

Steak

Continued from A1

Due to limited parking at the golf course, Cheryl Buchanan encourages diners to carpool if possible.

Buchanan is one of 40-some volunteers, from ages 4 to 93, who put on the steak feed.

"It takes the whole community and people out of Baker help, too," she said.

The steak feed began in 1948 as a late summer tradition for the Durkee community, about 25 miles southeast of Baker City along the Burnt River.

The event has since moved into Baker City to partner

with the Memory Cruise and the golf course.

"It's such a beautiful venue," Buchanan said.

The most recent event, in 2019, served 650 steak diners.

Proceeds from the dinner support maintenance and costs of the old Durkee school, which now serves at the community building for dinners, events and special functions.

In 2014, the Durkee Steak Feed was named Best Philanthropic Event by the Oregon Festivals and Events Association.

Saturday ends with an informal cruise on Main Street, starting around 7 p.m.



Travel Baker County, File

Volunteers cook the famous pan bread during the 2019 Durkee Steak Feed at Quail Ridge Golf Course. The event returns on Saturday, Aug. 20, 2022, after a two-year hiatus.



Clayton Franke/Baker City Herald

Claire Collier shows her sheep to potential buyers during the 4-H livestock auction at the Baker County Fair on Friday, Aug. 12, 2022.

Auction

Continued from A1

The arena was alive with the rambling of the auctioneer and a consistent buzz from the audience, which caused trouble for Elissa Nilsen, who had to prod and drag her goat around the show ring.

"(The goat) was scared of all the noise," she said.

But the animal eventually sold for \$9 per pound. It's the most she's garnered from any auction, earning her just over \$1,000 in total, an amount Nilsen said she was happy with.

The auction was also the culmination of a journey for many young livestock owners, one that ultimately means parting ways with their animal.

Nilsen talked about the range of emotions that come after parting ways with an animal she raised for the better part of a year.

"I'm a little upset, but I'm also relieved," she said. "It's a lot of work trying to raise a goat."

Kellar expressed the same sense of relief.

"I don't own him anymore!" he exclaimed shortly after he sold his sheep.

Results from the auction are still being compiled, and will be reported in a future issue of the Baker City Herald.

The 2021 auction set a record with sales totaling \$517,026.



Clayton Franke/Baker City Herald

Aaron Kellar shows his ewe, which sold for \$8 a pound, to potential buyers during the 4-H auction on Friday, Aug. 12, 2022.

Lawsuit

Continued from A1

McCarty is seeking either a ruling that the disputed section of the Pine Creek Road that crosses his property is not a public right-of-way, or, if a jury concludes there is legal public access on the road, that the extent of the access be defined and that the county pay him \$730,000 to compensate for the lost value of his land due to the right-of-way.

McCarty's lawsuit is pending, with court hearings tentatively scheduled for Oct. 31 and the week of Dec. 19.

In response to McCarty's lawsuit, the Baker County Board of Commissioners has been pursuing a legal action to declare the Pine Creek Road, including the section across the property that McCarty bought in September 2020, as a public route.

Commissioners are scheduled to approve a resolution related to declaring the road as public during their meeting Wednesday, Aug. 17 at 9 a.m. at the Courthouse, 1995 Third St.

New lawsuit

The Sanderses and Lagers contend in the lawsuit that McCarty and Linstrom have infringed on their ability to enjoy their properties by installing the locked gate, setting up cameras "to monitor the attempted use of Pine Creek Road," and "attempted privatization of Pine Creek Road."

The couples are each seeking monetary damages of at

least \$250,000.

They are also asking for a judgment that confirms that both couples can access their properties "without notice or permission from any Defendant and without intimidation, harassment, assault, or threat of interference."

The couples also are asking that a judge issue a warrant to the Baker County Sheriff mandating that the sheriff remove the gate and the cameras McCarty installed.

Among the parcels that the Lagers and Sanderses own are ones completely surrounded by McCarty's property. The Pine Creek Road is the only vehicular access to their properties, according to the lawsuit.

