



GO! INSIDE
Previewing First
Friday art shows



SPORTS A6
Volleyball official
shortage an issue



SPORTS A6
Baker volleyball
splits 2 matches

Baker City Herald

IN THIS EDITION: LOCAL • BUSINESS & AG LIFE • SPORTS Serving Baker County since 1870 • bakercityherald.com THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2022 • \$1.50

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Barbara Carnahan of Baker City.

BRIEFING

Local students graduate from EOU

LA GRANDE — Several Baker County students were among those to earn degrees from Eastern Oregon University during the 2021-22 academic year.

Baker City

- Kara L. Bennett, bachelor of science, Biology
- Boston Colton, bachelor of science, History
- Isabella L. Evans, bachelor of science, Computer Science
- Melissa Ann Kendall, bachelor of science, Accounting
- Elizabeth Ann Kippes, bachelor of science, Biology
- Katie Jo Stephens, master of science, Education

Haines

- Ashley Margaret Dyke, bachelor of science, Accounting
- Samuel H. Pointer, bachelor of science, Business Administration

Halfway

- Wyatt C. Page, bachelor of science, Computer Science

WEATHER

Today
93/42
 Sunny

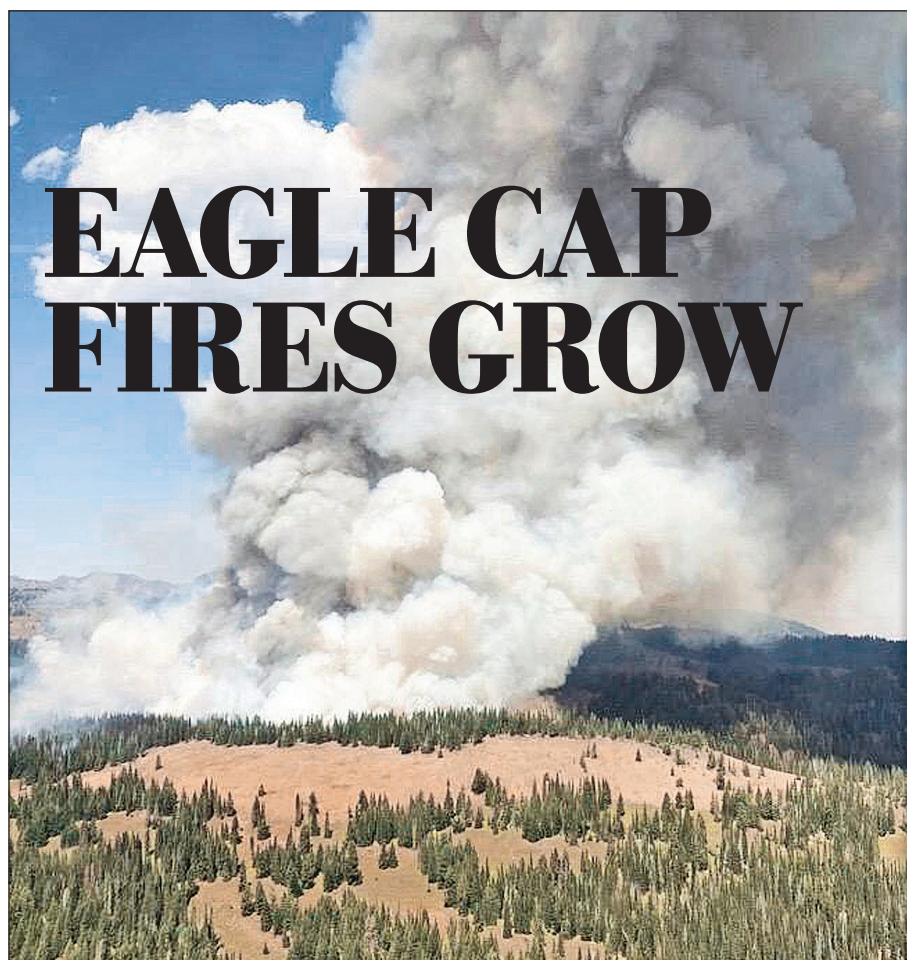


Friday
99/52
 Sunny



Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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



EAGLE CAP FIRES GROW

Record-breaking heat wave continues

Fires in the Eagle Cap Wilderness are being fueled in part by record-setting heat as August gives way to September.

The high temperature reached 98 degrees on Tuesday, Aug. 30 at the Baker City Airport. That broke the previous record high for the date of 96, set in 1996 and tied in 2017.

Another record was likely on Wednesday, Aug. 31. The National Weather Service forecast a high of 101, well above the record of 96, set in 2019.

Abnormally hot weather likely will continue through the Labor Day weekend and beyond, with temperatures ranging from the low to the upper 90s through at least Tuesday, Sept. 6.

U.S. Forest Service/Contributed Photo

The Nebo fire is burning in the southeast part of the Eagle Cap Wilderness.

One blaze created pyrocumulus cloud on Tuesday; trails closed

BY JAYSON JACOBY
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 The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest has closed sections of three trails that are near one of the two growing lightning-sparked fires the agency is monitoring in the Eagle Cap Wilderness northeast of Baker City.

