

IDAHO WEEKLY BRIEFING

August 6, 2018

Vol XIX, No 32

www.ridenbaughpress.com

In this issue



Idaho Weekly Briefing

Ridenbaugh Press
Published weekly
P.O. 834, Carlton OR 97111
(208) 484-0460

Editor & Publisher:
[Randy Stapilus](#)

Managing Editor:
[Linda Watkins](#)

Subscriptions:
e-mail \$19.95/year
[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#)

© 2018 Ridenbaugh Press
The Briefing is an independent
nonpartisan review.
Portions are adapted or
excerpted from public documents
and press releases; links here
may be considered references to
some original sources. State maps
adapted from Wikipedia unless
otherwise noted.

Contact the editor at
stapilus@ridenbaugh.com

With the arrival of August, preliminaries begin in the fall general election campaign season. An early activity was a debate between the candidates for superintendent of public instruction; more faceoffs are expected soon. Meanwhile, smoke gathered over the skies of southern Idaho as one wildfire after another popped up.

Cover picture

MAGIC VALLEY WIND Giant propellers stand above a farm field west of Burley, generating increasingly substantial amounts of electric power in the region. *(photo/Randy Stapilus)*

Building a perfect storm



What would it take for Democrat Paulette Jordan to win the governorship in November over Republican Brad Little? You might inquire in response, why ask? Little is heavily favored to win, right? And yes he is; and none of what follows should be interpreted to the contrary. But likely is not the same as certainty. Just ask all those prognosticators about their 2016 presidential estimates.

In a batch of conversations around southern Idaho this last week, with some well-informed people in both parties, a common perspective emerged, which might be useful to consider as the campaign season unfolds.

First, the most favorable estimates of a Jordan win put it at about 10 percent: One chance in ten. Others figure the prospect at around five percent. No one went much lower than that, which means a consensus view that she has a small but not insignificant chance of winning. They gave her a better chance than other recent Democratic nominees. Most people I talked to (opinions were not divided along party lines) thought Jordan was likely to get either the best percentage for governor, or nearly the best, of any Democratic nominee since Cecil Andrus in 1990. Most estimated percentages for her in the low to mid-40s; several thought percentages around 45 or 46 were plausible. That would imply a seriously close contest.

Why? One reason is that she's a strong campaigner. Most than most Idaho candidates, she has presence and draws immediate attention where she goes, and voters tend to respond to that - and react to the response. The people I talked to in both parties had strong favorable opinions of Little - his character, knowledge of issues and of the state, skill as a leader, and overall probability that he'd be a good governor - except when it came to his role as a campaigner. There his skills were less obvious; he's not the natural campaigner the current governor has always been. We're now entering a space in the cycle where that may matter.

Both Jordan and Little emerged from contested primaries. But most people - not everyone but most - thought Little was at greater risk of losing some of his own party's base because of dissatisfaction with the outcome of the primary. Specifically, the thought was that a number of backers of losing contender Raul Labrador, many of whom likely spent most of campaign season thinking their man would win the nomination, may be disgusted enough to not vote. If the election is otherwise close, that could matter. (There was some argument that dynamic could hinder Jordan too, but most thought that less likely.)

2018 may be a Democratic sweep year. That's not a certainty, and political waves don't splash the same everywhere; the waves in Idaho probably would be more like ripples than a tsunami. It would not, for example, come anywhere close to turning the Idaho Legislature Democratic; but a shift of five or six seats (out of 105) toward the Democrats might be a realistic prospect. That could slosh upward, adding more to the Jordan column.

Aside from national trends, there's a local issue that could matter: The Medicaid expansion ballot slot. That might have the effect of drawing out a significant number of Democratic-leaning voters, and become a real factor in races that otherwise are close.

There's also a strategic risk Little has to watch out for. His message and approach logically would involve staying relentlessly positive, making the affirmative case for the current administration and sticking with the course. He's mostly been hewing to that tack up to now - excepting a few shots fired at competitors in the primary - and it's the smart thing to do. But ... if polling shows the race tightening closely toward the end, if voters are simply in a very dissatisfied mood, there would be a temptation to improve his position by going harshly negative on Jordan - to drive up the base and change the conversation and weaken whatever momentum she has. That would be a mistake and probably would backfire. Little probably won't go there (it's certainly not in his native temperament). But if the race tightens, the temptation would arise, and I've seen any number of campaigns that have given in to it, usually to their eventual regret.

A Jordan win would take a perfect storm in an alignment of stars. The odds are against. But don't ignore this race; the raw materials for an upset may be widely scattered but they do exist.

– *Randy Stapilus*

In the news

A review, in some cases with expansion and comment, of leading Idaho news stories – excluding national or feature articles, and local crime and accidents. Generally, these were featured last week on front pages of the state’s newspapers. But the list also includes some other articles of note, including from Idaho broadcasters.

Please note that some links lead to newspaper pay walls. They were live at the time of publication, but may be discontinued later.

★ *Notes an article of special interest*

July 29

- [Growth in Treasure Valley stresses work for law enforcement](#) (*Idaho Statesman*, Boise) There’s a reduction in the number of officers available to respond per incidents reporting in.
- [Dubois residents evacuated as fires close in](#) (*Post Register*, Idaho Falls) The large fire was caused by lightning.
- [Idaho Falls paper will launch a new look in coming week](#) (*Post Register*, Idaho Falls) The paper will be redesigned, and the website is more open: “Before, only paid subscribers could access the content online. Now everyone will have basic access to our news stories. Heavy users of the site and specialty content may require a subscription down the road.”
- ★ [What changes might happen if Avista is bought by Hydro One?](#) (*Lewiston Tribune*) Article notes if the buy goes through, “It will mark the first time that people more than 2,000 miles away will have such an important say in the utility that was founded nearly 130 years ago as Washington Water Power.”
- ★ [Role of irrigation water changing in a time of urbanization](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) It was a system designed for farm country, and the sprawl of cities is changing the picture.
- ★ [There’s a lack of detailed information as law enforcement goes after opioids](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) There’s uncertainty about who exactly should be gathering and analyzing information about the problem.
- [Canyon Commissioners plan Tuesday vote on jail trailer](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) It would be a lease running seven years for temporary quarters.
- [Domestic violence shelter reopens at Burley](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) After organizational problems, the renamed center has returned with new staff and office.

- [Students at Wendell will get laptop computers](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) The touch-screen devices will be usable in class and at home.

July 30

- [Concerns arise over plans for trucking operation near airport](#) (*Idaho Statesman*, Boise) Residents of a mobile home park are concerned a new shipping business might mean pollution, traffic and an eventual ouster from their park. The area is not far from the airport, located near Eisenman Road.
- [Hottest weather so far this year coming to southern Idaho](#) (*Idaho Statesman*, Boise) Tuesday may be especially hot.
- [Moscow hosts music festival and ice cream social](#) (*Daily News*, Moscow) Moscow is holding multiple events over the weekend.
- [How Idaho state tries to combat invasive species in water bodies](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) A look at noxious plants and dangerous animal species which threaten health and agriculture in the state.
- ★ [Twin Falls considers historic area master plan for city](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) The city council will consider the possibility at its regular meeting this week.

July 31

- ★ [Reporter talks about navigating local health care when giving birth](#) (*Idaho Statesman*, Boise) It turned out to be more complicated than this health reporter had anticipated.
- [Post Register website and print design are under revision today](#) (*Post Register*, Idaho Falls) The changes to design and access to content were noted by the paper in a Sunday column.
- [Idaho joins case opposing fraud operators targeting veterans](#) (*Lewiston Tribune*) The overall case is national.
- [Moscow and Pullman both seek to complete mixed-use developments before university term starts](#) (*Daily News*, Moscow) These two large projects are called Identity and Evolve.
- [Washington State University gets a warning from feds on animal treatment](#) (*Daily News*, Moscow) It comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which cites concerns about animal treatment.
- [Heavy smoke and fire hitting southern Idaho](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) Fires are erupting in numerous places around the state, and smoke is growing through the state's air.

- ★ [Idaho has a new “slowpoke” law, but few people cited so far](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) The law effective July 1 allows police to cite drivers moving slowly in fast lanes. Not a lot of citations have been issued for violations yet, however.
- [Governor candidate Paulette Jordan stops in Twin Falls](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) The Democrat stops in downtown Twin Falls and describes herself as a “progressive conservative.”
- [Students from Filer and Twin Falls work on “Stop the Bleed”](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) They’re trying to provide bleeding control kits, evidently to be used in the case of a shooting incident.
- [After evacuation, firefighters are able to save Dubois from wildfires](#) (*Idaho State Journal*, Pocatello) The entire town had to be evacuated, but the flames were at a distance. Residents of the remote small town were allowed to return to their homes.

August 1

- [Report blasts UI and administrator over sex assault policy](#) (*Idaho Statesman*, Boise) The independent report says when sex assault was reported, the response of University of Idaho and athletics director Rob Spear was inadequate. See also *Daily News*, Moscow.
- ★ [Advocates for petition against development at Dry Springs fall short](#) (*Idaho Statesman*, Boise) The development was the target of people who wanted to put it on the ballot in November. But the protest was expected to continue.
- [Attorney general may pursue lawsuit against former owner of Hathaway Home Group](#) (*Post Register*, Idaho Falls) The business sold manufactured and mobile homes, but ran into some difficulties.
- [Lewiston library board dismisses library director](#) (*Lewiston Tribune*) Director Alexa Eccles, who had been on leave, was dismissed after a meeting with the board.
- [Idaho has about 6,000 unfilled jobs in science and technology](#) (*Daily News*, Moscow) These are called STEM jobs, many of which pay well, but for which there aren’t enough candidates in Idaho.
- [Canyon commission holds off on plan for temporary jail cells](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) Hard pressed for jail space, the Canyon commission has considered building new temporary housing through a private provider lease. It still might, but more public input is being sought first.
- ★ [In Idaho, dairy products, beer and cherries among those endangered by trade war](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) Article quotes local agricultural producers who say prices already are down and they are losing significant money because of the trade changes. It said, “Idaho State Department of Agriculture spokeswoman Chanel Tewalt said the tariffs have an undeniable effect on

Idaho's economy. ... Their department has been fielding worried calls from businesses across the state.”

- [Little known about new proposal for baseball stadium](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) The new west end proposal is coming without a lot of information.
- [Idaho teacher pay in real dollars has declined](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) Adjusting for inflation, teachers are earning less now than they did two decades ago.
- [Twin Falls police try improvements in handling domestic violence cases](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) The number of cases is up, but that appears to mean more active involvement in the area by Twin Falls police.
- [Democratic gubernatorial candidate stops by Pocatello](#) (*Idaho State Journal*, Pocatello) She called it her “Southeastern Idaho summer tour.”

