

See who's running for local office in the 2026 Voter's Guide / **A6**



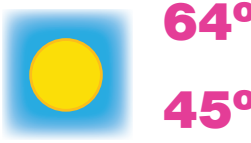
Chamber launches Welcome Bag program / **A3**

BONNERS FERRY

HERALD

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SPORTS

■ **PREP FOOTBALL:** Badgers claim second straight league title / **B1**

BRIEFLY

DMV set to launch e-notifications

The Idaho DMV will begin sending official e-notifications via email to customers as part of an upcoming modernization and cost-saving effort. With the number of customers who have online accounts, the DMV estimates at least a \$400K in savings. The e-notification system will provide reminders and updates directly to customers who have an email associated with their DMV account.

See DMV, A3

Boundary County teachers awarded STCU grants

A pair of Boundary County School District teachers have received grants from Spokane Teachers Credit Union. Receiving grants were Kari Dameron and Rachel Mertzweiller. STCU, founded by high school teachers in 1934, is for the second time this year honoring its roots by awarding a total of \$20,000 to 100 randomly drawn educators. Winners can spend their grants on anything that will enhance students' classroom experience, whether a basic need or something special. The online drawing was open to teachers, counselors, and other

See STCU, A3

BCH sets forum ahead of Nov. 3 levy vote

BONNERS FERRY — Voters will have another chance to learn more about Boundary Community Hospital's proposed \$3 million, two-year levy at a town hall meeting next Tuesday.

The proposed two-year special hospital tax levy would provide \$1.5 million annually for two years to support emergency services, hospital infrastructure and continued access to local health care. The measure is on the Nov. 3 ballot.

The last of three town hall meetings will be held at noon Tuesday, Oct. 27, at the Kootenai River Inn's Kxtuana Room. Meetings were held earlier this month in Naples and Moyie Springs.

Hospital officials said the town halls are aimed at giving residents a chance to discuss the proposal and provide an opportunity to discuss these challenges, review the hospital's financial position, and explain what the proposed levy would fund.

"Like many rural hospitals, BCH faces rising operating costs, including medical supplies, equipment, medications, and qualified healthcare staff," Boundary Community Hospital officials said in a press release. "At the same time, reimbursement from Medicare, Medicaid, and other government insurance programs often does not cover the full cost of providing care."

Hospital officials said the town halls are a way to talk directly to residents about the challenges the hospital faces, detail its financial position and explain what the levy would fund.

"[We want them to] better understand what it would mean for the hospital and the community before making an informed decision," officials said.

Hospital representatives will be available to provide information, address questions, and listen to community concerns.

"An informed community is an important part of the decision-making process," officials said. "These meetings are intended to provide residents with factual information and

an opportunity for open discussion before the November election."

Bryce Cordle, Boundary Community Hospital CEO, said previously that the levy is part of an effort to ease financial strain on the hospital while continuing to provide essential medical services in the community. The hospital is also pursuing ways to boost operational efficiency as well as appropriate reimbursement, grants and other available funding sources.

See BCH, A2

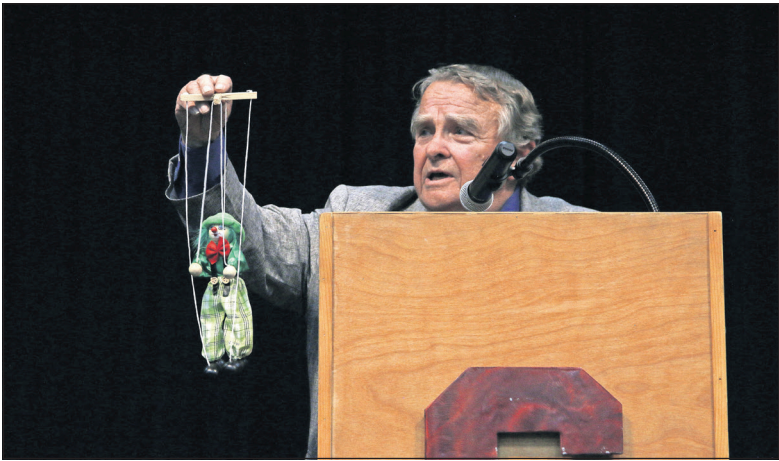
Absent opponents leave candidates unchallenged at Tuesday forum

By CHLOE COCHRAN
Staff Writer

SANDPOINT — Half the politicians on the ballot for Nov. 3's general election attended Tuesday evening's candidate forum, drawing a crowd of approximately 50 people as they fielded questions from public spectators.

The forum, hosted by local media companies, was the only political forum hosted for the November election cycle, inviting both Legislative District 1 and Bonner County candidates to share their platform and perspective with the North Idaho community.

Legislative candidates Steve Johnson, independent, and Karen Matthee, Democrat, were in attendance. Kathryn Larson, independent, was represented by her campaign manager after being too ill to attend the forum.



Courtesy of CHLOE COCHRAN

Steve Johnson holds up a puppet symbolizing his opponent, Scott Herndon, while he talks about the Idaho Freedom Foundation at Tuesday's candidate forum

Republican Legislative candidates Scott Herndon, Cornel Rasor and Jane Sauter were not in attendance. The three had earlier said they could not attend the forum

due to a conflict with the Bonner County Republican Central Committee's monthly meeting.

See FORUM, A3

BCSD pays share of ISBT shortfall

District opts to make lump sum payment

By CAROLINE LOBSINGER
Staff Writer

BONNERS FERRY — The Boundary County School District opted to make a lump sum payment to cover its \$217,000 contribution toward the Idaho School Benefit Trust's \$13 million shortfall.

The Lake Pend Oreille School District in Sandpoint also opted to make a lump sum payment to cover its \$661,000 contribution toward the trust's shortfall; however, the West Bonner School District in Priest River opted to make monthly payments to cover its \$117,200 contribution toward the trust's shortfall.

See BCSD, A2

McGrane reminds campaigns of disclosure requirements

Secretary of State Phil McGrane is reminding those who have contributed financially to political campaigns that it remains their responsibility to comply with campaign finance disclosure laws.

Under the Sunshine Law, political candidates, political organizations, and individuals spending money to influence elections are required to publicly report their contributions, expenditures, and related



McGrane

See FUNDS, A2

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Deadline extended for 'Valor' stories

By CAROLINE LOBSINGER
Staff Writer

BONNERS FERRY — Are you a veteran who served the United States? Did a family member serve?

We want to know the stories of our military servicemen and women — and veterans past and present — to capture them before they are lost.

To give as many veterans and families as possible the

2026 Valor veterans tribute publication, the deadline has been extended to 5 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 23.

Among families who have shared their stories:

- The Evans family — Major Gen. A.J. Evans, Col. Philip Brooks, and Col. Richard G. Evans — served a combined 95 years of active duty in the U.S. Air Force.
- George Dong, who was one of only a handful of Chinese American soldiers

to receive the Congressional Gold Medal for his service. He served in the 411th Field Artillery in the European Theater, stationed in England and Germany.

- SF1 Madoc Kenyon Irish, who died in service to his country. Irish was killed in action on April 16, 1945, aboard the USS Laffey DD-724. Thirty-two sailors, including Irish, were killed in the attack.

See VALOR, A2

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