The Wallowa-Whitman announced the trail closures, in the North Minam River area, on Tuesday, Aug. 30. Both the Sturgill fire, which is near the closed trails, and the Nebo fire, more than 15 miles east on the opposite side of Oregon's biggest federal wilderness, produced large smoke plumes on Tuesday as temperatures eclipsed record highs for the date.

The fires started Aug. 22. The Sturgill fire, estimated at 1,000 acres on Wednesday, Aug. 31, spawned a pyrocumulus

cloud Tuesday afternoon and evening — in effect, a thunderhead induced by the fire's heat.

The atmosphere was already slightly unstable Tuesday, meaning the sun was heating the ground and causing the air to rise high enough that some of the moisture condensed into cumulus clouds, said Jay Breidenbach, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service office in Boise.

The fire added considerably more heat to the equation, he said, allowing the air to rise even higher. The result was the pyrocumulus cloud.

Breidenbach said he reviewed a time-lapse loop of satellite images from Tuesday, and the progression of both smoke from the Sturgill fire, and the formation of the pyrocumulus cloud, were evident.

See **Fires** / A3



Mike Douglass/Contributed Photo

A pyrocumulus cloud formed above the Sturgill fire in the Eagle Cap Wilderness on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2022.

Former bank building becomes business hub

Plans include indoor restaurant or cafe and food trucks outside

BY CLAYTON FRANKE
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 A former bank building in downtown Baker City is on its way to becoming a hub for commerce and education. The Baker City-County

Planning Department recently approved a project to transform the former Pioneer Bank building at First and Broadway streets, and the parking lot on its west side, into a space that includes professional offices and retail, including indoor and outdoor seating for restaurants.

In addition, the Baker 5J School District's special education department will use the

entire top floor for operations.

According to a site narrative submitted by developer Mike Aizpitarate, the property is a "tremendous opportunity to enhance the atmosphere in Historic Downtown Baker City by providing the community a formal and informal gathering place to socialize and create business opportunities."

See **Hub** / A3

Churchill School's newest sculpture has a solid base

Obie Simonis' creation emerges from a boulder

BY LISA BRITTON
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Obie Simonis taps the rock, listening for variations in sound.

Most taps ring solid; a few echo a bit more hollow.

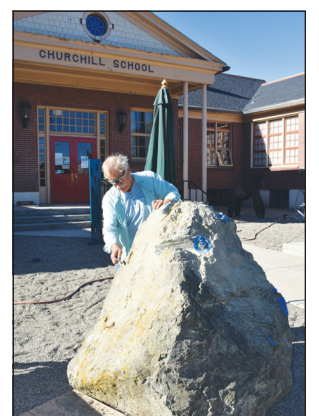
But he's happy with this boulder, which is the base for a new sculpture in front of Churchill School, 3451 Broadway St.

"I went to first grade here," he said, pausing in his work to wave a hand at the school. Simonis is a graduate of Baker High School, but he has lived in Boston for many years.

He's a professional artist, and his sculptures can be seen at numerous universities and other locations around the world.

"I have them from here to Singapore," he said.

He also helped organize a community of artists in Boston called the Brickbottom Artist Association that developed two semi-abandoned buildings into 150 studios.



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Obie Simonis inspects the boulder that is the base of his sculpture titled "Mind & Matter" in front of Churchill School. It will be unveiled during the First Friday art walk on the evening of Sept. 2.

Simonis visits Baker City every year, and while here he stays in the Airbnb rental inside Churchill, which has been renovated by Brian and Corrine Vegter.

The couple have installed several sculptures in front of the school, and Corrine contacted Simonis after acquiring three boulders from Jeffrey Bond.

See **Sculpture** / A5

BAKER CITY COUNCIL

Eight qualify for election ballot

Top 4 will be elected Nov. 8

Baker City Herald

All eight people who turned in signatures have qualified for the Baker City Council ballot in the Nov. 8 election.

They will be vying for four slots on the seven-member council. The four positions are held now by Joanna Dixon, Johnny Waggoner Sr., Dean Guyer and Kenyon Damschen.

Guyer, Waggoner and Damschen are among the eight candidates.

The five others are: Katie LaFavor, Matthew Diaz, Bev Calder, Donald Cody and Joe Johnson.

Calder is a former city councilor.

The three other incumbent Baker City councilors — Kerry McQuisten, Shane Alderson and Jason Spriet — are serving terms that continue through the end of 2024. All three were elected to four-year terms in November 2020.

The top three candidates in the Nov. 8, 2022, election will begin four-year terms in January 2023. The fourth-place candidate will be elected to a 2-year term.

Among the three incumbents on the Nov. 8 ballot, one — Waggoner — was elected in November 2020 to a 2-year term.

See **Council** / A3

TODAY
 Issue 48
 32 pages

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Comics.....B5	Dear Abby.....B6	News of Record.....A2	Sports.....A6	Weather.....B6