August 2

- ★ [UI president says the “2013 incidents” could have been avoided](#) (*Idaho Statesman*, Boise) The university releases a report o sexual harassment there and President Chuck Staben speaks to it.
- [Mountain Home faces small rural town issues](#) (*Idaho Statesman*, Boise) Elmore County has lost population, and local officials look at how to reverse the trend. Mountain Home is considering approach to downtown revitalization.
- [New report says Idaho teacher pay ranks relatively low](#) (*Post Register*, Idaho Falls) The Idaho Center for Fiscal Policy puts it at 43rd in the nation. See also *Idaho State Journal*, Pocatello.
- [Workforce reducing at Clearwater Paper](#) (*Lewiston Tribune*) About 100 jobs will go away, a consequence of tightened earnings; about 1,500 will remain.
- [Mining violations may be cited on South Fork of the Clearwater River](#) (*Lewiston Tribune*) Only a few miners are said to be involved, but the problems on the stream are growing.
- [State Judicial Council considers prospects for new 2nd District judge](#) (*Daily News*, Moscow) The new judge will replace John Stegner, who’s moving to the Idaho Supreme Court.
- [Idaho Press buys alternative Boise Weekly](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) The alternative weekly has been published since 1992 under mainly local owners.
- ★ [Budget deficit continues to plague College of Idaho](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) Article notes, “After a steady decline in enrollment and an increase in overall expenses, the College of Idaho is moving forward with department budget cuts and hiring freezes to address deficits that caused the college to overdraw from its endowment.” The word comes from the institution’s two new co-presidents.

- [Boise real estate market deals with high costs, low number of houses](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) The subject has gotten increasing discussion.
- [Firefighters tackle Carey-area fire next](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) Sharps fire, the latest in a rapid-fire series of wildfires in the Magic Valley appears northeast of Carey.

August 3

- [Area gardens may help sustain bee population](#) (*Idaho Statesman*, Boise) There are 400 species of bees in Idaho.
- [The remnants of the 1988 and 2016 Yellowstone fires, and what's next](#) (*Post Register*, Idaho Falls) The scars are moving toward recovery, but there's much further to go before the park returns to what it was like before that.
- [Thinking about preparing for the next serious recession](#) (*Post Register*, Idaho Falls) It's been about a decade since the last one hit, longer than the United States usually goes between recessions. Is the country, and the government, ready to deal with the next one?
- [Lewiston schools will provide all-day kindergarten](#) (*Lewiston Tribune*) It starts in the fall; more than 300 students are lined up. The classes will be held in all seven Lewiston elementaries.
- [Latah County will hold off adding a K-9 unit](#) (*Daily News*, Moscow) In the latest budget decisions, employee wages are expected to be increased, along with other changes.
- [Many areas around Palouse are deemed "ready to burn"](#) (*Daily News*, Moscow) The fire threat, which has emerged in fire reality in many places around Idaho, has not yet much hit the Palouse. But area watchers are warning that it could.
- [Boise compost efforts exceed expectations](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) Massive amounts of compost go to the Twenty Mile South Farm, operated by Boise city. There's more of it, coming mainly from Boise homes, than planners originally had anticipated.
- ★ [First debate between superintendent of public instruction candidates turns on credentials](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) Democrat Cindy Wilson also has criticized Republican Sheri Ybarra's attendance record at the Land Board and Board of Education.
- [Boise and Nampa airports receiving federal grants](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) They amount to about \$4 million for runway and lighting work, among other things.
- [Criminal charge brought over the launching of Sharps fire](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) Bellevue resident Ryan Jensen was charged with having created the fast-spreading fire when he detonated exploding targets in a hot and dry area.

- [Burley to get a new styrofoam plant](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) It will produce insulation products and bring about 25 jobs to town.
- ★ [Immigration officials still not giving in on Pocatellan's case](#) (*Idaho State Journal*, Pocatello) An immigrant from Africa, in Idaho for 16 years, married to an American citizen and father of two, remained slated for deportation despite a number of protests.

August 4

- [About 100 goats roam into Boise neighborhood](#) (*Idaho Statesman*, Boise) The escape from a pen goes viral and international in attention. See also [Idaho Press](#), Nampa.
- ★ [Pew Center report says Idaho is a low collector of "sin taxes"](#) (*Post Register*, Idaho Falls) Taxes on tobacco, alcohol and so on account for about 2% of state tax revenue in Idaho; most states are substantially higher. Nevada, the highest, is at 12%.
- ★ [Wilderness access may improve after Forest Service projects](#) (*Post Register*, Idaho Falls) An airstrip and a pack bridge may be readied for practical use again in the Church wilderness.
- [Economists figure Idaho will pick up about 22,000 jobs spots by 2019](#) (*Lewiston Tribune*) The growth shows signs of continuing, possibly through 2021, according to current indicators.
- [Grant outfits cattle with GPS collars to track feeding patterns](#) (*Lewiston Tribune*) The results are expected to help cattle ranchers more effectively feed their stock.
- [Moscow's Corner Club, local landmark, celebrates 70 years](#) (*Daily News*, Moscow) It's described as a "Vandal bar," open to University of Idaho supporters (along with the rest of the public).
- [What will become of the Cabin writing center?](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) The log cabin, a fixture since 1940 along the Boise River next to the Boise library, could be wiped out by library reconstruction. Advocates for the writing center aren't giving up, though the new library development doesn't seem to leave space (or design similarity) for it.
- [State's new museum of history launches in October](#) (*Idaho Press*, Nampa) It's been closed in whole or part for four years as an upgrade and overhaul as been under way.
- [Sharp's fire continues to grow but some evacuations reversed](#) (*Times News*, Twin Falls) the Carey-area fire is running to 57,000 acres, and the air is getting smokier around the Wood River Valley.



Ybarra and Wilson meet in early superintendent debate

[From an August 2 report by Clark Corbin in IdahoEdNews.](#)

The state superintendent's race kicked off Thursday as Republican incumbent **Sherri Ybarra** and Democratic challenger **Cindy Wilson** squared off in front of hundreds of educators in Boise.

(Photo: Ybarra left, Wilson right; by IdahoEdNews)

During the 40-minute forum, both candidates addressed hot-button education topics such as teacher pay, teacher shortages, school funding and facilities needs.

In her role as challenger, Wilson went on the offensive early. Without naming Ybarra, Wilson pledged to go all in for education.

“It’s time to show up,” Wilson said. The choice of words amounted to a jab at Ybarra. After the 2018 legislative session, outgoing House Education Chairwoman Julie VanOrden said Ybarra needed to show up more at the Statehouse in order to work collaboratively to pass her legislative agenda.

Ybarra also came out swinging — also without naming names. She attacked her predecessor, Republican Tom Luna, saying she ran for superintendent in 2014 because, as an educator and building administrator, she was frustrated by the culture of the State Department of Education. Ybarra said the SDE had devolved into a bureaucracy that was bad for teachers and bad for kids.

“As a former principal, I was not impressed by the name ‘em, blame ‘em, shame ‘em form of accountability we had in place,” said Ybarra, earning applause.

From there, things settled down a bit, and the candidates even staked out some common ground.

In advocating for teacher pay, Ybarra was adamant that there is no cap on the funding available for pay incentives for veteran teachers — a program called master educator premiums.

“I’ve dug deep and hard, and there is no cap,” Ybarra said.

Technically, Ybarra is correct. There is no cap. There is also no funding in the current school budget for master educator premiums. The 2019 Legislature will decide on the framework and funding.

The forum took place during the Idaho Association of School Administrators summer leadership conference in Boise. IASA Executive Director Rob Winslow moderated the debate, with about 450 school administrators in the audience.

Healthcare questionnaires released

Close the Gap Idaho, a health care network of over 300 organizations and individuals statewide, has released a health care questionnaire for candidates for elected office in Idaho. The questionnaire covers a multitude of subjects, ranging from Medicaid, the benefits of health care coverage and gaps in Idaho’s behavioral health care system. The questionnaire is being distributed to the media, organizations hosting candidate forums and the public.

Close the Gap Idaho encourages constituents, the media and organizations to actively engage candidates for elected office on health care related issues. Boise State Public Policy Polling has showed that for three years in a row health care has been one of the top issues for Idahoans.

The questionnaire is designed to seek clarity from candidates on their proposed health care policies.

Health care is a focal point of political debates nationally and in Idaho,” said Liz Woodruff of Close the Gap Idaho. “The purpose of the questionnaire is to highlight

how important health care is to Idaho voters, and to ensure that candidates are answering health care questions that voters care about.”

The questionnaire can be accessed on the Close the Gap website.

- [Close the Gap Idaho](#)

Top-ballot campaigns/2018

Incumbents in bold. Reports through June 30 unless otherwise noted.

As noted in opensecrets.org.

U.S. House 1	R	Russell Fulcher: raised \$611,899; spent \$523,707; on hand \$88,192.
	D	Christina McNeil raised \$5,956; spent \$2,637; on hand\$3,319..
U.S. House 2	R	Mike Simpson: raised \$806,870; spent \$733,552; on hand \$226,455.
	D	Aaron Swisher: raised \$65,075; spent \$53,124; on hand \$11,950.
Governor	R	Incumbent C.L. “Butch” Otter not seeking re-election. Candidates: Brad Little , lieutenant governor.
	D	Paulette Jordan has filed.
Lt Governor	R	Janice McGeachin , Idaho Falls
	D	Kristin Collum has filed.
Supt of Public Instr	R	Incumbent Sherri Ybarra has filed.
	D	Cindy Wilson has filed.



Senator Jim Risch met with Judge Brett Kavanaugh, President Trump's nominee to serve as associate justice to the U.S. Supreme Court. At the conclusion of the meeting, Senator Risch issued this statement: "My meeting with Judge Kavanaugh confirmed what I believed to be true: he is a person of strong moral character and a thoughtful, principled jurist who rejects judicial activism." (*photo/Senator Risch*)

Risch asks questions on social media election actions

Senator **Jim Risch**, who sits on the Senate Intelligence Committee, the lead senate committee investigating Russia's attempted interference in our 2016 elections, on August 1 participated in a hearing on foreign influence in our election process through social media.

Risch spoke with social media experts about the upcoming election and the committee's goal to combat Russian and other foreign interference. Risch expressed concern about the challenge of balancing Americans' constitutional right to free speech with protecting the integrity of our election process.

