



SPORTS A5
Baker girls hoops routs Homedale



OUTDOORS B1
Weather models and the 'big miss'



THE WEST A6
Update on missing Fruitland boy

Baker City Herald

IN THIS EDITION: LOCAL • OUTDOORS & REC • SPORTS Serving Baker County since 1870 • bakercityherald.com SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2022 • \$1.50

QUICK HITS

Good Day Wish To A Subscriber

A special good day to Herald subscriber Bobby Copley of Baker City.

LOCAL A2

The Oregon Public Utility Commission is hosting a virtual meeting on Monday, Dec. 5 for the public to comment on Idaho Power's application for a certificate of public convenience and necessity.

Idaho Power's request is part of its proposed construction of a transmission line that would connect the Hemingway substation in Idaho with a substation near Boardman, Oregon. The transmission line is known as the Boardman to Hemingway or B2H project.

BRIEFING

Pet supply drive through Dec. 16

Bisnett Insurance is hosting a pet supply drive for Best Friends of Baker through Dec. 16. You can drop off donations at Bisnett, at 2001 Main St. (corner of Washington Avenue and Main Street). Needs include kitten and adult cat food (dry or wet), dog food (large and small breeds), kitten milk replacement powder, and monetary donations for medical needs will be accepted as well.

WEATHER

Today
31/17
Mostly sunny

Sunday
34/19
Afternoon snow

Monday
30/18
Morning snow

Full forecast on the back of the B section.

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

2011 BAKER HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE

Brown off to fast start at National Finals Rodeo

Steer wrestler placed second in the first go-round, wins \$22,851

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Jesse Brown revels in the glaring spotlight that is Las Vegas.

But not in the casinos lining The Strip.

Brown, 30, of Baker City, is a world class steer wrestler, and for the second straight year he started the biggest event in rodeo with one of his best performances.

Brown brought down his steer in 4.0 seconds in the first go-round at the National Finals Rodeo Thursday, Dec. 1 at the Thomas & Mack Center.

Brown, who posted the

second-fastest time, earned \$22,851.

"I feel really good about where I'm at," Brown said in a phone interview on Friday morning, Dec. 2. "Stuff can change every night, but I think I'm in a good position."

Nick Guy, from Sparta, Wisconsin, was first, at 3.8 seconds, to win \$28,914.

At the 2021 National Finals Rodeo, Brown tied for fifth place in the first round to win \$5,661.

That was Brown's second year competing in the NFR, but the first in Las Vegas, the event's traditional home.

The 2020 event took place in Texas due to the pandemic. Brown had a fast start there, as well, with a first-place tie in the first round.



Jesse Brown of Baker City wrestles his steer on Thursday, Sept. 15, 2022, at the Pendleton Round-Up.

Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

"I've been glad to start off pretty good all three years," Brown said.

His second-place run Thursday moved him up to sixth in the world standings for 2022,

with total earnings of \$125,564.

The National Finals Rodeo runs for 10 straight nights, through Dec. 10.

That schedule, so unlike most rodeos that last one or

two days, requires a different sort of preparation, Brown said.

"It's sort of like Groundhog Day in Vegas," he said. "There's a lot going on, with signings and interviews. You just have to find your own routine. It's unlike anything else."

Brown said it's always a relief to finish the first round — especially with a second-place run.

"On that first run everyone's got some jitters," he said. "It's nice to get it out of the way."

Brown said he didn't feel quite as nervous this year compared with 2021 when he made his debut in the NFR's usual venue at the Thomas & Mack Center.

"It's always a great atmosphere," he said. "It gets your blood flowing."



A century of change

Ralph Ward's new book chronicles his family's history raising crops and cattle in Baker County

Lori Rowland/Contributed Photo

An historic barn, surrounded by a wheat field, on the Ward Ranches' property in Baker City in 2022.

BY LISA BRITTON

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Ralph Ward wanted to tell the story about his family's long history of farming and ranching in Baker Valley.

But maybe not the whole story. "I supplied some of the stories. I left a few out," Ward, 95, said with a smile during a recent interview.

