oak beams.

And instead of pulling the cart, his ox is a stuffed toy that rides on top of the wagon.

Martin passed through Baker City on Wednesday, July 6 as he attempts to walk the entire historic Oregon Trail.

He stayed overnight at the home of friends Carla and Wayne Inman, and then took a rest day on Thursday.

Besides his cart and his stuffed ox, Martin — who lives in Prineville — has different motivations than the 19th century travelers bent on settling in a new land.

Martin said he's walking the trail as a cultural and historical pilgrimage.

A pilgrimage is an opportunity to get away from your day to day life, do something physically demanding that you



Clayton Franke/Baker City Herald

Don Martin's wagon is designed to look like a miniature version of an Oregon Trail prairie schooner, albeit with modern touches such as a GPS unit.

would not otherwise be doing, share experiences with fellow travelers, get a different sense of perspective and do some self reflection," Martin said. "There's a lot of good things that come out of it."

On Wednesday Martin strode west on the shoulder of Pochontas Road, facing the Elkhorns, gripping the leather-wrapped handlebars of his cart with fingerless gloves.

His outfit was a mix of 19th century farmer, long distance hiker and deer hunter — those traditional white pants, with an orange long-sleeve shirt and floppy orange hat, for visibility.

His pants were tucked into wool socks inside hiking sneakers, the foam heel squashed, the tread deeply worn.

Martin is on his third pair of shoes out of the four he brought. Now 2,075 miles and 81 days into the trip, he hopes the fourth pair will get him

through the final 400 miles to Oregon City.

**A modern accessory**

Attached to the front of the cart is a device that Oregon Trail pioneers could scarcely have imagined — a Garmin GPS unit, which tracks his mileage and provides a location tracker where people can follow along online.

Martin's wagon — nicknamed "Ollie," as in "ollie, ollie oxen free" — like 19th century prairie schooners contains everything he needs to live for weeks on remote parts of the trail.

Unfortunately, though, the wagon, he said, has "zero capability in mud."

"There's still Kansas mud in that thing," Martin said.

He also carries camping gear. He usually can find public land to camp on, but if he can't, he'll

See *Pilgrimage* / A3



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Bob Bennett turned 99 on June 27, 2022, and on July 2 he was treated to an airplane flight over his home of Pondsosa, northeast of Baker City.

## Bob Bennett's high-flying 99th birthday

BY LISA BRITTON

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On the eve of his airplane flight above Baker County, Bob Bennett pondered another type of aerial stunt.

"He said last night 'I think I'd like to jump out of an airplane,'" Lori Brock, Bob's daughter, recounted as she waited at Baker Aircraft beside her father.

Her answer wasn't no. "Next year for your 100th birthday," she said with a smile.

Bennett, who turned 99 on June 27, isn't totally sold on the idea yet.

"I'm kind of iffy on it," he said, a smile stretching across his face.

Then Bennett, a camera slung around his neck and a World War II veteran hat perched on his head, walked to the plane that would give him a bird's eye view of his home.

See *Bennett* / A3

## Senior Center gets an office expansion

**Project adding six private offices**

BY SAMANTHA O'CONNOR

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Community Connection workers in Baker City are engaged in an ongoing game of musical offices.

It's not as fun as it sounds. Community Connection's Baker Senior Center, 2810 Cedar St., is undergoing an office expansion.

Manager Joe Hayes said the nearly \$400,000 project will add six private offices.

See *Expansion* / A3



**TODAY**  
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