

TURNING BACK THE PAGES

50 YEARS AGO

from the Democrat-Herald

November 14, 1972

The price of haircuts dropped to 50 cents in Baker Tuesday in the midst of a hot barber war, but the matter was apparently settled today.

25 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

November 14, 1997

A researcher who has written two books critical of the environmental movement will speak Thursday in Baker City. Dr. Michael Coffman, president of Environmental Perspectives Inc., will discuss the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project at 7 p.m. at the Sunridge Inn.

10 YEARS AGO

from the Baker City Herald

November 16, 2012

Investigators have used an Ontario man's global positioning system to track his criminal activity and send him to prison.

"The benefits of modern technology aren't always that great if you've got something to hide," District Attorney Matt Shirtcliff said of the GPS that led deputies to rural Baker County homes burglarized by Brian Anderson last spring.

ONE YEAR AGO

from the Baker City Herald

November 16, 2021

Kara Leggett was awakened from sleep, and to the awful reality of COVID-19, by a thump from the kitchen of her Baker Valley home.

It was early morning, Aug. 22, 2021.

Kara rushed to the kitchen.

She found her husband, Anthony Leggett, sprawled on the floor.

"He was breathing heavily, like he was hyperventilating," said Kara, 41.

She managed to get her husband, who's also 41, into a chair.

Kara, frightened by Anthony's labored wheezing, asked him if that was really the only way he could breathe.

It was.

She called her brother-in-law, Dan Kolilis, who is a nurse.

When he saw Anthony's condition, he told Kara to call for an ambulance.

The ambulance took Anthony to Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Baker City.

Both Kara and Anthony knew they had been infected with the virus. Kara had felt ill for about a week, her symptoms gradually accumulating.

Anthony, by contrast, felt fine for several days after his wife became sick.

But when the illness commenced, Kara said, it advanced rapidly. Both Kara and Anthony had recently had their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. But they recognized that their inoculations had come too late to potentially protect them from the virus.

A few hours before Kara was awakened by the thump, she had to help Anthony walk to the bathroom.

He couldn't get there by himself.

'Zero chance of survival'

At the hospital in Baker City, doctors tried to stabilize Anthony so he could be flown by Life Flight helicopter to Saint Alphonsus Hospital in Boise.

That's the destination for most local COVID-19 patients, and in particular those who are severely ill.

Kara said doctors couldn't intubate Anthony.

His oxygen saturation dropped to 40% — a level that can quickly prove fatal.

Anthony was placed in a tub of ice to combat his fever.

"They told me, he's a very sick man," Kara said. "I didn't realize that was code for he's probably not going to live."

OREGON LOTTERY

MEGABUCKS, NOV. 12

9 - 31 - 40 - 41 - 42 - 48

Next jackpot: \$1.6 million

POWERBALL, NOV. 12

16 - 20 - 44 - 57 - 58 PB 6

Next jackpot: \$59 million

MEGA MILLIONS, NOV. 11

1 - 5 - 17 - 37 - 70

Mega 22

Next jackpot: \$207 million

WIN FOR LIFE, NOV. 12

6 - 34 - 63 - 76

PICK 4, NOV. 13

• 1 p.m.: 5 - 6 - 0 - 5

• 4 p.m.: 6 - 9 - 1 - 6

• 7 p.m.: 7 - 3 - 4 - 2

• 10 p.m.: 0 - 4 - 5 - 6

LUCKY LINES, NOV. 13

2-7-12-13-19-22-28-30

Next jackpot: \$30,000

SENIOR MENUS

WEDNESDAY (Nov. 16): Sweet-and-sour chicken, brown rice, Oriental vegetables, rolls, Asian slaw salad, cinnamon rolls

THURSDAY (Nov. 17): Thanksgiving lunch: Roasted turkey with stuffing, butternut squash with apples and cranberries, vegetables, cranberry sauce, rolls, broccoli-bacon salad, pumpkin pie

FRIDAY (Nov. 18): Baked ziti, garlic bread, carrots, green salad, ice cream

MONDAY (Nov. 21): Chicken strips, mashed potatoes with gravy, corn, biscuits, coleslaw, cookies

TUESDAY (Nov. 22): Taco salad, sour cream and salsa, chips, fruit cup

Public luncheon at the Senior Center, 2810 Cedar St., from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; \$5 donation (60 and older), \$7.50 for those under 60.

