

Community center ...

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a supportive environment including rental space, administrative services, training and technical assistance to spawn new businesses such as web design/maintenance, product photography and shipping to encourage further growth."

The center would be a multifunctional facility combining a number of elements. Phillips said they would be:

*A gallery and showroom for local products, plus Oregon Caves souvenirs.

*Demonstration studios where artisans could practice their crafts before visitors.

*A small business incubator with rental space and affordable administrative services.

*A community connectivity area with high-speed computer access backed up by technical support.

*A training facility for micro-enterprise organizations and Rogue Community College to deliver courses and workshops.

Phillips said that the center also could "increase the

curb appeal of the valley to stop an increased number of visitors passing along Redwood Hwy., and serve as a focal point for dispersing visitors to other attractions such as the Caves, Rough and Ready Botanical Wayside and Lake Selmac."

It also could serve as a starting point for Biscuit Fire site tours, winetasting and visits to artist studios.

Phillips also told chamber directors that IVCRT is seeking a \$50,000 USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grant to establish business growth investment accounts. They could be used, he said, "to purchase a range of training and consulting services based on individualized needs and goals."

Some chamber directors asked whether functions of the existing visitor center would be duplicated by the planned center.

Phillips indicated that although visitor information would be available at each, they would serve essentially different functions.

Fire chief's paid leave ...

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questioned by Volunteer Capt. Bill Hickerson, a 23-year veteran, who has been honored as the district's and the state's Firefighter of the Year. Hickerson, former president of Illinois Valley Volunteer Firefighters Association, referred to injury and rumors regarding Kirchner's reputation, and why the audit process has taken longer than first thought.

He also questioned the notification process used for the March 28 special meeting.

Haviland responded that proper procedures were used, including printing a legal ad in the Grants Pass "Daily Courier." In addition, notices were posted at various locations in the valley. The legal notification apparently was placed in the Grants Pass newspaper because a decision to call a special meeting was made after deadline for "Illinois Valley News."

Haviland also told Hickerson that the board can call special meetings when needed. He indicated that there are no grounds for questioning the notification process, although Hickerson said he believes that Jones was not notified.

Jones on Sunday, May 18 agreed with that, saying that he had not been notified, but that Director Joe Malcolm had told him about it when he encountered Jones and his wife having dinner in a restaurant. "Otherwise I wouldn't have known," said Jones. He added that he thinks perhaps two other directors also were not notified in a timely manner.

During last week's meeting, the board conducted an executive (closed to the public) session that lasted approximately 10 minutes. During the closed session the five directors read through printed information; then reconvened into open session.

In the latter portion, the board, said Haviland, "agrees by consensus that the district's attorney, Martial Henault, "bring his report to the board

on his findings and (follow) due process after that."

A special meeting likely will be called to deal with that matter. It was noted that the "audit" is not a true audit, but only examines a relatively short time span.

Haviland on Thursday night said that the audit process has taken longer than first thought because the certified public accountant, from Medford, was busy with tax season and other matters. He also noted that "there are no accusations" against Kirchner.

"There is a lot of turmoil (among volunteers and others in the community) because of this long situation," said Hickerson. "It sucks."

"Personally I see nothing that should result in termination," said Jones, "but maybe a slap on the wrist." He noted that as a fire chief he sometimes inadvertently used a municipal credit card, but always provided reimbursement, just as Kirchner has done.

"Kyle has turned the department around," said Jones. "He is an excellent chief; nearly all the personnel like him. The fact that he is such a good chief is the reason I joined the board."

On May 18, Kirchner said from his home that the entire situation is extremely unfortunate for the district. He said that it would have been best if the board had come to him with its questions, rather than going through the lengthy and expensive process that has occurred.

Jones added that should there be an attempt to terminate Kirchner, he fears a situation similar to one several years ago when the then-board made a surprise move to fire Chief Mike Barty.

Because of that, many volunteers removed their badges and tossed them on the table, quitting before the board in protest.

"The volunteers are up in arms about his situation," Jones said. "We need to conclude it."

Jugglers ...

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also has found juggling improves hand-eye coordination, boosts confidence and reduces stress.

In his perfect world, everyone would walk down the street juggling and all pass bags back and forth to each other. What a great way to meet people, he mused.

Jeff's story on how he learned to juggle elicits a grin as well. A fellow employee at a Keebler factory taught him on-the-job approximately 30 years ago. For Jeff, it seemed a salvation of sorts from the boring, monotonous work.

"I learned with dough balls. And no, I didn't put any of the dough back in," he laughed, noting that graham cracker dough juggles best.

Since then, Jeff has taught many people his skill, including his wife and children.

"Everyone in the family juggles," Mary said.

