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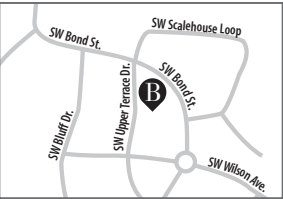
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LOCAL, STATE & REGION

A bear that wandered into Baker City released in the Wallowas

BY JAYSON JACOBY
Baker City Herald

Baker City's most famous black bear — or at least the most photographed — is likely roaming today somewhere in the southern Wallowa Mountains.

That is better bear habitat than a birch tree between two apartment buildings in a Baker City neighborhood.

The bear, which ran through part of a golf course on Sunday morning then crossed a street and climbed the tree, ended up tranquilized and in a cage later that morning.

Brian Ratliff, district wildlife biologist at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Baker City office, fired the tranquilizer dart that gave the yearling male bear a temporary nap.

A crowd of about 20 people who had watched the incident clapped and cheered, with yells of "good job" and "thank you" resounding as the episode concluded with no injuries.

Ratliff said with a chuckle that it was his first standing ovation.

The biologist released the bear in the Eagle Creek area northeast of Baker City.

He suspects the bear, which weighed about 150 pounds, had separated from its mother, as bears tend to do after their first birthday.

"I think it just wandered into town and got caught after daylight where it didn't want to be," Ratliff said.

He said there were no reports of the bear nosing into garbage cans or other behavior that could suggest the

» This yearling male bear recovered quickly from its ordeal in Baker City on Sunday and was released later in the day in the Wallowa Mountains.

✂ A Baker City Police officer stands beneath a birch tree in case the bear in the tree came down or fell, on Sunday.

Jayson Jacoby photos/Baker City Herald



bear was comfortable around people.

In those cases, ODFW offi-

cials are likely to kill the bear rather than trap it and release it in the wild.

SHERIDAN

Inmates at federal prison denied showers amid strike, lawyer states

Associated Press

Prison officials at the Federal Correctional Institution in Sheridan denied showers last month to those held in a unit where people were engaged in a hunger strike, according to a court filing.

A court filing last week by a federal public defender says about 80 people housed in the detention center's "J2 Unit" were protesting conditions inside the facility's detention center. According to the Bureau of Prisons, on June 23 some of the men in custody at the prison southwest of Portland "did not accept their meals."

The following day, documents say, prison Warden DeWayne Hendrix issued a

memo to people in that unit saying showers were postponed, Oregon Public Broadcasting reported.

"The purpose of this memorandum is to inform each of you that showers are postponed due to continued threats of assault to staff," Hendrix wrote. "Enhanced security procedures due to ongoing disruptive behavior will continue through the weekend and will be reevaluated on Monday. All issues brought to our attention are being reviewed."

Oregon Public Defender Lisa Hay noted in the court filing that temperatures in Sheridan reached 90 degrees when showers were withheld.

The Bureau of Prisons didn't

answer questions from OPB about the memo or whether the water was cut off in an effort to end the hunger strike.

U.S. Department of Justice attorneys, who represent the federal prison, said in a court filing of their own last week "that no inmates are currently on a hunger strike."

Conditions inside the federal prison have been the subject of concern since the pandemic took hold in 2020. Hay has in court filings detailed lockdowns that have lasted for days. In other filings, her office has documented poor medical and dental care that has left many suffering.

Since the pandemic began, seven people have died at the facility.

Multnomah County noncitizens could be granted the vote

BY MAX EGENER

Oregon Capital Bureau

Voters in Multnomah County will see a ballot measure this November that would expand voting rights to residents who are not U.S. citizens.

Last month, a group reviewing Multnomah County's charter — effectively a local constitution — unanimously recommended adding language that would extend voting rights to more groups, including people who are not citizens.

If voters pass the measure, Multnomah County would be the first jurisdiction in Oregon to grant the right to vote in local elections to "noncitizens."

The county would be one of only a handful of jurisdictions in the United States that allow noncitizens to vote in local elections. Eleven cities in Maryland, two in Vermont and San Francisco currently allow voting by noncitizens.

The Multnomah County Charter Review Committee was expected to vote on specific charter language for the recommendation during its meeting Tuesday. The county convenes a charter review committee, comprising 16 appointed residents, every six years.

Expecting controversy, committee members chose broad language for the charter amendment to maximize who could gain voting rights as well as to avoid potential legal troubles.

"If we were to pursue one narrow declaration of who we would like to expand the vote to, if a court were to say, 'No, you can't do it that way,' then there's not as much recourse to really move this idea forward," said Samantha Gladu, who helped draft the charter change and co-chairs the subcommittee that started discussions about it.

The language under consideration says the county shall extend the right to vote for county officers and measures "to the fullest extent allowed by law."