"Defendants ignored the real and private property rights of the Sanderses and the Lagers, even though Defendants knew or should have known that the Sanderses and the Lagers relied solely on Pine Creek Road for ingress and egress to their respective properties," the lawsuit states.

The plaintiffs contend in the lawsuit that the defendants, who have logged the McCarty property, also felled trees on the Sanders property, and removed padlocks the Sanderses had installed on their cabin and replaced them with other locks, and blocked vehicle access to the couple's cabin with "one or more large obstacles in the driveway."

"They also installed new boundary posts on the Sanders Property and around the Sanders Cabin and 'no trespassing' signs that claimed the Sanders Property belonged

to McCarty," the lawsuit contends.

The lawsuit also accuses the defendants of financial abuse and elder abuse, stating that due to their ages and to Sharen Sanders' disability, they are both "vulnerable people as defined in ORS 124.100(e)."

James Sanders is 69 and Sharen Sanders is 81 and legally blind, according to the lawsuit.

The suit also claims financial abuse and elder abuse against Tom Lager, who is 68, due to his age.

The lawsuit claims "McCarty and the other Defendants knew or should have known that interference with Plaintiffs' real property, timber, and personal property would inflict severe mental or emotional distress and Plaintiffs are entitled to damages for this infliction."

Plaintiffs expressed concerns during April public hearing

Both Lagers and James Sanders were among the 19 people who objected to McCarty's actions, including installing the locked gate, during a public hearing called by county commissioners on April 19, 2022, in Baker City.

During that hearing Tom Lager told commissioners that he and his wife own 11 parcels in the Pine Creek area, as well as the Timber Tiger Lodge rental cabin. Tom Lager called Pine Creek "the most beautiful canyon in Baker Valley."

"We love it — it's our backyard," Tom Lager said on April 19. "We enjoyed that country so much that we have pur-

chased those parcels."

He also said that since McCarty bought the 1,560 acres, Lager was unable, for the first time in 13 years, to bring to Pine Creek a young hunter who has a terminal illness for a guided hunt through the Hunt of a Lifetime program.

Lager accused McCarty of "greed" and of trying "to take it away from the public."

"They don't own the road," Lager said during the April 19 hearing. "They own the 1,560 (acres) they purchased."

Betty Lager said during the hearing that she and her family feel "like we're held hostage" due to the gate McCarty installed, and that since the gate went up the Lagers have used their own property about "one-tenth" as often as before.

During the April 19 hearing, James Sanders told commissioners he first visited Pine Creek, along with Tom Lager, in 1975.

Sanders said he bought a cabin near the Lagers' property in 2002. He said he has spoken with "hundreds" of people in the area since, and although he's reminded a few visitors about not camping on private property that adjoins the road for part of its length, he's never had any vandalism at his cabin or been harassed.

But that wasn't the case, Sanders said, after McCarty bought the property. He said acquaintances of McCarty allowed him and his friends after they rode four-wheelers to his cabin.

"It's just crazy," Sanders said. "They have no right to do what they're doing. Stop them."

Bentz discusses hot topics in town halls

ANTONIO ARREDONDO

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The FBI raid on the residence of former President Donald Trump, social media and immigration were some of the hot topics U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz addressed during town hall meetings Wednesday, Aug. 10, in Eastern Oregon.

Fifty or so locals attended the afternoon event at Blue Mountain Community College Science & Technology Center, Pendleton. While not every member got their number called to speak, many did get an opportunity to make their voices heard.

After briefly introducing himself, Bentz opened up the floor for questions. Jim Setzer of Adams had the first question of the day, asking Bentz about his voting history, including his stance on abortion and other health care options.

"I am a right-to-life candidate," Bentz said in response. "If you would like a choice candidate, you should vote for someone else."

Audience members asked two separate questions regarding the recent FBI raid of former President Donald Trump's private residence at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida. Bentz said he wanted to get more information on the situation, but questioned why the FBI was in the vicinity.

"The FBI has overreached over and over again," Bentz said. "One thing we're waiting for is why did they do it?"

Bentz also discussed the dangers of social media throughout the meeting. He questioned the abilities for tech companies to distinguish between misinformation and "something you don't like."