Partial transcript of Risch's remarks:

"Something that's troubled me from the beginning is how difficult this is. We know the problem. We have bad actors putting out bad information. The difficulty is how do you segregate those people who are doing this from Americans who have the right to do this?

"I've looked at the stuff that -- that, as everybody has, that is part of this. But yet, if you took one of those pieces -- any one of them individually, and looked at it and said, we just discovered who's doing this, it's John Doe in East Overshoe, New Jersey. There's nothing illegal about it.

"It may be disgusting. It may be untrue. It may be with a bad motive, but there's nothing -- indeed, it's protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution.

"So, how do you separate that person from someone who is doing the same thing, but coming from Russia, but whose motives are to enhance Russia by pulling down America? How do you -- how do you police that?

"I think, probably, the question that Senator Warner asked about putting a speed bump in so that somebody can evaluate this. I mean, that -- that kind of puts -- I want to be the evaluator. And I think most everybody does and that's the problem.

"And then you talked about protecting anonymity. How can you protect anonymity if you're going to, actually, do something against someone who is doing something that we don't want done?

"These are, extremely, difficult questions. And I appreciate all the kind things you've said about -- this is bipartisan, we all need to come together, et cetera -- et cetera. We all agree with that, but how in the world do you do this?

"I mean, it's -- the takeaway here has got to be that this is just an enormous, if not an impossible, thing."

● [Senator Risch](#)

Crapo proposes measure on service members transition

Senator **Mike Crapo** and Michigan Senator Debbie Stabenow introduced S. 3299 the Improving Preparation and Resources for Occupational, Vocational, and Educational Transition for Service members Act.

The IMPROVE Transition for Service members Act would make needed reforms to the Transition Assistance Program, a multiagency program responsible for providing pre-separation counseling, training and assistance to service members returning to civilian life and their families.

“The transition from military service to the civilian world can prove particularly stressful and overwhelming for veterans and their families,” said Crapo. “Ensuring that our women and men in uniform have access to the personalized resources, training and counseling they need to succeed and pursue their ambitions will help veterans more smoothly and successfully reintegrate into their communities and start their new lives on solid footing.”

“As I’ve met with veteran leaders and service providers across Michigan, one of the top concerns I’ve heard about is the challenges our veterans face when transitioning back to civilian life,” said Stabenow.

Drawing directly from interviews with service members, veterans, military leadership, transition counselors, employers and experts, S.3299 includes several reforms:

- Instating earlier commencement and completion deadlines for participation in TAP to ensure service members have adequate time to maximize available services;
- Limiting the use of online TAP curriculum as a substitute for in-person instruction only to extreme circumstances;
- Urging the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to enter into agreements with state veterans services agencies to develop a database of and connect service members to supportive services and organizations in the communities to which they are relocating;
- Making currently-optional 2-day specialized courses in entrepreneurship, career technical training, and higher education, with the addition of advanced employment assistance, mandatory curriculum in order to boost participation in and access to those courses;
- Requiring a ratio of at least one full-time, non-contract TAP employee per 250 transitioning members at an installation to ensure enough full-time personnel are available to meet service members’ needs during transition;
- Requiring the establishment of an electronic database to track individual progress in TAP and an online portal for service members to access information and resources related to their personal transition;
- Requiring the education of service members and military leadership on programs and resources for professional development, academic advancement and post-service career preparation available to them during service; and
- Directing Government Accountability Office to study the implementation of and access to TAP and other transition assistance programs at small and remote bases to assess any disparity in resources and access compared to larger bases.

The legislation further acknowledges the competing pressures on the Armed Forces in carrying out their essential function to defend the nation, while affirming the importance of an effective transition program to improving the lives and welfare of service members and thereby the health and mission of the U.S. military overall.

The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee will hold a hearing on Wednesday, August 1, 2018, to consider pending service member assistance legislation. Language from the IMPROVE Transition for Service members Act has been included in the discussion draft for the hearing, and TAP improvements remain one of the committee's highest priorities for the remainder of the 115th Congress.

● [Senator Crapo](#)

INL will lead Energy Frontier Research Center

The U.S. Department of Energy has announced 22 new Energy Frontier Research Centers, including one that will be led by **Idaho National Laboratory**. This is the second time INL has won the opportunity to lead an EFRC.

“This is a great accomplishment for INL, and we are honored and excited for the opportunity to lead an EFRC and support two others,” said INL Director **Mark Peters**. “These centers play an important role in accelerating scientific breakthroughs that allow us to resolve our nation’s energy challenges.”

Established by the Department of Energy’s Office of Science in 2009, the EFRC program brings together researchers from multiple disciplines and institutions to accelerate transformative discovery at the frontiers of science. The centers conduct fundamental research focusing on one or more “grand challenges” identified in major strategic planning efforts by the scientific community.

The Center for Thermal Energy Transport under Irradiation led by INL will make it possible to accurately model and improve how heat moves through materials in extreme irradiation environments.

In advanced nuclear fuels, one of the most important material properties is the transport of thermal energy, which relates directly to reactor efficiency and safety. The aim of TETI is to reveal the fundamental physical mechanisms driving heat transfer in advanced nuclear fuels under irradiation.

TETI partners include Columbia University, Purdue University, The Ohio State University, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, University of Central Florida and Air Force Research Laboratory. Funding for all partners will total \$11.5 million over four years (subject to Congressional appropriations, progress toward research objectives and other factors).

“Realizing the TETI research mission will provide tremendous new opportunities for the energy materials community,” said **David Hurley**, INL Directorate Fellow, who is leading TETI. “Examples include new computational tools to enable high-throughput compositional screening of advanced fuels, tailoring electron and phonon transport in advanced thermoelectrics, and harnessing strong spin-orbit coupling to realize new paradigms for quantum materials.”

INL also is a partner on two other new EFRCs. The University of Utah will lead the Center for Multi-Scale Fluid-Solid Interactions in Architected and Natural Materials, which will include support from INL’s subsurface modeling team, led by

Hai Huang. Brookhaven National Laboratory will lead the Center for Molten Salts in Extreme Environments, with INL support led by Directorate Fellow Simon Pimblott, the EFRC's deputy director.

The latest cohort of EFRCs, selected by competitive peer review, includes renewal of nine existing centers and 22 new ones. All of the centers will be funded for up to four years.

- [Idaho National Laboratory](#)

Cybersecurity bill clears Senate

The U.S. Senate on August 1 unanimously passed the NIST Small Business Cybersecurity Act, legislation introduced by Senators Brian Schatz (D-Hawai'i) and **James Risch**.

The bipartisan bill will provide a consistent set of resources for small businesses to best protect their digital assets from cybersecurity threats.

“Since small and medium businesses suffer most often from cyber-attacks, it is vital that NIST, which sets the standard for cybersecurity resources, provide Main Street America with usable resources on how to keep themselves secure,” said Senator Risch, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship. “This legislation will help Idaho small business owners safeguard against cyber threats and better position them to protect their assets, customers, and employees.”

“As businesses rely more and more on the internet to run efficiently and reach more customers, they will continue to be vulnerable to cyberattacks. But while big businesses have the resources to protect themselves, small businesses do not, and that's exactly what makes them an easy target for hackers,” said Senator Schatz, lead Democrat on the Commerce Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet.

In addition to Schatz and Risch, co-sponsors of the bill include U.S. Senators John Thune (R-S.D.), Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), Cory Gardner (R-Colo.), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-Nev.), Maggie Hassan (D-N.H.), Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.), and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.). The bill now heads to the president's desk.

In 2014, the Senate unanimously passed the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2014, which codified the industry-led process for the National Institute of Standards and Technology Cybersecurity Framework, a comprehensive voluntary guide for organizations and businesses to better manage and reduce cybersecurity risks.

While this framework continues to play a key role in improving the cyber resilience of the United States, additional coordinated resources may be necessary to improve the ability of small businesses to use it.

- [Senator Risch](#)



State Regulation

Published rules appear in [the administrative bulletin](#). The most recent publication was on August 1. The next will be published on September 5.

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare will hold multiple public hearings and negotiated rulemakings this month on various dockets regarding Emergency Medical Services, immunization requirements for Idaho children, Medicaid Basic Plan and Enhanced Plan benefits, criminal history and background checks, children’s mental health services and standards for non-hospital, medically monitored detox/mental health diversion units.

The proposed rule public hearing request deadline is August 15, 2018, unless otherwise posted. The proposed rule written comment submission deadline is August 22, 2018, unless otherwise posted.

(Temp & Prop) indicates the rulemaking is both Temporary and Proposed.

DIVISION OF BUILDING SAFETY

07-0206-1702, Rules Concerning Idaho State Plumbing Code. Revises certain sections of the 2017 Idaho State Plumbing Code to require an air gap or backflow prevention device on a potable water supply to beverage dispensers or coffee machines; allows water closets to act as cleanouts and requires installation of exterior, two-way cleanouts; replaces the first hour ratings in table 501.1(1) with ratings calculated using the U.S. Department of Energy’s revised ratings method.

07-0501-1801, Rules of the Public Works Contractors License Board. Defines an individual qualified by examination (QI) designation; determines the “reasonable length of time” a contractor’s license will remain in force; and clarifies that notice that a contractor’s QI has ceased to be connected with the contractor must be provided on forms prescribed by the administrator.

07-0701-1703, Rules Governing Installation of Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Systems. Allows apprentices to take the journeyman exam before completing four years’ work experience and allows apprentices who successfully complete a Board-approved, full-time, one-year training course to receive credit for up to one year of work experience.

BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

08-0202-1801, Rules Governing Uniformity. Makes certification and endorsement revisions for school nurse, teacher librarian, teacher leader, gifted and talented, English, online teacher, and literacy; defines “clinical experience”; adds new

endorsements for middle school social studies and science; addresses the use of continuing education units toward a certificate renewal by pupil service staff certificate holders who also hold a license through IBOL.

08.02.03 - Rules Governing Thoroughness

08-0203-1801, Incorporates by reference the updated Idaho Special Education Manual.

08-0203-1805, Removes obsolete references to Annual Measureable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs).

BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS

*10-0101-1801, Rules of Procedure. (*PH) Implements SB 1252 by repealing examination failure requirements, allowing for early testing for professional examinations, and adding a new category for discontinued certificates of authorization.