The idea to publish a book started a year ago during a conversation with family.

The project, he said, is 90% due to his daughter, Kathy Ward, who lives in California and visited her dad at least once a month from January through August of this year to collect stories and organize the book.

And now it's ready — 244 pages full of stories and photos about the Ward family and the role of agriculture in Baker Valley.

And especially the changes over more than a century.

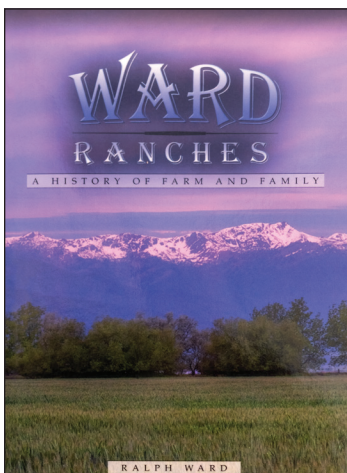
"No one has lived through as much history as the last 100 years," Ralph said.

And he's quick to name his favorite advancement during his many years of farming:



Contributed Photo

Charlie Ward, Ralph's uncle, bringing in the Ward family's second potato harvest in Baker Valley in 1916.



"I supplied some of the stories. I left a few out."

— Ralph Ward, 95, talking about his new book chronicling his family's history in Baker County

"The first combine with a cab." GPS technology is another new tool.

"You can tell things are GPS now — the rows are a lot straighter," Ralph said with a chuckle.

The book, priced at \$35, is available at Betty's Books in Baker City.

See **History** / A3

New chamber director busy from the start

Devon Colton, a Baker High School graduate, started 2 days before Twilight Christmas Parade

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Devon Colton didn't exactly ease into her new job as executive director of the Baker County Chamber of Commerce.

Her third day was Saturday, Dec. 3, which brought one of the chamber's signature events, the Christmas Twilight Parade and lighting of the community Christmas tree downtown.

"I'm really excited about it," Colton, 27, said on Wednesday, Nov. 30, the day before she started the job.



Colton

See **Director** / A3

Updated vote totals from Nov. 8 released

No change in the order for Baker City Council race

Baker City Herald

Baker County Clerk Stefanie Kirby released updated results from the Nov. 8 election on Wednesday, Nov. 30, and there was no change in the Baker City Council election.

The closest race was for the fourth and final candidate elected to the council.

Based on preliminary results from Nov. 8, Beverly Calder was in fourth place, with 1,830 votes, 51 more votes than Katie LaFavor.

Calder retained her lead after postmarked mail-in ballots were added to the tally on Wednesday. Calder had 1,853 votes, and LaFavor 1,800.

Calder will serve a two-year term, starting in January.

There was no change in the order of the top three candidates, all of whom will serve four-year terms.

Matt Diaz received the most votes, with 2,388, incumbent Dean Guyer was second with 2,100, and incumbent Johnny Waggoner Sr. was third with 1,913.

OTEC keeps its rates steady, returning \$3M in capital credits

OTEC hasn't raised rates since 2019

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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In a year when the word "inflation" has been ubiquitous, Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative is bucking the trend of escalating costs.

OTEC, the member-owned cooperative that serves parts of Baker, Union, Grant and Harney counties, is keeping its power rates steady for the third straight year.

OTEC typically makes any changes to its rates in the fall, with new rates in effect for the next year.

"We are fortunate to say we have not raised rates since 2019 and will not be raising rates this winter," said

Les Penning, the cooperative's CEO. "OTEC has seen increases in our costs, as many businesses have, but will continue to work to hold the line on keeping our members' rates competitive."

Those increasing costs include fuel and other supplies, said Joe Hathaway, OTEC's communications manager.

See **OTEC** / A3



TODAY
Issue 87
12 pages

Classified	B2-B4	Crossword	B2 & B3	Jayson Jacoby	A4	Opinion	A4	Sports	A5
Comics	B5	Dear Abby	B6	Lottery Results	A2	Outdoors	B1 & B6	Turning Backs	A2
Community News	A2	Horoscope	B2 & B3	News of Record	A2	Senior Menus	A2	Weather	B6