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Start spreadin' the news... T. headed for Big Apple

T. to receive Nat'l. Music Teacher of the Year award

By BRITT FAIRCHILD
Staff Writer

The phone call came four days ago, but T. Lund still feels like he's dreaming.

No way could he and his wife, Sandi, be going on their first trip to New York City -- all expenses paid -- in less than one month.

No way could he, the only music teacher at Lorna Byrne Middle School and Illinois Valley High School (IVHS) in little ole' Cave Junction, have been chosen as a Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation National Music Teacher of the Year.

Such recognition -- T. is one of just five recipients of this year's award -- is not lost on the former mechanic.

"I'm flabbergasted," he said Monday afternoon at IVHS, still a bit giddy.

The honor couldn't have come at a more crucial, yet poignant time, T. said, noting the uncertain future of music programs in schools across the state pending the outcome of Measure 28.

"(Teaching music) is important," he said, noting it helps with students' emotional development.

"As important as math, science and reading," he said.

The Lunds leave for New York on Feb. 13. At a special celebration at Carnegie Hall the following evening, Richard Dreyfuss, who portrayed Mr. Holland in the film, will present T. and the other recipients with their awards.

On the evening of Feb. 15, the Lunds will attend a party at the home of composer Henry Mancini, who established the Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation to preserve music education, put on by Mancini's wife.

And, as if all that weren't enough, T. will also receive \$10,000 for his own personal use.

The roots of Lund's recent recognition actually began in 1999, when Lund applied for, and received, a \$5,000 grant from the foundation.

Having no grant writing experience at the time, Lund said he answered the questions on the application about why he needed the money for both

schools from the heart.

His honesty would again strike a chord with members of the foundation's grant committee as they began re-evaluating some of the old



T. LUND

grant applications last year.

In a letter sent to IVHS Principal Craig Beier in December, members of the committee noted that they found his comments to be "compelling," and wanted to have a representative go to the school as a follow-up to the grant.

A man from the foundation visited IVHS on Wednesday, Jan. 8 and Lorna Byrne the following day, observing and talking with T., as well as his students, colleagues and parents.

"We all thought it was a site visit," T. said.

Little did they know the visit was actually part of the selection process for the award.

T. realized it just two days later, when a woman from the foundation called him at approximately 9:30 the morning of Jan. 11, while he was playing Nintendo.

"She told me, 'You need to sit down,'" Lund remembered.

Once seated, T. began listening to her explain the details of what was he said was almost unfathomable. The more she described, the more tears T. felt roll down his cheeks.

His sobs awakened Sandi, who thought something horrible had happened.

"Who would have thought receiving the grant would have gone this far," T. said.

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Learn before you burn; or pay the price

By SHARON SILVA
Staff Writer

People who are issued burn permits, and then burn items not allowed by the permit could end up having to pay for their mistakes.

This is in accordance with Ordinance No. 03-01, which Chief Kyle Kirchner read during the Thursday night, Jan. 9 meeting of the Illinois Valley Rural Fire Protection District (IVRFPD) Board in Cave Junction City Hall.

The new ordinance would allow IVRFPD to charge a minimum fee of \$250, or the cost of suppression, whichever is greater, when firefighters have to respond to, or extinguish, a fire in violation of the Oregon open burning regulations.

Ordinance 03-01 will need to be read during the Feb. 13 IVRFPD regular board meeting, be adopted by the board, and would be in effect 30 days thereafter.

"We have a fair amount of calls regarding bad smells, people burning tires, you name it," said the chief.

"We can now bill for the recovery of cost," he said. "When you get a fire permit, you know what's legal to burn, and what's not."

Before the ordinance goes into effect, the fire district will get the word out to Illinois Valley residents.

The board is also in the beginning stages of discussing the addition of new staff members, what it would cost, when it would happen, and where the new staff would be utilized. None of these aspects has been decided yet.

The Cave Junction Lions Club will sponsor a spaghetti feed fund-raiser for the fire district on Saturday, Feb. 8, from 3 to 7 p.m., (or until the food runs out), in the county building in Cave Junction.

Tickets will be on sale at the door. However, several businesses around town, as well as members of the club, will be handing out Lion Bucks, which will take a dollar off the price of admission.

For more information, phone The Book Exchange at 592-3689.

R&R employees study ESOP plan

Employee Stock Ownership Plan possible 'light at end of tunnel'

By BRITT FAIRCHILD
and SAM NEWTON
Staff Writers

A plan to keep Rough & Ready Lumber Co. operating in Illinois Valley is in the works.

On Saturday, Jan. 11, more than 40 R&R employees, Ron Phillips, executive director of Illinois Valley Community Response Team, Josephine County Commissioner Harold Haugen and Al Koski, Josephine County economic development director, met to discuss the likelihood of the mill staying put.

"There have been discussions as to whether the possibility of keeping the mill running is even viable," said Carol Mayfield, R&R spokeswoman and longtime employee.

"Log supply is a big factor in being able to keep the mill open," she said.

Saturday's meeting was one of two educational ses-

sions that Phillips, who is assisting with the process, scheduled to help employees decide if pursuing an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) is an option.

Phillips has experience in employee ownership, including work with the Ohio Employee Ownership Center in Russia.

An ESOP allows employees to borrow money to buy an entire company, a portion of a company, for company expansions or capital improvements.

