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Daisy Hill Fire too close for comfort 100-acre wildfire burns structures; causes evacuation of 30 residents



One of the structures on Daisy Hill Road at the end of West River Street destroyed by fire in Cave Junction. Related photos on page 7 and 8. (Photo by Steve Fairchild)

By BRITT FAIRCHILD
Staff Writer

Cave Junction got its first major taste of fire season on Sunday, June 29 when it was hit by a costly 100-acre blaze that primarily consumed trees, grass and brush.

The fire is being called the Daisy Hill Fire. It burned a residence at 580 W. River St.; a camp trailer serving as a residence and a shop at 1000 Daisy Hill

Road; and two other out-buildings. Plus it sent nearby residents to seek temporary shelter. No injuries were reported.

The fire began at the west end of Schumacher Street near Pomeroy Dam, according to Joe Feldhaus, Illinois Valley Rural Fire Protection District (IVRFPD) division chief. Winds estimated between 15-20 mph rapidly carried the flames northwest to

Daisy Hill Road at the end of West River Street.

Feldhaus said that IVRFPD responded to its first call, from a resident on Daisy Hill Road, at 3:45 p.m.

The cause of the fire is under investigation by Oregon Dept. of Forestry.

Initial reports stated that two young people were seen leaving the area where the fire started. But that has not been con-

firmed.

"State forestry and Oregon State Police are on the ground as we speak trying to figure it out," Feldhaus said Tuesday morning, July 1.

Units from Grants Pass Fire and Rescue, Rural/Metro Fire Dept., ODF, U.S. Forest Service and two task forces from Jackson County and Josephine County Sheriff's Office also responded.

Approximately 25 firefighters, including crews from Grayback Forestry, battled the blaze with three engines, four water tenders, two brush trucks, a retardant bomber, and a helicopter.

A number of citizens joined fire crews to fight the flames on Daisy Hill Road, where James Pruner lost his home.

West River Street residents Mike Dougherty and

Gilbert Van Tassel grabbed a rake and shovel to try and stop the encroaching fire that had already engulfed Ora Mae Meyer's house at 580 W. River St.

"We could see the flames from our door," Dougherty said.

They assisted firefighters for nearly two hours.

"I just wanted to
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Help save history, be a volunteer

By BRITT FAIRCHILD
Staff Writer

While it might seem otherwise, operating a museum requires a lot of time and money.

The Kerbyville Museum needs more of both.

"Our biggest problem is we just don't have enough volunteers," said Peggy Porretta, museum board member and volunteer.

Including she and her husband, Byron Porretta, museum board president, there are just eight people currently working at the museum.

And only about half are able to either volunteer several hours each week or do manual labor such as lifting and moving things.

Byron noted that someone from the Job Council recently began working at the museum 30 hours per week and will likely help maintain the grounds -- one of several



Peggy and Byron Porretta (Photo by Britt Fairchild)

tasks fallen to the wayside lately -- among other tasks.

That will help, yet there are other behind-the-scenes jobs that could use some extra hands too.

Peggy said she would love to have the stacks of old photos that are still in boxes in a storage closet organized, or the various china collections identified and dated, for example. Someone to do historical research would be a dream.

"I don't have any volunteers to do these things,"

she said. "We know there is a lot of talent out there."

As it is, she's already at the museum at least three days a week or more now that the museum is open five days a week. Byron, who along with his wife, have been involved with the museum for four years, also spends many hours there each week when he isn't at work.

"We would love to open it (the museum)

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Valley alumni come home for bash

Numerous gatherings set for reunion during July Fourth weekend

While some in Cave Junction will celebrate the Fourth of July with sparklers and snakes, others plan to spend the weekend catching up with old friends and reminiscing about high school.

"Reunionmania" for the Illinois Valley High School Classes of 1953, 1958, 1963, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, and maybe 1968, as well as all IVHS and Kerby Union High School alumni and friends, begins on Friday, July 4 with an Annual Meeting at 4 p.m. at Jubilee Park Pavilion.

A "Prowlers vs. Growlers" softball game will follow at 5:30 p.m.

On Saturday, July 5 the 16th annual golf tournament will begin at the I.V. Golf Club at 8 a.m. A tour of Lorna Byrne Middle School, the former IVHS, is planned at 2 p.m.

Perhaps the most anticipated event of the weekend, which commemorates the Class of '53's 50th reunion, will be

the "50s Bash" dinner and dance at the Junction Inn Saturday night.

Dinner for those who have made reservations, will be served from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Dancing to the music of "Roadmasters" will begin at 8:30 p.m. Tickets will be available at the door for those only attending the dance.

Sunday morning, July 6 will greet alumni and their friends and families with a breakfast put on by

Cave Junction Cares from 8 to 11 a.m. at Jubilee Park Pavilion. An alumni picnic and silent auction will follow breakfast and last until approximately 4 p.m.

Along with activities planned for all alumni, each reunion class also has its own special events scheduled during the weekend.

For more information about reunion weekend, phone 592-2293.

-Britt Fairchild



REPEAT WINNER - Chuck and Betty Mathis of Roseburg won 'Best of Show' honors and more with their 1951 Mercury at the fifth annual Show N' Shine at Jubilee Park in Cave Junction on Saturday, June 28. The event was sponsored by Cave Junction Lions Club. (Photo by Joe Malcolm, related photos page 8)