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Ace Clark/Contributed Photos

A trio of Oregon Department of Transportation snowplows clear the westbound lanes of Interstate 84.

ODOT facing a winter labor shortage

BY DICK MASON

The Observer

LA GRANDE — A labor shortage has Oregon Department of Transportation officials juggling schedules and resources in Eastern Oregon as the winter season's icy grip tightens.

The department's Eastern Oregon region, which is composed of Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Baker, Grant, Harney and Malheur counties, has 300 total positions. The region now has 38 vacancies, about 25 of which are permanent and seasonal road maintenance positions, according to Ken Patterson, the manager of ODOT's Area 5 region.

The vacancies mean some ODOT crews may have to do more with less as they work to keep Interstate 84 and state highways clear of snow and ice.

"We will do as much as we can with the people we have," Patterson said.

The employee shortage is linked to a falling number of seasonal workers, who are hired to work from November through April.

"Our No. 1 concern going into winter is seasonal labor," said Rich Lani, the manager of ODOT's District 12, which covers Umatilla and Morrow counties and the northern half of Union County.

Stricter regulations

ODOT's labor shortage is more difficult to address today than it was two years ago because of a new state regulation that makes the process of earning a commercial driver's license more time-consuming.

The additional regulations make it harder to find potential employees who are ready

to begin driving snowplows and trucks. ODOT is hiring people without CDLs and then helping them earn the accreditation. However, a number of employees leave ODOT after receiving their CDLs because they are now able to land higher paying jobs elsewhere.

"Having a CDL gives you more options," explained Ace Clark, manager of ODOT's District 13, which includes all or portions of Union, Baker and Wallowa counties.

Filling holes

The seasonal employee situation is particularly dire at ODOT's Meacham maintenance station, where eight of its total of 27 positions are unfilled. Lani said it is hard to fill the Meacham positions because the community has limited housing for employees, forcing many working in Meacham to commute between either the La Grande area to the east or Pendleton area to the west. Both are at least 25 miles, a costly drive because of today's high gas prices.

Lani said that when fully staffed, his district would have as many as 72 employees after Nov. 1, but now has only 55.

The transportation department is taking a new step this year to keep as many of its winter positions filled as possible. The state is granting travel status to employees who come to Region 5 from outside Eastern Oregon to help with winter road work. Employees granted travel status have their meals and lodging expenses paid for, Patterson said.

The move has so far drawn in at least two ODOT employees to work in the region.

Patterson, ODOT's Area 5 region manager, said it is only fair that travel status be granted to ODOT employees coming here from outside the region.

"They are stepping away from lives they have elsewhere," he said.

Another step the agency is taking involves maintaining its Fire and Ice program, a program that involves ODOT and the Oregon Department of Forestry.

Employees in the program are guaranteed year-round work by fighting fires for the Oregon Department of Forestry in the summer and being employed as seasonal winter employees for ODOT.

Versatile workers

The transportation agency is putting the versatility of its employees to good use by transferring some full-time workers from other positions

to fill seasonal winter spots.

Employees at ODOT who have different summer and winter jobs include Andy Adkins, the bridge crew coordinator for ODOT's District 13 and a winter road maintenance worker. He said that doing snow and ice and removal leaves him with little downtime in the winter.

While he compared the job to parenting — "It is like having kids," he said. "You are busy constantly" — Adkins noted that the winter challenge of keeping roads clear of snow and ice is a unique undertaking.

"It is an entity all its own," he said.

Help wanted

ODOT is accepting applications for open seasonal positions. People interested in the positions can learn more on ODOT's website, www.oregon.gov/odot.

Totals

Continued from A1

This is the first general election in which ballots postmarked by election day, but which arrived later, will be counted.

• Ballots that were delivered to a clerk's office in a different county. Clerks are required by state law to mail those ballots to the county where the voter lives by Nov. 16, Kirby said.

She estimates there will be fewer than a dozen of these ballots.