*10-0102-1801, Rules of Professional Responsibility. (*PH) Requires professional land surveyors to notify affected adjacent landowners and the Board prior to setting a monument that represents a material discrepancy with another monument for the same property corner and potentially clouding the title of private land.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

12-0108-1801, Rules Pursuant to the Uniform Securities Act (2004). Removes an exemption for a federal securities issuer that no longer exists; addresses recent changes in uniform securities examinations as adopted by both federal and state securities regulators.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND WELFARE

16-0309-1809, Medicaid Basic Plan Benefits. (Temp & Prop) PCS paraprofessional provider qualifications are being updated for school-based services to align with community paraprofessional PCS provider qualifications. (eff. 8-1-18)T

*16-0310-1801, Medicaid Enhanced Plan Benefits. (*PH) (Temp & Prop) Allows Medicaid to enroll dual eligibles who have not elected to enroll in the coordinated MMCP into a Medicaid Managed Long-Term Services and Supports program, which will administer and coordinate Medicaid benefits. (eff. 10-1-18)T

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS

20-0401-1801, Rules Pertaining to Forest Fire Protection. Incorporates by reference the spark arrester standards established in 2012; adds required sections; updates and adds definitions; updates fire tool requirements and new fire protection requirements for forest operation activities involving cable logging operations and the use of metal tracked harvesters to include on-site water supply, fire watch service and operation area fire prevention practices.

BUREAU OF OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES

24-0101-1801, Rules of the Board of Architectural Examiners. (Temp & Prop) Implements HB 458 by updating and streamlining processes to make it easier for licensees and those seeking licensure to obtain one; removes a 30-day application deadline; eliminates unnecessary and obsolete language. (eff. 7-1-18)T 24-1501-

1801, Rules of the Idaho Licensing Board of Professional Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists. (Temp & Prop) Establishes education requirements, reduces costs and barriers for licensure; allows an individual to work under supervision while completing licensure requirements; accepts the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education graduate programs as meeting all education requirements; increases flexibility to complete both practicum and supervised experience hours, which reduces tuition and supervision costs for applicants.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

*34-0602-1801, Rules Governing the Electronic Recording of Plats, Records of Survey, and Corner Records. (*PH) New chapter implements consistent standards for electronically filing and recording plats, records of survey, and corner records in county courthouses.

STATE TAX COMMISSION

35-0101-1801, Income Tax Administrative Rules. Clarifies Commission's application of Federal retroactive provisions and that uncodified provisions of federal law are included when calculating Idaho taxable income; new rule tells how to report federal section 965 deemed repatriation income on the Idaho return; adds 2018 tax bracket; limits and exempts certain contributions and earnings for nonqualified withdrawals from college savings to what was previously exempt; increases deductions for adoption expenses; adds the amount of guaranteed payments that are sourced as compensation for services for 2018; lists the corporate tax rates for 2001 through 2018; adds the new Idaho child tax credit; changes the date the withholding reconciliation return must be filed; modifies the time period that a taxpayer has to notify the Tax Commission of a change in federal taxable income or in tax paid to another state; deletes obsolete rules.

35-0102-1801, Idaho Sales and Use Tax Administrative Rules. Clarifies that parts installed in non-resident aircraft are exempt from sales tax if those parts are installed by a FAA approved repair station, even if the repair is paid for under a warranty agreement; removes the 5% tax schedule from the sales tax tables.

35-0105-1801, Idaho Motor Fuel Tax Administrative Rules. Clarifies which vehicles can use dyed diesel pursuant to 63-2425, Idaho Code.

LOTTERY COMMISSION

52-0103-1801, Rules Governing Operations of the Idaho State Lottery. Moves the Idaho Lottery to an automated balancing functionality by eliminating the use of Drawing Managers to audit and balance draws from the online game drawing procedure, a function that will be obsolete to industry practice and standard going forward.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

58.01.01 - Rules for the Control of Air Pollution in Idaho

*58-0101-1801, (*PH) Updates and clarifies certain air quality permitting provisions including minor clarifications for sources seeking air quality permits or exemptions from permitting; resolves inconsistencies in rule language; removes outdated references: adds provisions for renewing operating permits. Comment by 9/5/2018

*58-0101-1803, (*PH) Allows farmers to pay the required burn fees after crop burning instead of prior to burning; streamlines DEQ administrative processes for permit registration and fee collections. Comment by 9/5/2018

*58-0101-1804, (*PH) Updates and adopts amendments to the Clean Air Act federal regulations that are incorporated by reference. Comment by 9/5/2018

58-0102-1703, Water Quality Standards. Designates domestic water supply as a beneficial use in 27 water bodies where the Safe Drinking Water Information System indicates an active surface water intake and where domestic water supply is not currently designated.

58-0105-1801, Rules and Standards for Hazardous Waste. Updates and adopts amendments to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act federal regulations that are incorporated by reference. Comment by 8/29/2018

BUREAU OF OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES

24-2801-1801, Rules of the Barber and Cosmetology Services Licensing Board (eff. 7-2-18)T

STATE TAX COMMISSION

35-0101-1802, Income Tax Administrative Rules (eff. 1-1-18)T



Nampa reschedules council meetings

Beginning August 6, 2018, **Nampa City Council** meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m. rather than 6:30 p.m. Public hearings will continue to begin at 7:00 p.m. The additional half-hour will extend opportunity for staff updates and citizen feedback before the public hearing.

The City of Nampa council meetings provide citizens an opportunity to speak before city council for three (3) minutes on an agenda or non-agenda item. Citizens are provided this opportunity near the beginning of the meeting, before public hearings.

Nampa City Council meetings are held at Nampa City Hall (411 3rd St S) on the first and third Monday of each month, unless that Monday falls on a holiday, at which time the meeting would be held the following day.

Nampa City Council meetings are livestreamed and archived for public record at <http://www.livestream.com/cityofnampa> .



- [Nampa city](#)



AG consumer division report released

Attorney General **Lawrence Wasden** has released the latest annual report from his office's Consumer Protection Division. The summary represents a detailed look at the division's work between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2018.

The division recorded more than 13,000 contacts with consumers, mediated 883 complaints, recovered more than \$7.6 million in consumer restitution and deposited more than \$1.78 million in civil penalties, fees and costs into the state's consumer protection account. In addition, the division completed 12 enforcement actions concerning unfair competition, false advertising, charitable solicitations and other consumer-related issues. The CPD also facilitated the transfer of \$23 million in charitable trust funds from Ascension Health to the newly-established Lewis-Clark Valley Healthcare Foundation in Lewiston.



“Enforcing consumer protection law is an important responsibility,” Wasden said. “The Consumer Protection Division’s annual report is an opportunity for my office to inform Idahoans about the specifics of this vital work.”

The CPD logged a total of 1223 consumer complaints, a 35 percent increase over the previous year. Complaints about motor vehicles again led the list of top 10 complaints. Other top categories include internet sales, healthcare-related disputes, construction/contractor complaints and landlord/tenant disputes.

The report also highlights the ongoing payments made to the State of Idaho from the 1998 Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement. The state received more than \$23

million dollars from tobacco companies in Fiscal Year 2018. Since 1998, companies have paid the state \$478 million.

The division also:

- concluded enforcement actions against national and international companies such as General Motors and Lenovo, as well as several Idaho-based companies;
- participated in multistate settlements with Deutsche Bank and Citibank for their roles in manipulating LIBOR-related rates; and
- pursued consumer protection actions against Hathaway Homes, an eastern Idaho manufactured home dealer accused of taking customers' money and then failing to deliver their new homes.

The Consumer Protection Division includes 23 attorneys, consumer specialists and support staff. In addition to working directly with Idaho consumers, division attorneys represent the Idaho Departments of Insurance and Finance.

- [Attorney General Wasden](#)

Supreme Court decisions

Recent civil decisions of the Idaho Supreme Court.

- [***Jennifer Eastman v. Farmers Insurance Company***](#) (July 30, Bevan) This is a dispute regarding underinsured motorist insurance coverage. Appellant, Jennifer Eastman filed a complaint, seeking a declaratory judgment that she was entitled to underinsured motorist insurance coverage under her auto insurance policy with Respondent, Farmers Insurance Company. The district court granted summary judgment in favor of Farmers, ruling that an exclusion contained in the Policy precluded UIM coverage for Eastman's injuries. Eastman appealed the district court's judgment. We vacated the district court's order granting summary judgment, vacate the judgment of the district court and remand this case for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.
- [***KDN Management Inc. v. Winco Foods LLC***](#) (July 30, Brody) This appeal involves the district court's denial of a jury trial under Rule 39(b) of the Idaho Rules of Civil Procedure and the decision to pierce the corporate veil. The dispute arises out of a transaction between Kym Nelson, who acted on behalf of KDN Management Inc., and WinCo, Foods, LLC, for concrete floor work that KDN performed in several WinCo stores. The district court found that KDN had overcharged WinCo for the work, and awarded WinCo \$2,929,383.31 in damages, including attorney fees pursuant to Idaho Code section 12-120(3). The district court also held Nelson and two entities associated with her, SealSource International, LLC, and KD3 Flooring LLC, jointly and severally liable for WinCo's damages. We affirm.

- **[Vernon K. Smith Jr. v. Joseph H. Smith](#)** (July 30, Brody) This case centers on the estate of Victoria H. Smith. The magistrate court ruled that Victoria died intestate after finding that her will was a product of the undue influence of her son, Appellant Vernon K. Smith, Jr. Vernon appeals from that ruling, as well as an earlier partial summary judgment ruling that invalidated a series of transactions that transferred all of Victoria's assets to a limited liability company that Vernon owned and a corresponding judgment entered pursuant to Idaho Rule of Civil Procedure 70(b). We affirm the decisions of the magistrate court.
- **[PHH Mortgage v. Charles and Donna Nickerson and Coldwell Banker Mortgage](#)** (August 1, per curiam) This is the second appeal following a judicial foreclosure. Charles and Donna Nickerson initially appealed the district court's decision to grant summary judgment in favor of PHH Mortgage and J.P. Mortgage Chase Bank in a judicial foreclosure proceeding involving the Nickersons' approximately fifty acres of land in Clearwater County. We affirmed the district court's summary judgment grant in *PHH Mortgage v. Nickerson* (2016) in April 2016. Following this Court's decision, the district court issued an order lifting the stay on its prior judgment, as well as an order of sale and decree of foreclosure. The district court also denied the Nickersons' post-appeal motions for sanctions, to quash execution and judgment, and to vacate or amend the order of sale and decree of foreclosure. The Nickersons now challenge several issues previously decided in Nickerson I as well as the district court's decisions on motions and orders subsequent to that decision. We affirm.
- **[Michael Johnson v. Wal-Mart Stores Inc.](#)** (August 3, Brody) This is a premises liability case concerning whether a retailer is negligent for failing to warn a customer about potential spills. The case began when Michael Johnson suffered injuries after he slipped and fell on a liquid while walking in the housewares department of a Wal-Mart store. Johnson knew neither the source of the substance, nor how long it had been on the floor. Additionally, none of Wal-Mart's surveillance cameras captured the initial spill or Johnson's fall. Johnson filed a complaint alleging Wal-Mart, which has issued an internal statement to its employees that spills are largely responsible for slip/trip/fall accidents in its stores, was negligent for failing to warn him of the potential for spills. Johnson claims that the store's business practice of allowing patrons to carry liquids throughout the store should have put Wal-Mart on notice that spills were foreseeable anywhere. Wal-Mart filed a motion for summary judgment based on its lack of actual or constructive notice of the spill. The district court granted summary judgment in favor of Wal-Mart. We now affirm.

