

## TURNING BACK THE PAGES

## 50 YEARS AGO

from the Democrat-Herald

November 4, 1972

Idaho Power is Baker County's largest property taxpayer. The company's tax bill is \$1,098,719, heading the list of the 10 top taxpayers in the county, according to Ralph McCray, county assessor. McCray said the county will collect a total of \$3,934,976 in property taxes this year.

## 25 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

November 5, 1997

The Northeast Oregon Assembled Land Exchange is a complicated proposal that could involve more than 160,000 acres of forests, streams and mountains.

One thing is certain: If the exchange occurs as the U.S. Bureau of Land Management has proposed, maps showing who owns land in the region will look much different.

## 10 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

November 5, 2012

A Friday morning truck wreck near Farewell Bend was a windfall for Baker City residents.

Superior Towing brought the wreckage to its Baker City garage and opened its doors to community residents Saturday morning.

People salvaged apples, oranges, bananas, watermelons, avocados, lettuce, cabbage and other fruits and vegetables from the crash.

## ONE YEAR AGO

from the Baker City Herald

November 6, 2021

The pair of five-year-olds are discussing COVID-19 vaccinations, and it's a serious conversation.

"I hate waiting," says Gwen Swart.

"It just makes it scarier," says Sloan Defrees, her fellow Baker City kindergartner.

"Sloan," Gwen replies with an earnestness that belies her age, "you already got your shot."

Sloan's gentle response:

"Gwen, don't worry."

Five minutes later, both these girls had received their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine at the Baker County Health Department. Gwen and Sloan were among about 25 children, ages five to 11, who were inoculated Friday morning, Nov. 5, the first group in that age range in the county to receive the vaccine that gained federal approval earlier in the week. There are about 1,200 children in that age group in the county.

Although the vaccine wasn't available everywhere in Oregon on Friday, Nancy Staten, director of the Health Department, said the agency took advantage of a brief opportunity to place an order for doses and the smaller needles that are used to administer the vaccine to small children.

"We're fortunate in that regard," Staten said.

Gwen's and Sloan's mothers, Anna Swart and Jess Defrees, agreed. Anna Swart said she and her husband, Tony, who both work at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Baker City, have been eagerly anticipating the approval of the vaccine for younger children.

Swart, who also works in Baker schools, said she and her husband were both inoculated soon after the vaccines became available in December 2020.

Swart said she's also had a booster shot.

"We just want to do our part in ending this," she said.

"COVID has affected all of our lives so much."

Swart said it was an easy decision to have Gwen vaccinated. "She doesn't have a high risk of becoming very sick, but she could still spread it to others," Swart said of her daughter.

Once Gwen is vaccinated, Swart said she hopes that should her daughter be exposed to the virus at school, she would not have to quarantine.

Swart said she is completely confident in the safety of the vaccine, and that the possibility of a reaction to the vaccine is much lower than the chance that Gwen could be infected with the virus.

## OREGON LOTTERY

## MEGABUCKS, NOV. 2

5-26-33-38-41-45

Next jackpot: \$1.2 million

## POWERBALL, NOV. 2

2-11-22-35-60 PB 23

Next jackpot: \$1.5 billion

## MEGA MILLIONS, NOV. 1

5-9-15-16-17

Mega 25

Next jackpot: \$119 million

## WIN FOR LIFE, NOV. 2

24-24-26-72

## PICK 4, NOV. 3

• 1 p.m.: 8-6-1-4

• 4 p.m.: 4-7-6-8

• 7 p.m.: 0-3-5-7

• 10 p.m.: 1-5-1-5

## LUCKY LINES, NOV. 3

4-5-11-13-17-24-26-32

Next jackpot: \$20,000

## SENIOR MENUS

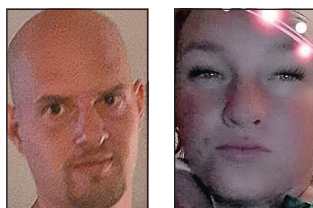
**MONDAY (Nov. 7):** Chicken with homestyle noodles in gravy, rolls, broccoli, 3-bean salad, cheesecake