The employee stock is held outside a company in a separate trust. The trustee acts on behalf of all the employee participants. Within the trust, separate accounts are maintained for the individual stockholders.

The R&R employees at Saturday's session agreed that an ESOP was worth further exploration, Phillips said.

"I'd like to turn over

every stone before we give up," said R&R employee Bob Webb who was at the meeting.

He said the next step will be to raise money to help fund a feasibility study.

Phillips noted that Koski explained at the meeting that several state possibilities were available to pay for the study.

One being a \$25,000 grant from the Oregon Economic Community Development Dept., which would require a \$6,250 match, he said.

"There is one potential buyer who hasn't committed as far as purchasing the mill," Mayfield added. "We don't want to get hopes up. (Things are) still very much up in the air at this time."

But, Webb said, "there may be a little light at the end of the tunnel."

Announcement of the company's impending closure was made Dec. 4.

Future meetings are to be announced.

Measure 28 failure = drastic cuts

JoCo education one of many programs to suffer if measure defeated

By BRITT FAIRCHILD
Staff Writer

If voters reject Measure 28 on Tuesday, Jan. 28, virtually all Josephine County services -- including courts, police, mental health, and education -- would suffer.

There was no way of getting around the grim reality during a Thursday, Jan. 9 evening meeting in the Anne Basker Auditorium in Grants Pass.

Representatives from human services, criminal justice, Oregon State Police, the Oregon Youth Authority and other agencies, reported how the measure's likely defeat would affect the services they provide.

"We are not here to advocate (one position or another)," but to inform, said Commissioner Jim Brock, who facilitated the meeting, which dozens attended.

Measure 28 would increase Oregon's income tax for three years as a way to generate needed money to cover the state's shortfall.

This is an "unprecedented situation," said Josephine County Presiding Judge Gerald Neufeld.

Local courts stand to lose \$122,000 if the measure fails, resulting in layoffs of two employees, Neufeld said. He noted that during the state Legislature's first of five special sessions held prior to convening, more than \$187,000 was slashed from the local budget. Three of the then 37 full-time employees lost their jobs.

The courts themselves would close on Fridays from March until June 30. Neufeld said that the judges would continue working five days a week, while other court staff would work four nine-hour days.

"Things that we take for granted now, such as the processing of orders, judgments and decrees aren't going to be processed promptly," Neufeld

said of the possible closures.

All small claims cases would also be postponed beginning March 1, according to Neufeld. Adult and juvenile crimes such as shoplifting, forgery and other "non-person" misdemeanors wouldn't be handled until July.

That would lead to a backlog of cases once funding is restored.

Josephine County Public Defender Gary Berlant spoke on another issue concerning the processing of local court cases -- the lack of attorneys to provide indigent defense.

"If someone who qualifies for a court-appointed attorney comes into court and there is none available because there is no funding that basically means that the court system cannot process that case," Berlant said.

The inability to process their cases, means those in jail would have to be released, he said.

In addition, the Day Reporting Center in Grants Pass -- an alternative to jail for adult offenders -- would close, according to Marie Hill, Josephine County Community Justice director.

The county could likewise lose the \$85,000 the Oregon Youth Authority pays to rent space in the Juvenile Justice Center, Hill added. The 16-bed shelter also functions as holding area for minor offenders.

The situation looks as bleak for OSP.

"It's already nearly impossible to provide 24 hour, seven-day coverage with the patrol staff we have," said Lt. Dan Durbin, area commander for Josephine and Jackson counties.

He said that in Josephine County from June through December 2002 officers responded to more than 10,700 calls for service, including traffic stops, accidents, etc.

A total of 22 layoffs in Grants Pass and Medford for

troopers and other employees are scheduled if the measure fails, and would be effective on Feb. 1.

Durbin told attendees that included cutting five positions each in the crime lab, patrol, professional support and dispatch divisions, as well as two in the Fish & Wildlife division.

Statewide, a total of 282 layoff notices have been delivered, he said.

Durbin said the closure of the Grants Pass office, or reducing it to a 16-hour office are also possibilities.

For schools in the Three River District, the only solution to saving the money lost if Measure 28 fails is shortening the school year by 10 days, according to Superintendent Dave Burgess.

He told the audience that he had already met with the entire district staff, who voted to take a 10-day cut in pay if the measure fails.

In response to a question from a woman in the audience, Burgess also explained that by cutting the days, the district would be under the number of required instructional hours for kindergarten, and fourth and fifth grades, rendering it a "non-standard" school. He added that if the district were to cut the year short again next year, it could then affect funding.

District employees have been advised of the following closure days, should Measure 28 fail: March 17 and 31; April 7, 14, 21 and 28; and May 5, 16, 19 and 20.

Cutting school days isn't an option for Rogue Community College, as it is required to offer a certain number of credit hours for students to transfer to four-year schools, said RCC President Rick Levine.

He said the college has already taken steps to prepare for a loss of nearly \$1 million should the measure go down.

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SKYLINE CONFERENCE OPENER - The Illinois Valley High School girls' basketball team played the Phoenix Pirates in the Skyline Conference opener at IVHS on Friday, Jan. 10. The 'Cougs' made a valiant effort scoring 50 points but couldn't outplay the Pirates who won with a score of 65. The next home game will be on Friday, Jan. 17 against Mazama. (Photo by Gary Bell) (Additional photos on page 12)