Idaho employment expected to grow 1.4% annually

New projections from the **Idaho Department of Labor** forecast that the state will add just over 105,000 jobs by 2026, bringing total statewide employment to approximately 841,000.

In 2016, statewide employment was 735,000. This new projection indicates expected growth of 14.4 percent for the 10-year period from 2016 to 2026, for an annual growth rate of 1.4 percent.

As high-tech industries continue to grow, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) occupations are projected to grow faster than the rest of the labor market as a whole, at 17 percent. Within STEM fields, health occupations lead the way with a projected growth rate of 23.6 percent. STEM occupations are projected to grow by 14,000 new jobs through 2026, accounting for 14 percent of all new jobs in Idaho.

Beyond STEM, employment growth is projected to occur across a wide swathe of industries in Idaho. Service producing industries are expected to grow at 1.4 percent annually, adding 83,000 new jobs through 2026 and accounting for the bulk of Idaho's employment growth. Goods-producing industries are projected to grow slightly slower, at 1.2 percent annually, and adding 16,000 jobs by 2026.

Idaho industries with the highest projected growth rates are concentrated in the service sector. Transportation and warehousing has the highest projected growth rate at 3.6 percent, followed by real estate and rental leasing services at 2.4 percent, and health care and social assistance at 2.1 percent. Construction is projected to grow at 1.7 percent annually, which is the highest projected growth rate among goods-producing industries.

Idaho's expanding labor market is expected to create substantial needs in a variety of occupations. While economic growth is projected to create 105,000 new positions, the routine churn and turnover of the labor market is expected to create approximately 809,000 openings through 2026. This means that roughly 913,000 total job openings will be created in Idaho over 10 years.

The largest numbers of job openings are expected to occur in occupations with a large number of positions and with relatively high turnover rates. Office and administrative support occupations lead the way, with 134,000 projected openings through 2026, followed by food preparation and serving occupations with 114,000 openings, and sales and related occupations with 109,000 openings.

Diverse job growth in Idaho will create openings for workers with a wide variety of educational backgrounds. In 2026, roughly 38 percent of jobs in Idaho will require a high school diploma or less, while 32 percent will require some college

but less than a four-year degree, such as an associate degree or occupational certification.

Twenty percent of Idaho’s jobs will require a bachelor’s degree, while 10 percent will require a master’s degree or higher.

● [Department of Labor](#)

Individual Health Insurance Market Insurance Company	Preliminary 2019 Rate Increase Requests				
	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Catastrophic	Overall
Blue Cross of Idaho Health Service	10%	9%	12%	11%	10%
Mountain Health CO-OP	18%	24%	16%	68%	23%
PacificSource Health Plans	27%	24%	23%	14%	24%
Regence BlueShield of Idaho	6%	8%	n/a	n/a	7%
SelectHealth	-1%	-4%	6%	1%	-1%
Average Rate Increase Statewide	6%	9%	10%	26%	8%

Proposed health insurance rates posted

The **Idaho Department of Insurance** has posted on its website, proposed health insurance premium rates and the requested increases for plans sold starting January 2019.

Health insurance carriers have submitted their rating information including explanations for the rate increases. The DOI will continue to review the insurance carriers’ submissions.

The DOI has the authority to determine the rates “unreasonable” if the requests are not adequately justified. In past years, the DOI has successfully negotiated lower rate increases with carriers to avoid having them labeled “unreasonable.”

Final rates will be publicly available around mid-September or early October.

“While the proposed rate increases are not nearly as extreme as some prior years, any increase to health insurance premiums make it that much more difficult to afford,” said DOI Bureau Chief **Wes Trexler**.

“We are still reviewing these increases, and welcome examination and comments from the public.”

The DOI encourages consumers to carefully review all of their options with a licensed insurance agent whether purchasing coverage on or off the exchange (Your Health Idaho) once the final rates are published.

● [Department of Insurance](#)

Avista proposing lower electric, natural gas rates

State regulators are accepting comments regarding proposals from **Avista Utilities** that would lower rates for electric and natural gas service.

Avista's annual Fixed Cost Adjustment filings with the Idaho Public Utilities Commission call for decreases of nearly 5 percent for residential electric customers and 4.2 percent for residential natural gas service.

For the typical residential customer using 910 kilowatt-hours per month, that equates to a decrease of \$4.16 per month, taking the monthly electric bill from \$88.49 to \$84.33.

The change would take effect Oct. 1 and run through September 2019, if the Commission approves the proposal. The proposed change to the natural gas FCA would take effect Nov. 1 and run through October 2019.

For the typical residential natural gas customer who uses an average of 63 therms per month, the proposed change would lower the monthly bill by \$2.03, taking it from \$48.31 to \$46.28.

The deadline to submit comments on the electric FCA proposal is Sept. 13, and the comment deadline for the natural gas FCA proposal is Sept. 20.

The FCA for each service is adjusted annually with Commission approval – via a surcharge when expenses exceed revenue or a rebate when FCA revenue surpasses costs. It is designed to provide the utility with a financial incentive to promote energy efficiency and conservation among its customers. When energy sales fall short of expectations due to decreased energy use among customers, the FCA allows Avista to recover its fixed costs. Fixed costs include those associated with infrastructure, including power lines and poles, and employee salaries.

While these expenses remain relatively stable, a utility's energy sales, and therefore revenue, fluctuate due to a number of factors, including weather and conservation or efficiency measures.

Avista said the proposed changes to the FCA mechanisms are due primarily to higher energy use among customers in 2017, in part because of a winter that was colder than normal.

If the Commission approves the company's electric FCA proposal, residential customers would see a rebate of 0.176 cents per kilowatt-hour. If the Commission approves Avista's proposal for natural gas service, the FCA would be a rebate of 0.766 cents per therm for residential customers.

A year ago, the Commission OK'd increases to the FCA for both electric and natural gas service, based on a significant drop in energy use among customers over the previous year. For residential electric and natural gas service, the FCA increased by 3 percent in 2017, the maximum allowed.

Avista provides natural gas service to approximately 82,000 customers in north Idaho. About 130,000 Idahoans receive electric service from the utility.

● [Public Utilities Commission](#)

Stocks

From late in the week, as reported through Google. Prices on stocks were mixed through the end of last week. (Google finance) **Up ▲ Down ▼**

		Last week		Week before	One year ago
Micron Technology	MU	52.81	▼	53.96	27.92
Hewlett Packard	HPQ	23.34	▲	23.23	19.37
Idaho Power (IDACORP)	IDA	94.12	▼	94.17	86.56
Clearwater Paper	CLW	26.20	▲	21.90	46.70
CenturyLink Inc.	CTL	18.83	▼	18.37	22.47
Boise Cascade Corp.	BCC	44.00	▲	42.95	30.10

Gas prices

Price of gasoline in Idaho dropped slightly on the low end from the week before. Source: idahogasprices.com.

Gas	Last week	Natl/St Avg	Week before
low	2.85 SW Boise (Costco)	2.85/3.08	2.90 Idaho Falls (Conoco)
high	3.89 Malta (Sublett Fuel Stop)		3.56 Stanley (Sinclair)



Forest Service seeks comment on Boise foothills projects

The **Boise National Forest** is seeking comments for two proposed vegetation treatment areas, Sinker Creek and Boise Ridge, located approximately nine miles northeast of Boise. The purpose of these projects is to improve forest health by addressing hazardous fuels and uncharacteristic disturbance by insect and disease.

The thirty-day scoping comment period will end on Aug. 30, 2018

“Improving the health of our forests is key to ensuring we have clean water, wildlife habitat, forest products, and recreation opportunities in the future,” said Mountain Home District Ranger **Stephaney Kerley**. “These projects are a significant step in the right direction toward achieving that goal and ensuring our forests are more resilient to future disturbances like wildfire and insect and disease outbreaks.”

- [Boise National Forest](#)

Sage grouse comment period expanded

On August 1, the Forest Service extended the public comment on a Supplemental Notice of Intent in the Federal Register to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement which would amend the Forest Service land management plans regarding greater sage-grouse.

The comment period is extended by 14 days and will now end August 15, 2018. The extension is in response to requests for additional time from various state agencies and partners because of an overlap of the Forest Service comment period with the comment period for the Bureau of Land Management’s Draft Environmental Impact Statements on sage-grouse management.

The Forest Service is proposing to amend, with ongoing input and collaboration from affected states, the land management plans that were amended in 2015 regarding greater sage-grouse conservation in the states of Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Wyoming, and Utah. There is no proposal to alter plans in Montana.

The purpose of proposed changes is to improve the clarity, efficiency, and implementation of greater sage-grouse plans, including better alignment with Bureau of Land Management and state plans, in order to benefit greater sage-grouse conservation on the landscape scale. The agency will use lessons learned from new science, scoping and implementing during the last three years to make

revised plans more efficient. Proposed actions are intended to improve sage-grouse conservation and although some management areas, such as Sagebrush Focal Areas may change in name designation, limits to development and other protections will remain.

Commenters are encouraged to comment on the textual edits that are being considered. After reviewing comments to the corrected NOI, the Forest Service plans to continue the planning process for amending plans on units in Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Wyoming, and Utah, with multi-regional draft and final Environmental Impact Statements. Plan amendments should be finalized in the summer of 2019.