At least one jurisdiction that tried to extend voting rights to noncitizens — New York City — saw the effort quashed by a court ruling. On June 27, a New York State Supreme Court justice struck down the measure approved by the City Council in December, saying it violated the state's constitution.

Many states, including Oregon, allowed noncitizens to vote when they were founded. Racism and sexism were very explicit in the laws, said Juliet Stumpf, a professor at Lewis & Clark Law School who studies immigration and criminal law.

Early Western states allowed noncitizens to vote as a way to encourage settling specifically by white European immigrants. In Oregon, white men who had resided in the state for six months prior to an election and declared an intent to become U.S. citizens could vote.

People have long applied measures of groups' contributions to society as a means to decide whether they should be able to vote, Stumpf said. Literacy tests and proxies of taxation such as property ownership or residency were common qualifiers historically.

Charter review committee members cited multiple reasons for expanding voting rights, including reducing taxation without representation.

Undocumented people in Multnomah County pay an estimated \$19 million in state and local taxes annually, according to a report by the Oregon Center for Public Pol-

icy. About half of those taxes are property taxes and the other half are income taxes and excise taxes on goods like gas and alcohol, the report shows.

Undocumented people aren't eligible to access many of the social services to which they contribute, however. They can't access Social Security, Medicare, the Oregon Health Plan after age 18, federal food assistance programs, and state and federal earned income tax credits, among others, the report states.

Legal challenges

Granting voting rights to noncitizens likely will face substantial legal barriers, Katherine Thomas, assistant Multnomah County attorney, told committee members in March.

First, Oregon's Constitution requires citizenship for voting. State statutes related to voting refer to citizenship requirements, including one that says state voter registration cards must indicate a person is a U.S. citizen.

"Ultimately, it's untested," Thomas said. "I'm not aware that there is a local jurisdiction that has expanded voting to noncitizens. We don't know how a court would necessarily treat that kind of proposal if it was challenged in court."

The committee will present by Aug. 4 all of its recommended charter changes to the county board, which files the ballot title and other information with the elections division. Any ballot title challenges must be resolved by Sept. 8 to appear on the ballot for the Nov. 8 election.

If the measure passes, county staff would consult with the board about how to implement an expansion of voting rights, said Ryan Yambra, spokesperson for the county.

The committee also researched whether people under 18 and people currently prohibited from voting because they're serving a sentence for a felony conviction could gain voting rights.

"The committee expects that the county will explore every possible avenue to expand local voting access," Yambra said. "The details of implementation would depend on a variety of factors, and so we can't say at this time whether or what board action might be required."

Noncitizen residents include multiple groups, such as temporary residents with certain visas, permanent residents who hold green cards and undocumented immigrants.

Tens of thousands of people in Multnomah County could be granted the right to vote if the measure passes. Seven percent of the county's population — or more than 56,000 people — are noncitizen residents, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2021 American Community Survey. An estimated 25,000 residents are undocumented, according to the nonpartisan Migration Policy Institute.

The recommendation has received support from the Portland-based nonprofit Coalition of Communities of Color.

"The decisions of elected representatives impact every resident, regardless of whether they are eligible to vote," Sol Mora, community engagement manager for the nonprofit, wrote in a letter to the committee. "This reform to expand our democracy will have a meaningful and lasting impact on communities across Multnomah County to feel that they belong and have a seat at the decision-making table."

LOCAL BRIEFING

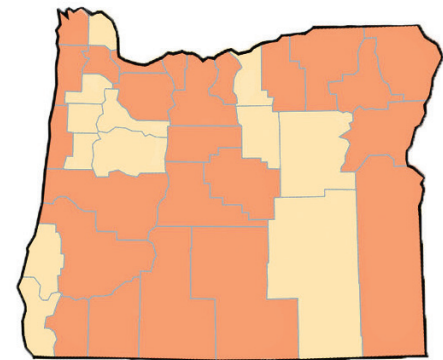
COVID-19 community levels for Central Oregon

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention monitors community levels of COVID-19 to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. Levels can be low, medium or high and are determined by looking at hospital beds being used, hospital admissions and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area.

As of Thursday, 24 Oregon counties had reached high levels of community spread.

The CDC listed the following levels for Central Oregon:

Deschutes County: High
Crook County: High
Jefferson County: High
Precautions the CDC rec-



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Thursday raised the COVID-19 community levels to high in Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson and 12 other Oregon counties. Orange equals high levels and yellow equals medium. CDC

ommends for communities with high levels:
• Wear a mask indoors in public
• Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines.
• Get tested if you have

symptoms.
• Additional precautions may be needed for people at high risk for severe illness.
• Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines.

— Bulletin staff report