**TUESDAY (Nov. 8):** Ground beef steak with onions, mashed potatoes with gravy, peas and carrots, rolls, fruit cup

**WEDNESDAY (Nov. 9):** Tuna salad, croissant chips, pickle wedges, green salad, pudding

**THURSDAY (Nov. 10):** Meatloaf, mashed potatoes with gravy, carrots, rolls, green salad, apple slices

**FRIDAY (Nov. 11):** Barbecued ribs, baked beans, rolls, corn, coleslaw, peach crisp



Miller

Simonis

## Missing child found after high speed car chase

BY ISABELLA CROWLEY

The Observer

NORTH POWDER — A missing infant was found on Sunday, Oct. 30, after law enforcement pursued parents in a high speed car chase and trek through the snowy woods near North Powder.

According to a press release from Union County Sheriff Cody Bowen, deputies arrested Remington Miller, 35, for reckless driving, two counts of recklessly endangering another person, two counts of failure to register as a sex offender and misdemeanor and felony fleeing. He was also arrested on felony Klamath County warrants and a felony State Parole Board warrant. McKinzie Simonis, 24, was arrested on a second-degree failure to appear warrant.

Deputy Dustin Heath saw Miller at the Sinclair gas station in North Powder at 12:23 p.m. as he got into a blue Ford F150 truck, according to a probable cause declaration. Heath knew there was a felony warrant for Miller's arrest, so he approached the truck and knocked on the driver's side window. He did not see anyone else in the truck at the time and signaled for Miller to step out.

Instead Miller sped out of the parking lot and onto Anthony Lakes Highway, according to the probable cause declaration. Heath followed in his patrol car — noting that the truck weaved in and out of the oncoming lane while traveling over 70 mph.

The chase continued into the mountains past Pilcher Creek Reservoir and onto Forest Service Road 4350, according to law enforcement documents. Heath found the vehicle unoccupied in the snow and saw two sets of human footprints leaving from the driver's side, the documents stated. The footprints continued about 100 yards up the road before traveling down a steep embankment.

Heath stayed with the truck in case the suspects returned. After some time Deputy Dane Jensen arrived on scene with a K-9 unit. The pair tracked the footprints through the woods with assistance from Oregon State Police troopers.

Just before 5 p.m. Miller and Simonis were taken into custody. The couple had their 6-month-old infant, Oakley Miller, with them.

In August, the Oregon Department of Human Services' Child Welfare Division issued a statement indicating the infant may be at risk after he went missing with his mother. DHS issued a missing person report and, according to the sheriff's press release, there was a court order to place the child in state protective custody.

Law enforcement contacted DHS and the child was taken into the department's custody when Miller and Simonis were arrested.

Miller was transported to Union County Jail. Circuit Court Judge Thomas Powers set bail at \$10,000. Miller is represented by court-appointed counsel, La Grande attorney J Logan Joseph. He is due to appear in court for a plea hearing on Nov. 28.



Brentwood Reid/Pacific Northwest Incident Management Team, Contributed Photo

Firefighters on the Double Creek fire near the Imnaha River on Sept. 7, 2022.

## Residents discuss forest plan revision process

BY DICK MASON

The Observer

LA GRANDE — One Northeastern Oregon resident believes there is a critical factor being overlooked by many experts for the increase in large wildfires in the West.

Jon Patterson said he is convinced that wildfires are more common today and burn hotter because there are more grasses and other vegetation in forests since fewer livestock, including cattle and sheep, are consuming it due to increasing grazing restrictions that are more stringent than they were decades ago. Vegetation once consumed by livestock, he said, now helps ignite fires.

"It is like kindling," the Sumpter resident said during a public meeting of the Blues Intergovernmental Council on Tuesday, Nov. 1, at Eastern Oregon University.