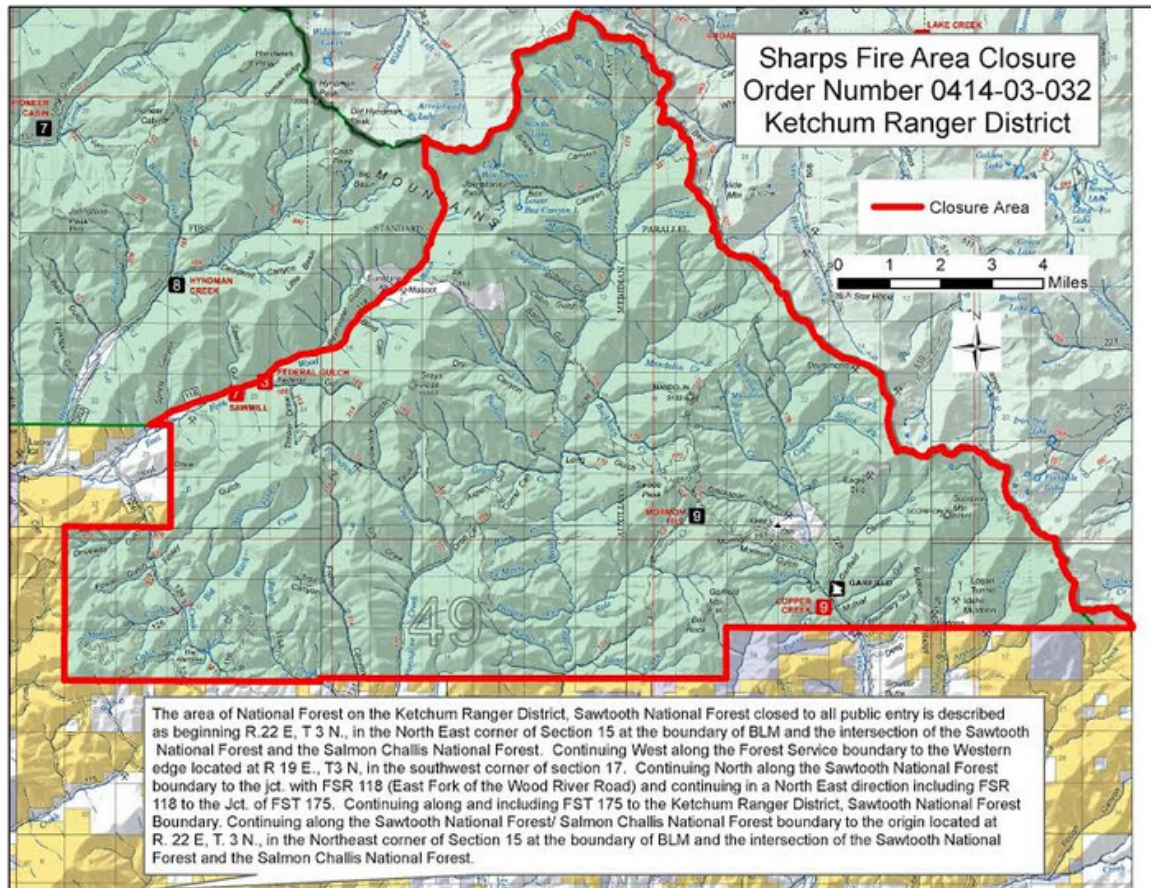
● [Boise National Forest](#)

Wildfires

Wildfires have been spreading around the western United States in recent weeks, and fires in Idaho grew rapidly last week.

Idaho		Fires: 11	Acres: 141,241	New: 0	Contained: 1
Bruneau	Twin Falls District	BLM	61,691	60	12 miles northwest of Murphy Hot Springs
Cat	Boise District	BLM	25,633	85	18 miles northeast of Owyhee
Grassy Ridge	Idaho Falls District	BLM	15,360	20	15 miles northwest of St. Anthony
Jim Sage	Twin Falls District	BLM	1,934	30	4 miles southeast of Elba
Keithly	Payette National Forest	FS	13,000	10	4 miles northwest of Midvale
Kiwah	Salmon-Challis National Forest	FS	259	0	49 miles northwest of Challis
Lodgepole	Boise National Forest	FS	1,616	75	16 miles northeast of Garden Valley
Mesa	Payette National Forest	FS	14,000	5	4 miles south of Council
MM73 Hwy 55	Southwest Area, Idaho Dept of Lands	ST	4,480	60	25 miles north of Boise
Rattlesnake Creek	Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest	FS	3,139	5	5 miles southwest of Riggins
Trestle	Idaho Department of Lands	PRI	129	80	4 miles northeast of Smiths Ferry
Rock Creek	Payette National Forest	FS	1,560	100	15 miles northwest of Weiser

Fire-related reports from around the state last week:



Multiple agencies/Sharps Fire, August 3: Today, predicted winds and low humidity contributed to the active flame front that moved further north. The fire became established on both sides of the Little Wood drainage in the Sawtooth National Forest.

Crews have been able to hold fire lines on the northwest and northeast corners. The weather is expected to be slightly cooler, with gusty winds and no predicted moisture for the next few days.

Closures: Muldoon Canyon Road is closed from EE-DA-HO Ranch (east of Bellevue) to Hunt Road. Little Wood Reservoir Road is closed at the reservoir. High Five, Baugh Creek, Bay Horse and Hunt Roads are also closed. Quigley and Slaughterhouse Creek Road are closed where the pavement ends. The closures restrict access into the fire area where crews are working. East Fork Road is closed at Triumph.

The Sawtooth National Forest implemented an Area Closure on Wednesday, August 1 for the Sharps Fire area. This includes all roads and trails, and the fire area until September 30, 2018 or until rescinded by the Sawtooth National Forest

Supervisor. The full closure order and map can be found under the Closure tab on the Sharps Fire Inciweb page.

Effective earlier today, the BLM has temporarily closed public lands in and around the Sharps fire in Blaine County. This includes all BLM-managed lands east of Highway 75, south of East Fork Road, then south of the Sawtooth National Forest Boundary, west of Fish Creek Road, and north of US Highway 20, and east of Gannett Road.

Lifted Evacuations: The Mandatory Evacuation has been lifted for Little Wood Reservoir Rd. north of the reservoir including the High Five Creek campground and Little Wood Recreation area campground.

Pre-Evacuation Notice: Pre-evacuation for residents north and east of the intersection of Buttercup Rd and Myrtle St. in Hailey including these subdivisions remains in effect but will be re-evaluated daily: Old Cutters/Buttercup Subdivision, South Hiawatha, North Hiawatha Red Devil, Indian Creek, Valley Club, Ohio Gulch, Heatherlands, and all of East Fork.

For more detailed information and a list of locations, please visit the Blaine County Sheriff website: www.blainesherriff.com/2018/08/01/new-pre-evacuations/

Residents in affected areas should prepare to leave at a moment's notice.

Fire restrictions, August 1: With the threat of wildfire danger increasing rapidly, state and federal land management agencies will implement Stage 1 Fire Restrictions on all lands within southwest Idaho effective Aug. 3, 2018, beginning at 12:01 a.m. Fire restrictions limit certain activities in the outdoors to decrease the chance of any preventable fires in the designated areas.

The Stage 1 Fire Restrictions will be in effect, until further notice, in the Treasure Valley, West Central Mountains, and Owyhee Mountains of Idaho which includes all federal, state and private forestland and rangeland in:

- Ada, Canyon, Gem, Payette, Elmore, Boise, Valley, Washington counties and Owyhee County west of Bruneau Canyon.
- Within Washington County, all Bureau of Reclamation lands surrounding Mann Creek Reservoir.
- Within Valley County, all Bureau of Reclamation lands surrounding Lake Cascade.
- Within Elmore and Boise counties, all Bureau of Reclamation lands surrounding Arrowrock and Anderson Ranch reservoirs.

These restrictions are being implemented by agencies managing or providing wildland fire protection, including the U.S Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and the Idaho Department of Lands.

Idaho Panhandle National Forest, August 3: Despite cooler temperatures, continued dry conditions are increasing fire danger on the Idaho Panhandle National Forests (IPNF). The fire danger rating is currently VERY HIGH. At this time there are no fire restrictions in place, however with windy conditions and “very high” fire danger, visitors are reminded to be careful while recreating in the forest.

A fire danger rating of VERY HIGH means that fires start easily from all causes and small fuels (such as grasses and needles) will ignite rapidly and immediately after ignition spread rapidly and increase quickly in intensity. Small fires can quickly become large fires and exhibit extreme fire intensity such as long distance spotting. These fires can be difficult to control and will often become much larger and longer-lasting fires.

Wildfires on the forest that are being actively managed include:

- Copper Mountain Fire (25 acres): The Copper Mountain fire was reported on 8/2/2018. Located approximately 4 miles east of Hwy 95 and close to the Canadian border, it is actively burning in subalpine fir and shrubs in moderately steep terrain. Smokejumpers and firefighters are on scene.
- Smith Creek Fire (370 acres): The fire was reported on 7/28/2018 and is burning on National Forest System Lands at the head of Smith Creek on Lions Head Ridge, approximately 7 miles northeast of Priest Lake, Idaho and 19 miles west of Bonners Ferry, Idaho. The fire was caused by lightning and is burning in subalpine fir and shrubs. Operations are geared to protect private property values near the fire. Sprinkler systems have been installed adjacent to structures. Firefighters are actively engaged on the fire. Fire activity is moderate, smoldering and creeping with an occasional single-tree torching. Breezy conditions associated with a passing cold front were evident Thursday, but the fire was somewhat sheltered and did not show as much activity as previous burn periods. Information about this fire is provided on InciWeb.
- Slide Creek Fire (27 acres): Located in the Myrtle Creek municipal watershed, the fire is burning in heavy logging slash on private timber ground. A line has been constructed around the perimeter and crews are working on controlling the fire.
- Cougar Fire (500 acres): The Cougar Fire was reported on 7/28/2018 and is approximately 5 miles east of Hope, Idaho. Located on National Forest System Lands south of Wellington Creek and north of Porcupine Lake, this fire is actively burning in steep, rugged terrain. Fire is expected to continue burning with short range torching, spotting and rolling debris. Cooler temperatures and higher humidity should help to slow the fire spread. Smokejumpers were dispatched on Monday, however they disengaged because of safety concerns with falling trees and steep terrain. Fire managers are using man-made and natural features to confine and contain this fire.