Approximately 15 people addressed Bentz during the public forum though some did not have a question. Several participants thanked Bentz for his work in Washington or the veterans on his staff for their service.

The first-term representative briefly touched on other issues such as the 2020 presidential election and voting issues before concluding the town hall and thanking all participants for their participation and time.

Pendleton Mayor John Turner, Umatilla County Commissioner John Shafer, and BMCC President Mark Browning were all in attendance. None of them asked questions.

It was the sixth stop for Bentz on his trip around Oregon's 2nd Congressional District. The representative before the Pendleton event made stops on Grants Pass, Medford, Prineville, Madras, and that morning in Boardman. He said he plans to make more stops throughout the district in



Bentz

the following weeks.

Boardman town hall

Bentz addressed immigration, child care and veterans'

benefits a few hours before at the SAGE Center at the Port of Morrow, Boardman. About a dozen residents attended the town hall.

He also gave some indication as to how things might change in Washington with the upcoming midterm election. If Republicans are in the majority next year, he said, they will be looking for ways to cut back on government spending.

Some in the meeting wanted to know about government assistance. Debbie Radie of Boardman Foods asked Bentz about issues related to employment.

Radie pointed out the nation has a low unemployment rate, but Boardman Foods is having trouble finding enough employees. She said businesses such as Boardman Foods could benefit if the federal government acted on child care, freeing parents to work. Also, she said, businesses need foreign immigrants for their labor, and government could help with that, too.

Cameron Krebs agreed, saying foreign workers are key to our community and essential to local business. He called for Bentz to support their efforts, possibly with a program to offer amnesty.

Bentz responded to both, saying the U.S. is facing an "organized wave" of immigration that will need to be addressed before it can expand a visa program.

He said he has visited the U.S.-Mexico border, and he has seen immigrants massing there. Many of the people, he said, are poor, uneducated and lacking proficiency in English. According to Bentz, many people are illegitimately claiming asylum. And Bentz expressed the hope the border could be fixed.

Radie also asked about nitrate contamination, a major issue of concern in the Boardman area. Bentz acknowledged there has been a long-standing practice of imprecise nitrate use, which has led to the contamination of many private wells. He said this problem needs addressing, both in short and long terms.

And veteran Chris Brown said he suffers from health problems and has had difficulty receiving care. According to Brown, the system of providing health care to veterans is "not user friendly." Other vets agreed more needs to be done.

He said he would look into the issue and communicate further with people who were having troubles.

Hail

Continued from A1

But then she noticed that she could hear individual stones slamming into her home's roof, which has composite shingles — much less musical than tin.

"I thought that was weird, that I could hear that," Dennis said.

But not as weird as what she saw outside.

"It was piling up and beating my plants to death," she said. "I've never seen hail that big. I couldn't believe my eyes."

She said stones, which were bulbous and misshapen rather than perfectly round, bounced a foot or so off the ground.

Dennis said the hail continued for 5 to 6 minutes.

The storm knocked many of the plums out of Dennis' trees, and severely damaged her jalapeno plants, prompting the impromptu pickling lest the peppers go to waste.

She said hail cracked the windshield of her son Jason Molina's pickup truck, which was parked on her property while her son is visiting.

Fortunately, she said, her own truck was parked in a carport, and her four-

wheeler was also covered.

Dennis said that based on conversations with relatives and friends, it seemed that the hailstones were bigger, or at least the damage more extensive, closer to Oxbow.

She said her niece, Emily Kormyla, was visiting her mother, and Dennis' sister, Julie Stromer, who lives about a quarter-mile north of Oxbow.

Dennis said stones dented Kormyla's Toyota 4-Runner in several places.

Sven Berg, a spokesman for Idaho Power Company, which owns and operates the Oxbow Dam and has many employees living in the area, said the storm didn't damage any company facilities.

Berg said he did hear, however, from employees about damage to vehicles and camp trailers.

Dennis said she considers herself lucky that the damage wasn't worse.

She noted that hail that fell a day earlier, on Aug. 11, in Wallowa caused widespread damage to vehicles, homes, signs and other structures.

"My sympathy goes to Wallowa Valley residents," she said.