The meeting was one of a series the Blues Intergovernmental Council is conducting in Northeastern Oregon to garner input on how the public thinks the U.S. Forest Service's next revised forest management plan for the Wallowa-Whitman, Umatilla and Malheur national forests should be developed. The management plan the three national forests now operate under was written in 1990.

An attempt to create a new plan started about a decade ago.

However, the development of the Blue Mountains Forest Plan, for which a large draft was written, was shut down in 2018 before it could be finalized after receiving a negative reception from many people across Northeastern Oregon.

Among the many things the proposed update of the Blue Mountains Forest Plan was criticized for was the limited number of opportunities for people in Northeastern Oregon to provide meaningful input on its development.

"There was a lack of community engagement," said Union County Commissioner Paul Anderes, one of about 40 members of the Blues Intergovernmental Council.

Wallowa County Commissioner Todd Nash, also a member of the council, noted that the plan, which was shelved, was not made available to the public and elected officials until the process was too far along. He said county commissioners in Northeastern Oregon did not see the draft until about a week before the public did.

"We do not want to get blindsided again," he said.

The Blues Intergovernmental Council was created to provide the U.S. Forest Service with guidelines for addressing concerns expressed by the public when it creates another forest plan for the three Northeastern Oregon national forests. The council is composed of elected officials and representatives of natural resource organizations. The purpose of the council was discussed in depth at the Nov. 1 meeting.

Input from the public, like that expressed by Patterson, was also taken at the meeting. Issues like maintaining access to forestland were often brought up by those giving input. One resident of Baker County spoke of how he enjoys taking visitors to an old mine near his home, one once enormously productive. He said he fears that a forest plan with too many restrictions on access would make it impossible to continue giving these tours.

Members of the council also discussed what they wanted the new forest management plan to address. Wallowa County Commissioner Susan Roberts said forest health is a concern she wants the future plan to address. She wants to see forests opened up so there is not a large buildup of vegetation that can make it hard for firefighters to get through in an emergency.

Roberts also said reducing forest density would prevent fires from getting so hot that everything they touch is destroyed and the land is burned to the point that nothing will grow.

"We want our forests to be fire resistant and resilient," she said.

Roberts said she also wants to make sure the next forest plan allows for the airfields in Northeastern Oregon's forests to remain open because they could save lives in an aviation emergency.

"Landing strips are a real safety issue," she said. "I want to keep these airfields open."

Roberts also noted they provide a good place for helicopters to land during firefighting operations.

Shaun McKinney, supervisor of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and a council member, said it will take two to three years to create an updated forest plan once the process is started. McKinney said he is delighted with the opportunity the public is being provided.

"The emphasis on community involvement means that more decisions will be made locally," he said.

## News of Record

## POLICE LOG

## Baker City Police

## Arrests, citations

**FAILURE TO APPEAR (multiple Malheur County warrants):** Robert M. Metz, 37, transient, 6:34 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 2 in the 1600 block of Indiana Avenue; jailed.

## Baker County Sheriff's Office

## Arrests, citations

## CONTEMPT OF COURT: Sean Michael

Dethloff, 24, Baker City, 3:35 a.m. Friday, Nov. 4 at Oak and Madison streets; cited and released.

**PROBATION VIOLATION:** Frank Nathan McNair, 42, Baker City, 4:51 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 2 in the 3400 block of 13th Street; jailed.

## DEATHS

**John Vernon Hays:** 80, of Baker City, died Nov. 2, 2022, at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Nampa, Idaho. A visitation will take place Tuesday, Nov.

8 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel, 1500 Dewey Ave. Recitation of the Rosary will follow, at 6 p.m. at Gray's West & Co. Mass of Christian burial will take place Wednesday, Nov. 9 at 11 a.m. at St. Francis de Sales Cathedral, with Father Rob Irwin officiating. Vault interment will follow the mass at Mount Hope Cemetery. Memorial contributions can be made to the Oregon Cattlemen's Association through Gray's West & Co. Pioneer Chapel, 1500 Dewey Ave., Baker City, OR 97814.

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