■ Snowpack

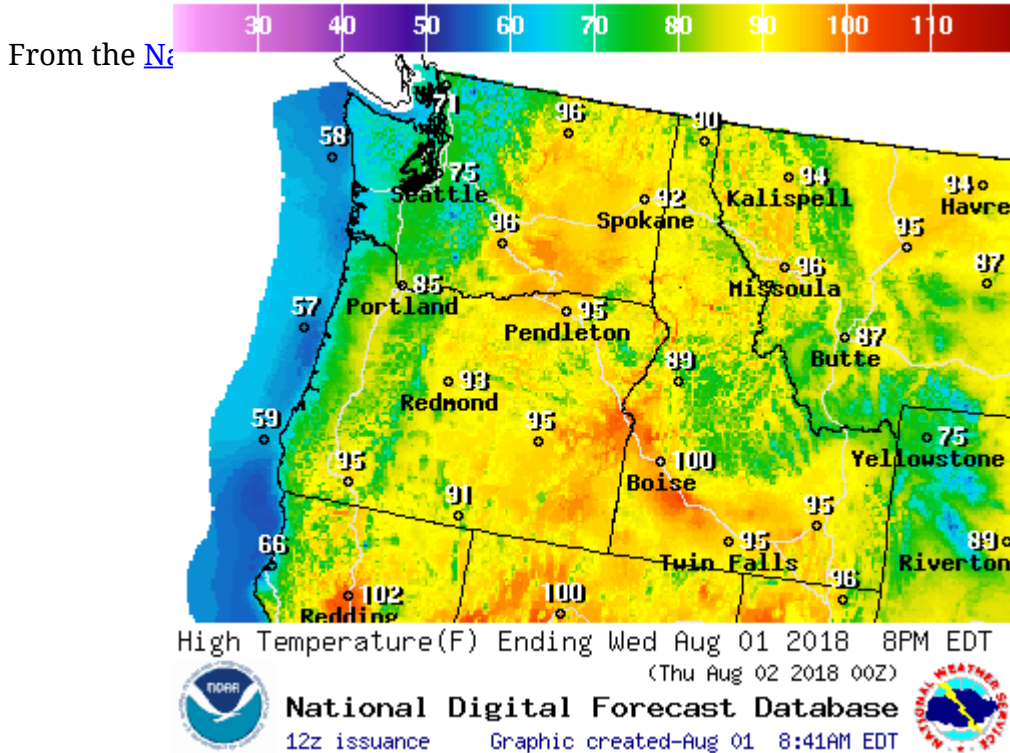
The numbers are percentages.

From the Natural Resources Conservation Service: “The Accumulated Precipitation Percent of Average represents the total precipitation (beginning October 1) found at selected SNOTEL sites in or near the basin compared to the average value for those sites on this day.”

Note: The new water year began on October 1. Normal would be 100. Much higher can mean flooding; much lower, drought. [From the Natural Resources Conservation Service](#). The percentage represents total precipitation (beginning October 1) at selected SNOTEL sites near the basin compared to average value for those sites.

basin	Last week	Week before	1 year ago
Northern Panhandle	108	109	127
Spokane	106	106	121
Clearwater	120	117	113
Salmon	101	102	131
Weiser	88	88	128
Payette	90	90	137
Boise	91	92	150
Big Wood	92	93	157
Little Wood	97	98	159
Big Lost	103	104	154
Little Lost, Birch	107	109	130
Medicine Lodge, Beaver, Camas	104	105	120
Henry’s Fork, Teton	107	109	138
Snake above Palisades	107	108	144
Willow, Blackfoot, Portneuf	90	91	141
Snake above American Falls	104	106	142
Raft	83	84	143
Goose Creek	77	78	128
Salmon Falls	84	85	125
Bruneau	89	89	128
Owyhee	86	86	130
Bear River	81	83	139

Weather



	Last week	Week before	One year ago
Boise	97/58 s	99/61 s	98/58 s
Idaho Falls	91/61 c	89/60 s	90/56 s
Pocatello	95/70 c	94/70 s	93/62 s
Coeur d'Alene	91/61 s	90/60 s	91/64 s
Lewiston	97/62 s	98/63 s	102/68 s
Twin Falls	94/64 s	96/65 s	95/62 s
Sun Valley/Ketchum	88/52 c	86/51 s	88/49 s

s- sunny; c - cloudy; r - rainy; p-snow



First West Nile virus human case found in Canyon

The first positive human case of mosquito-borne West Nile virus in Idaho this season has been confirmed in Canyon County by **Southwest District Health** officials in a male in his 50s who resides in Canyon County but may have been exposed in Adams County.

Both counties have previously reported WNV-positive pools of mosquitoes this season.

The individual reported mosquito bites before the onset of his illness in mid-July, according to public health officials. His symptoms included high fever, severe headaches, rash, body aches, vomiting and diarrhea.

WNV is a potentially serious illness that is usually spread to animals and humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. It does not spread from person-to-person. Most people infected with the virus do not show symptoms, although more severe symptoms may occur. People with symptoms may experience fever, headaches, body aches, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash typically occurring 2 to 14 days after the bite of an infected mosquito.

“About one in 150 people infected with WNV develop severe illness such as encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), or meningitis (inflammation of the linings of the brain and spinal cord),” said **Jami Delmore**, Environmental Health Supervisor for Southwest District Health in Caldwell. “These more severe infections are marked by a rapid onset of a high fever, headache, neck stiffness, body aches, disorientation, and tremors,” she said.



The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare tracks WNV each season, documenting locations of infected mosquitoes, horses and birds, and symptomatic human cases. You can see the latest data on this map. Currently, West Nile virus activity is centered in the southwestern portion of the state, but historically WNV-positive pools of mosquitoes have been found in each of Idaho's 44 counties.

- [Department of Health & Welfare](#)

Opportunity scholarship website launched

Idahoans interested in finishing their college degree or career technical certificate can now apply online for the **Idaho State Board of Education's** newly expanded Opportunity Scholarship.

The Board, in partnership with the Idaho Workforce Development Council, has launched a new Opportunity Scholarship website with useful information and a step-by-step process for applying for the scholarship.

“The Opportunity Scholarship has been great for Idaho and the Board is excited to be able to offer it to adults now too,” State Board President Dr. Linda Clark said. “This new website has everything a person needs to submit their application smoothly and quickly in order to potentially receive the scholarship in time for the fall semester.”

Governor **C.L. “Butch” Otter** and Idaho lawmakers passed legislation earlier this year allowing up to 20 percent of the Opportunity Scholarship fund to be used for adult learners interested in resuming their education. They also increased the annual appropriation by \$3.5 million for a total of \$13.5 million.

Applicants must have earned 24 credits or more before “stopping out” of college or a career technical program and they can return to school and attend class part-time or fulltime.

Other requirements include:

- Minimum GPA OF 2.7
- Be an Idaho resident
- Applicants must have “stopped out” for two years or more
- Requires students to show progress in order to maintain eligibility
- Award amounts are pro-rated based on credits enrolled in

The Opportunity Scholarship was launched in 2013 and several thousand Idaho students have used it to further their education. Last year, 3,716 Idaho students received an Opportunity Scholarship. The maximum award for a scholarship is \$3,500 annually for up to four years.

- [Opportunity scholarship site](#)

UI rangeland projects funded

GPS-collared cattle will soon roam ranches in southern Idaho and northeastern Oregon in an effort to better understand grazing patterns on large rangeland landscapes.

The project, called “Deploying CERT” (Climate Engine Rangeland Tool), is led by **University of Idaho** researchers and is one of two related projects selected to receive a total of \$1.28 million in grant funding by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services’ Conservation Innovation Grant program.

The second U of I-led project engages the Rangelands Partnership, a collaborative of rangeland professionals and librarians in 19 states, to improve access to rangeland management information and literature through a national grazing land information system.

By pairing satellite imagery with technology to track cows and field estimates of forage, the CERT project aims to create a new management tool to assist private ranchers and public land managers.

“Currently, the primary source of information we have on how livestock use rangeland forage is limited field observations,” said **Jason Karl**, College of Natural Resources associate professor and the project lead. “Ultimately our goal is to create map-based products to make more accurate estimates over time of forage availability and consumption by livestock. That will be an important management tool, and it’s one that we don’t really have yet.”

To get better data, the team will outfit cows at Rock Creek Ranch in Idaho and the Zumwalt Prairie Preserve in Oregon with GPS collars developed at U of I. GPS has been used to study livestock in the past, but previous studies were often limited to tracking just a few cattle because of the cost of the devices. Karl has developed a small, low-cost GPS collar that will allow his team to outfit entire herds.

The GPS data will be used to more effectively link on-the-ground observations of forage utilization with remote sensing techniques developed by U of I doctoral candidate Vincent Jansen. The resulting maps and forage utilization data will be built into the CERT, an online tool to analyze and visualize information on how much forage the cows consume.

Both projects have multiple partners. U of I’s partners on the Deploying CERT project are the Oregon Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Also, the site of one of the research herds, Rock Creek Ranch, is a collaboration among U of I, the Idaho Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and the Wood River Land Trust. U of I’s partners on the National Grazingland Information System project are the Rangelands Partnership, University of Arizona and Altar Valley Conservation Alliance.

The project, “Deploying CERT (Climate Engine Rangeland Tool),” has been recommended for funding by the USDA. The total anticipated federal funds for the project is \$661,118, which amounts to 50 percent of the total cost of the project. The USDA grant number associated with this project is yet to be determined.

Cult/Com/Trans

Idaho Press buys Boise Weekly

The **Idaho Press**, the newspaper group including the *Idaho Press* daily newspaper at Nampa, said on August 2 that it has bought the *Boise Weekly*, an alternative newspaper published since 1992.

The *Weekly's* publisher, **Sally Freeman**, is expected to remain in that capacity.

The Boise paper has been printed at the Nampa plant for some years.

The *Weekly's* office location, at 523 Broad Street, was announced to become the central location for news and some other operations in Boise for the Idaho Press, which is expanding its Boise circulation, news gathering and other efforts.

- [Idaho Press](#)

Ski areas

Information available on the [SkiTiger.com](#) Northwest ski site. Details return in the fall.

Bestselling books

Top selling paperback non-fiction, from the [Pacific Northwest Independent Bestseller List](#), by IndieBound and the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association, based on reports from regional independent booksellers.

*Regional bestseller not on national IndieBound list.