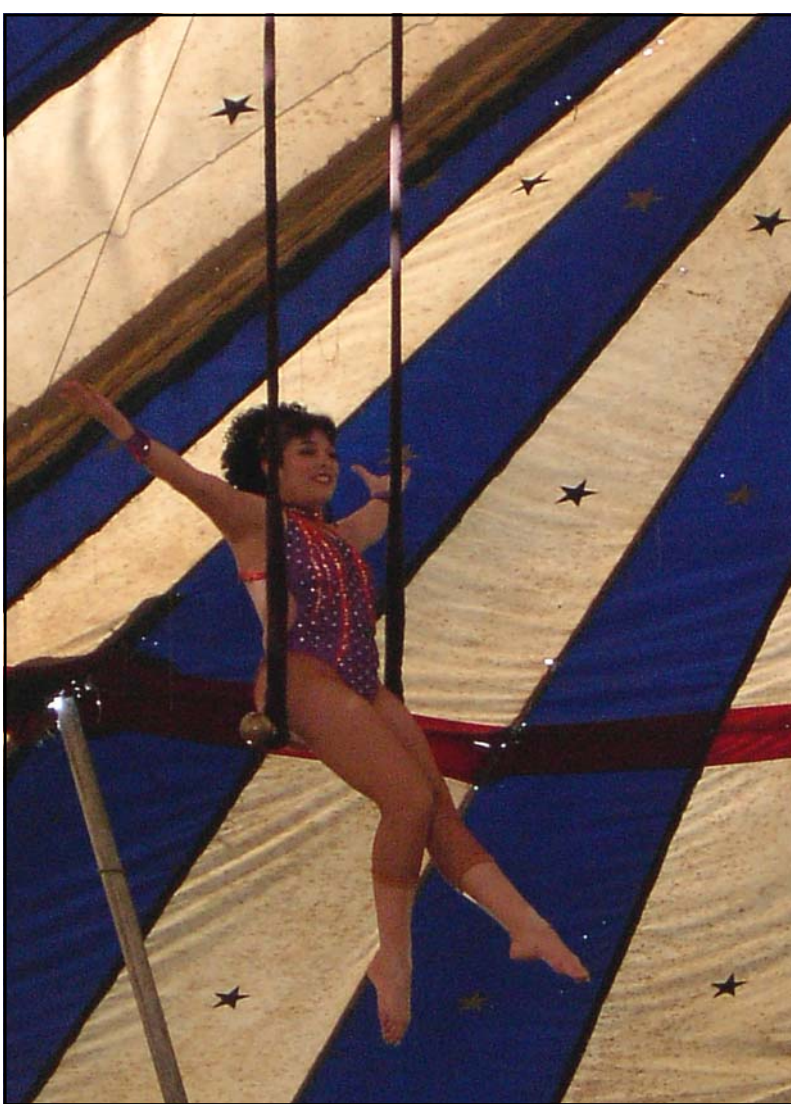
When she first learned 10 years ago, she found it somewhat frustrating. Her advice for beginners -- walk away for awhile and come back to it.

Jemarc is open every day from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., but will eventually be closed two days a week, which haven't been decided yet.

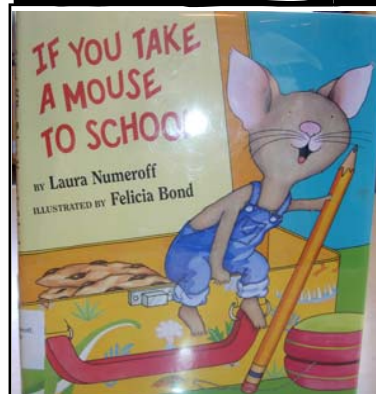
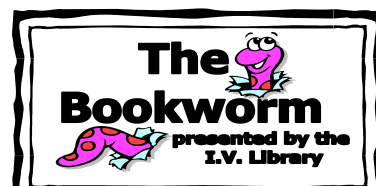
Jeff and Mary welcome anyone and everyone to not only come learn to juggle but to hang out and juggle as well. Jemarc is located at 1344 Rockydale Road and can be reached by phoning 592-2465.



A LITTLE GIRL tamed a dragon, which was really a horse, and children created edible necklaces with elbow macaroni noodles (photos above) during the seventh annual Pet Parade in Jubilee Park in Downtown Cave Junction. Parade results were not available at press time.



CHILDREN RODE on the backs of African elephants, ate colorful snow cones and watched acrobats swing from the big top during the Culpepper & Merriweather Circus held on Thursday, May 15, adjacent to the Illinois Valley Family Resource Center. The circus was sponsored by the Illinois Valley Family Coalition. (Photos by Britt Fairchild)



"If You Take A Mouse To School"

By: Laura Numeroff
Illustrated by: Felicia Bond
Ages: 2-5

Find out what can happen when you take a mouse to school. Helps children learn cause and effect.

--This book was selected by Senior Library Specialist Jennifer Berubee and is available at the Josephine County Library, I.V. branch in Cave Junction. Phone 592-3581.



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- Grenville Kleiser