• Ballots that either lacked the voter's signature, or that had a signature that elections officials concluded did not match the signature on file.

There are about 90 of these ballots, Kirby said.

The clerk's office mails a notice to the voter in each case, whether the ballot lacked a signature or there was a question about the signature matching one on file, Kirby said.

Those voters have until Nov. 29 to resolve the situation. They can do so by coming to the

clerk's office and signing their ballot, or signing a form that, if it matches the one on file, becomes the new official signature for that voter, Kirby said.

In past elections, she said, relatively few people with such ballots responded to the letter and resolved the issue to ensure their votes were tallied, Kirby said.

On the Baker County ballot, the race for Baker County Commission Chairman wasn't close enough to be affected by outstanding ballots, as Shane

Alderson has nearly 1,000 more voters than Dan Garrick.

The Baker City Council election is closer.

Voters are electing four councilors.

The margin between the fourth-place candidate, Beverly Calder, and fifth-place, Katie LaFavor, is 51 votes.

It's not clear how many of the ballots that could still be counted are from voters who live within the Baker City limits and are eligible to vote in the city council race.

News of Record

DEATHS

Freda Lois Waldron: 95, of Baker City, died Nov. 8, 2022, at her residence. To leave an online condolence for Freda's family, go to www.coletributecenter.com.

Paul Herb: 76, of Halfway, died Nov. 10, 2022, at Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Boise. A family gathering and celebration of Paul's life will take place at a later date, the time and place to be announced. Arrangements are under the direction of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Online condolences can be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

Teresa Lorene (Randall) Watson: 72, formerly of Richland, died Nov. 10, 2022, at Mountain View Hospital in Las Vegas, Nevada. A graveside service and celebration of Teresa's life will take place later, the time and place to be announced. Arrangements are under the direction of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Online condolences can be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

Doug Payton: 77, a lifetime resident of Halfway, died Nov. 8, 2022, at his home in his wife's arms. A roping and celebration of Doug's life will take place in the summer of 2023, the time and place to be announced. Arrangements are under the direction of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Online condolences can be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

POLICE LOG

Baker City Police

Arrests, citations

FAILURE TO APPEAR (Roseburg Municipal Court warrant): Jordan Kent Sanko, 28, Baker City, 1:48 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 13 in the 2400 block of Oak Street; jailed.

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF INTOXICANTS: Gordon Leallen Wicklander, 77, Sumpter, 7:26 p.m. Friday, Nov. 11 at Washington Avenue and Main Street; cited and released.

Baker County Sheriff's Office

Arrests, citations

CONTEMPT OF COURT (Baker County Justice Court warrant): Jeremy James Broyles, 39, transient, 7:23 p.m. Sunday at Auburn Avenue and Main Street; cited and released.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (Baker County Justice Court warrant): Robert Jarboe, 47, Huntington, 6:18 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 13 in Huntington; cited and released.

UNLAWFUL DELIVERY OF METHAMPHETAMINE (Baker County Circuit Court warrant): Joshua James Smith, 40, Baker City, 4:14 p.m. Friday,

Nov. 11 in the 400 block of Spring Garden Avenue; jailed.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (Baker County Justice Court warrant): Tami Deann Dudley, 42, Richland, 12:10 p.m. Friday, Nov. 11 in Richland; cited and released.

Oregon State Police

Accident reports

Friday, Nov. 11, 9:51 p.m. on Interstate 84, Milepost 291 eastbound. A Ford F-150 pickup truck pulling a camper trailer, driven by Aaron Paul Singleton, 43, of Draper, Idaho, hit ice, causing the trailer to jackknife and the truck to spin. The truck and trailer stopped facing

west on the eastbound shoulder, with the trailer on its side. No injuries were reported, according to an OSP report.

Thursday, Nov. 10, 8:33 a.m. on Interstate 84, Milepost 293 eastbound. Harold Wayne Bobo, 71, of Haines, was driving a commercial truck when an animal ran onto the freeway. The truck drifted on the gravel shoulder on a slight corner, and when the driver tried to maneuver the truck back onto the freeway, it overturned, landing on the passenger side, according to an OSP report. Bobo was taken to Saint Alphonsus Medical Center in Baker City with minor injuries.

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