

Alex "The Xaniac" Zerbe to perform at Panida / A2



**Boundary County Museum  
This Week In History**



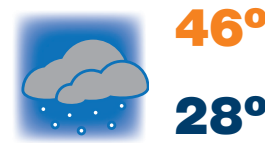
'Every Idahoan' at risk from weak snowpack / A8

**BONNERS FERRY**

**HERALD**

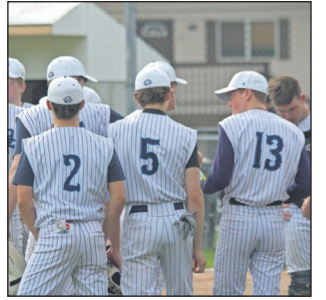
**Thursday**

April 16, 2026



Vol. 132, No. 144

\$1.00



**SPORTS**

■ **PREP BASEBALL:** Burt stand out during the Badgers' bruising by Sandpoint / B1

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**Distinguished Young Women, Little Misses participate in 'Be Your Best Self' activities**

The "Be Your Best Self" program is a fundamental part of the Distinguished Young Women program.

The program aims to inspire participants to empower young people nationwide with valuable tools that help them face the challenges of negative peer pressure, as well as encourage them to be their best selves in areas such as academics, physical fitness, morality, character, and social and civic participation.

Since February, this year's DYW participants have been meeting each Friday morning to learn the five values of the program: be healthy, be ambitious, be involved, be responsible, and be studious. The participants have heard from guest speakers, worked in their community, and mentored sixth-grade Little Misses.

There are 13 girls participating in the Little Miss program this year, and each DYW participant is partnering with one of them. The Little Misses also meet every Friday morning to connect with the DYW participants and engage with the five BYBS values. The goal is to empower young women to recognize their strengths and give back to their local community.

See **BEST SELF**, A2

**New Valley View moves forward with groundbreaking ceremony**

By NOAH HARRIS  
Staff Writer

**BONNERS FERRY** — On a warm and bright day, Boundary County community members gathered outside and watched the start of a new era at Valley View Elementary School.

Ground has been broken at Valley View Elementary School, as the Boundary County School District works to ensure that a new elementary school will be ready by the start of the 2027-28 school year.

Several state lawmakers were in attendance, including Idaho Lt. Gov. Scott Bedke and Debbie Critchfield, Idaho Superintendent

of Public Instruction. They were joined by Idaho Rep. Mark Sauter, R-Sandpoint, and Idaho Sen. Jim Woodward, R-Sagle, from District 1. Several Boundary County elected officials were also in attendance, including county commissioners and city councilmembers.

Dozens of students from Valley View sat on the grass quietly, listening attentively as BCSD Superintendent Jan Bayer spoke to the audience.

Bayer acknowledged the work it took to get a new school, which included multiple failed bonds on the ballot.



Photo By NOAH HARRIS

**14 individuals, wearing hard hats, broke the ground at Valley View Elementary School on April 9 to signal the start of construction for a new elementary school.**

See **SCHOOL**, A2

**Historic 'Spuds' bring America 250 celebration to Bonners Ferry**



Photo By Sue Kemmis, Museum Curator

**From left to right: Molly-Tot Pitcher, Alexander Hamiltater, Spuddy John Jay and Thomas Jefferspud at the Boundary County Museum.**

By NOAH HARRIS  
Staff Writer

**BONNERS FERRY** — The Boundary County Museum welcomed Thomas Jefferspud, Spuddy John Jay, Alexander Hamiltater and Molly-Tot Pitcher on April 8 as a unique celebration of America's 250-year anniversary came to town.

Potatoes dressed as Thomas Jefferson, John Jay, Alexander Hamilton and Molly Pitcher were brought from the state capital to Bonners Ferry as official America 250 ambassadors. In

total, 15 historical figures have been reimagined as "spuds."

Idaho State Treasurer Julie Ellsworth created the potato figures.

During the event at the museum, Ellsworth spoke to about 20 attendees about how the spuds came to be. Attendees also had the opportunity to sign a copy of the Declaration of Independence that will hang in the state capitol rotunda.

See **SPUDS**, A7

**Survey of safety concerns along U.S. 95 corridor highlighted at ITD workshop**

By NOAH HARRIS  
Staff Writer

**BONNERS FERRY** — Nearly everyone who responded to a recent survey expressed concern about driving the U.S. 95 corridor from Ponderay to the Canadian border, according to findings released by the Idaho Transportation Department.

The results were shared during a Jan. 30 safety workshop in Bonners Ferry, held in partnership with Idaho State Police and the Office of Highway Safety.

See **CORRIDOR**, A6

**Watts running for county clerk**

By NOAH HARRIS  
Staff Writer

**BONNERS FERRY** — Stacie Watts is running for Boundary County Clerk, saying the position is one of the most important operational roles in county government and requires strong leadership, accuracy and accountability.

"I believe Boundary County benefits from leadership that brings both institutional knowledge and a fresh, independent perspective focused



Watts

See **WATTS**, A7

**Trial begins in child enticement case**

By NOAH HARRIS  
Staff Writer

**BONNERS FERRY** — A jury trial is underway for a local man accused of inappropriately texting a minor more than a year ago.

Chase Jerrold Invernon, 30, will face a jury for one count of child enticement after allegedly engaging in sexual conduct online with someone under 16.

Invernon's three-day trial began May 15 and is expected to conclude May 17. The charge carries a maximum sentence of

15 years, according to the Idaho Legislature.

Court documents indicate Invernon sent video messages showing his genitals to a minor under 16 between Dec. 26, 2024 and Feb. 18, 2025. He also allegedly stated in messages that he wanted to engage in sexual acts with the minor.

As part of the state's evidence, prosecutors will present screenshots from the alleged victim's phone, a body camera recording from an interview conducted Feb.

26, 2025 and downloads from Invernon's Facebook account.

The trial has been delayed three times prior, with the earliest scheduled for July 16, 2025.

Three individuals have been subpoenaed to testify.

Invernon was charged Feb. 19, 2025, for the alleged crimes, where he posted a \$50,000 bond April 30 after initially being held without bond.

He is prohibited from contacting the minor under a no-contact order.

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