1. Killers of the Flower Moon - David Grann, Vintage, \$16.95, 9780307742483
2. On Tyranny - Timothy Snyder, Tim Duggan Books, \$7.99, 9780804190114
3. Sapiens - Yuval Noah Harari, Harper Perennial, \$22.99, 9780062316110
4. Hillbilly Elegy - J.D. Vance, Harper, \$16.99, 9780062300553
- *5. The Soul of an Octopus - Sy Montgomery, Atria, \$16, 9781451697728
- *6. How to Fight - Thich Nhat Hanh, Jason DeAntonis (Illus.), Parallax Press, \$9.95, 9781941529867

- *7. The Boys in the Boat - Daniel James Brown, Penguin, \$17, 9780143125471
- 8. Shoe Dog - Phil Knight, Scribner, \$20, 9781501135927
- 9. You Are a Badass - Jen Sincero, Running Press, \$16, 9780762447695
- *10. How to Love - Thich Nhat Hanh, Parallax Press, \$9.95, 9781937006884
- *11. Astoria - Peter Stark, Ecco, \$15.99, 9780062218308
- *12. Lab Girl - Hope Jahren, Vintage, \$16, 9781101873724
- *13. Evicted - Matthew Desmond, Broadway, \$17, 9780553447453
- *14. Daring Greatly - Brene Brown, Avery, \$17, 9781592408412
- *15. On Trails - Robert Moor, S&S, \$16, 9781476739236

Calendar

July

- 1 Effective date for many state laws passed in 2018 legislature.
 - Beginning of new state fiscal year (FY19).
- 2 Board of Correction meeting. Boise.
- 4 Independence Day. State and federal holiday.
 - State administrative rules bulletin publishes.
- 12 Idaho-China trade office manager visit to Idaho begins (eight days).
- 13 Board of Dentistry meeting. Idaho Falls.
 - Special meeting, state Board of Education. Boise.
- 14 Last day for the County Clerk to examine election register and note challenges from the Primary Election.
- 15 Idaho Humanities Council program series, “And Here We Have Idaho.” Three days. Boise (Boise State University).
- 17 State Land Board meeting. Boise.
 - Board of Examiners meeting. Boise.
 - Possible Snake River Basin Adjudication information meeting, status conference.
 - State Parole Commission meeting. Boise.
- 18 Idaho Transportation Board meeting. Boise.
 - Public School Funding Formula Committee meeting. Boise.
- 19 Last day for the Secretary of State to approve requested modification of election procedures for the August 28 election.
- 20 Release of June’s 2018 labor force and nonfarm payroll data for Idaho.
- 23 Idaho Behavioral Health Cooperative meeting. Boise.
- 24 Community Care Advisory Council meeting. Boise.
- 25 Fish & Game Commission quarterly meeting. Idaho Falls.
- 26 Idaho Water Resource Board meeting. Moscow.
- 27 Capital for a Day event. Dayton.
 - Board of Education special meeting. Boise.
- 28 Idaho Association of Resource Councils meeting. Pocatello.

August

- 1 State administrative rules bulletin publishes.
- 3 The Bureau of Land Management hosts a commemoration event celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area.
- 7 Occupational licensing and certification legislative interim committee. Boise.
 - Board of Correction meeting. Boise.
 - The Idaho Anti-Trafficking Coalition in its efforts to fight human trafficking in Idaho, is planning a social media blitz.
- 8 Last day to file for election to the Ada County Highway District board.
 - Last day for magistrates to file for retention in November election.
- 13 Criminal Justice Reinvestment legislative interim committee meeting. Boise.
 - Boise City Club Lunch, “Future of Idaho’s History,” with Janet Gallimore.
- 15 State Board of Education meeting. Pocatello (Idaho State University).
 - Idaho Transportation Board meeting. Coeur d’Alene.
- 20 Colleges and universities, fall classes begin.
 - Most public schools, first day of school.
- 21 State Land Board meeting. Boise.
 - Board of Examiners meeting. Boise.
 - Possible Snake River Basin Adjudication information meeting, status conference.
- 23 Fish & Game Commission meeting. Boise. Special meeting.
- 28 Election day in some localities.
- 31 Colleges and universities, last day to make many student changes.

People

Tom Moss, 80, a former U.S. attorney for Idaho and a former state legislator and prosecuting attorney at Bingham County, died on July 29. He served many years in two stretches as Bingham County prosecutor, and was elected to the Idaho House in 2000. Not long after that, he was appointed U.S. attorney for Idaho in the George W. Bush administration. He continued in that role until June 2010.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra is revisiting plans for a new chief policy advisor after **Will Goodman**, who had planned to rejoin the State Department of Education Sept. 17, told her he wants to remain with the Mountain Home School District.

Goodman, who served as chief technology officer for the SDE in 2015, was announced July 19 as Ybarra's choice to replace Chief Policy Advisor **Duncan Robb**, who plans to step down August 17 to pursue other opportunities. Goodman, director of operations and technology for the Mountain Home School District, said Friday the district needs him to remain in that role.

- [Department of Education](#)

Saint Alphonsus Health System said on July 30 that Chief Executive Officer **Rodney Reider** is leaving as President and CEO of Saint Alphonsus. **Sally Jeffcoat**, Executive Vice President of Trinity Health and former CEO of SAHS, will assume leadership of SAHS and a search for a new CEO will begin immediately. Jeffcoat will work with Reider to ensure a smooth transition.

Reider became CEO of SAHS in 2015 after serving as President of Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise since 2010. During his tenure as CEO of the health system, he oversaw the relocation of the medical center in Nampa, the designation of the Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise as the first hospital in the state to be a Level I Stroke Center by the State of Idaho's Time Sensitive Emergency Statewide Council, and expanded local patient services with new urgent care centers.

- [St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center](#)

A year ago



2017: Seal coat work coming to many Magic Valley highways, impacting I-84, US 93, ID 75 and many others. (*photo/Idaho Transportation Department*)

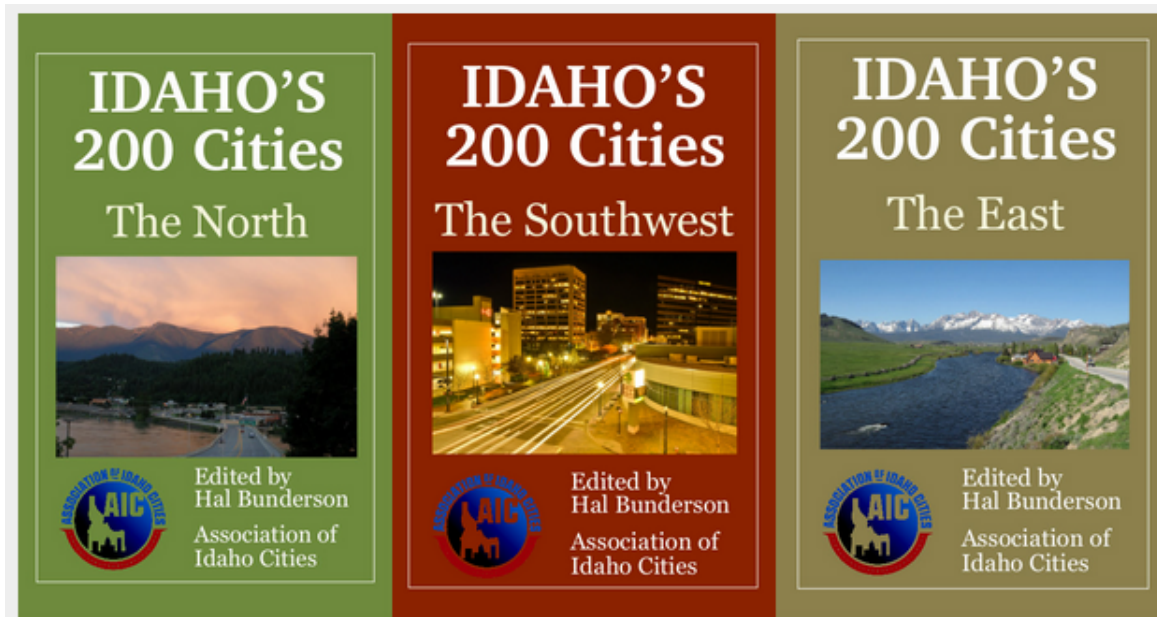
In the *Idaho Weekly Briefing*:

- On August 1 the White House reported that it intends to nominate Ryan Nelson of Idaho to be Solicitor for the Department of Interior. Nelson has worked in all three branches of the federal government. He served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the Department of Justice, where he managed the

natural resource, wildlife and appellate sections of the Division, and as Deputy General Counsel for the White House Office of Management and Budget.

- Beginning August 5 Idahoans need to dial the area code along with the seven-digit telephone number in order to make a local call. The Idaho Public Utilities Commission approved a new area code for the state in December 2015 to address the need for additional phone numbers. To implement the new area code, the commission also approved mandatory 10-digit dialing for all of Idaho.
- As wildfire season rages across Oregon, Idaho and the west, senators Ron Wyden, D-Ore., Jim Risch, Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., and Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., urged the senate to pass a wildfire funding fix included in new legislation to address funding for floods and other natural disasters.
- The biggest solar event to pass through the area in years is just a few weeks away and the city of Pocatello is helping residents, businesses, and visitors to the Gate City get prepared.
- The Idaho Department of Insurance has posted proposed health insurance premium rates and the requested increases for plan year 2018 on its website.
- Two of Idaho's largest and best-known business law firms said on August 1 that they will join forces and unite as 75 attorneys-strong under the Hawley Troxell banner. Moffatt Thomas is joining Hawley Troxell, combining two deep benches of talent to enhance and expand services for clients across the Intermountain West. Hawley Troxell will continue operations in its five locations in Boise, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho Falls, Pocatello, and Reno, increasing its presence specifically in Boise and Pocatello.
- The first sockeye of the year recently arrived in the Stanley Basin, including a naturally produced fish on July 27 and a hatchery fish on Aug. 2. The fish completed a 900-mile journey that included passing through eight dams and swimming 6,500 vertical feet in elevation from the Pacific to Stanley.
- During its bi-monthly meeting, the Idaho Water Resource Board voted to approve \$730,000 for two new projects that will increase the capacity of the board's managed recharge program.
- Wildfires in Idaho reported by the National Interagency Fire Center (based at Boise), as of the end of last week. Fires gently accelerated last week compared to the previous few weeks, but still were significantly lighter than over the last few years.
- Idaho's first human case of West Nile virus (WNV) infection for 2017 has been confirmed in a Kootenai County resident. The resident, over the age of 50, is recovering from West Nile neuroinvasive disease.

Idaho's 200 Cities – North, Southwest and East



Three new books arriving this week: The series of Idaho's 200 Cities, with one title each focused on the norther, southwestern and eastern parts of the state.

And more than that too: There are also three books of Idaho trivia, a challenge for anyone who thinks they know the state.

The books are the culmination of a decade of work by the Association of Idaho Cities, spearheaded by former legislator Hal Bunderson. The books were written in part by Bunderson and in part by people all over Idaho, in cities from Moyie Springs to St. Charles.

The detail is startling, and the insights often surprising - there's a lot more to these communities than almost anyone but locals know (and not all of them). One of the most useful parts of the books is the section on turning points, describing the developments and events that caused the city to grow and change, for better or worse, the way it has. A of lessons can be found there.

If Idaho is of interest - and if you live there it ought to be - then these books belong on your bookshelf. They're available now, and in both paperback and full color hardbound flavors.

[You can find out more about them, and order them, here.](#) (They're also available [at Amazon.com](#)).