



LENDING A HAND - Cave Junction residents Mike Dougherty (left) and Gilbert Van Tassel (photo above) run toward the Daisy Hill Fire with a shovel and rake to help fight the flames. The City of Phoenix Fire Dept. (photo right) was just one of several units from as far as Ashland that responded. (Photos by Steve Fairchild)



Road closed to prevent spread of knapweed

The gate at the beginning of U.S. Forest Service road 4201-142 will be locked year-round for a three-year term, according to Pam Bode, Illinois Valley District Ranger.

This road system is the site of a large scale spotted knapweed population and in addition accesses the Fall Creek trailhead (4201-869), as well as one mining claim.

This decision was made in order to prevent viable spotted knapweed seeds located along the above road systems from being carried to new locations via tire tread, vehicle undercarriages and germinating.

People who would like to use the Fall Creek Trail are asked to park at the Onion Camp Trailhead.

Daisy Hill Fire sparks community support

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help," he said, complimentary of the firefighters' efforts. "They appreciated an extra pair of hands."

Feldhaus said that units from Josephine County, other than IVRFPD, were delayed by another fire on Riverbanks Road in rural Grants Pass.

He noted that Oregon Dept. of Forestry (ODF) was not up to full seasonal staff yet, which caused more delays. U.S. Forest Service supplemented ODF crews.

Regarding Meyer's house (she was evacuated prior her home burning), Feldhaus said that a unit from the forest service checked on it after the fire first began nearby.

"It is my understanding, in talking to the forest service, that (men from an engine) did a walk around (the house) and found nothing out of the ordinary. Then they came back and there was fire in the attic. They were not equipped to fight that.

"By the time we got engines over there it was too late, and we weren't going to save it. There were other houses we had to save, and that's one of toughest decisions you have to make," Feldhaus said.

Lt. Brian Anderson of the sheriff's office said that 25-30 residents from River Valley Mobile Home Park at 222 Ollis Road, and Daisy Hill Road, were evacuated to Illinois Valley High School, where they were assisted by the American Red Cross.

Charles Bridges, Bridgeview Community

Church pastor, also opened the church's doors, where three evacuees took shelter.

Carly Jones, who has lived on Daisy Hill Road only a few months, said that she and her neighbors weren't initially worried about the fire.

"It was pretty close to where we were," she said. "We could feel the heat."

But once they saw the flames rise above the trees they phoned the fire district. Eventually, they evacuated.

"It seemed like everybody was pretty calm," Jones said of those around her. "But you could tell they were (worried)."

Walking door-to-door, authorities ordered an evacuation of River Valley close to 4 p.m., giving residents 15 to 20 minutes to leave, said Dan Bailey, park manager.

"I got my wife to safety first," he said before assisting other residents in the park.

"We handled a couple of incidents inside the mobile home park assisting some invalids," Feldhaus said. "But as far as I know there were no injuries related to fire."

Bailey commended the Red Cross for its efficiency. Volunteers, which included non-Red Cross workers from the community, had food waiting for evacuees and brought in cots in case anyone needed to spend the night.

Teresa Stover, disaster volunteer for the Rogue Valley Red Cross Chapter, said they also arranged for evacuees who left their needed medications at

home to return later in the evening accompanied by sheriff's deputies.

Residents returned to the mobile home park in shifts beginning at 9:30 p.m. on Sunday. Anderson said that most of the evacuees were back in their homes by 11 p.m., except for one of the families whose residence burned. They stayed in an area motel courtesy of the Red Cross.

Illinois Valley firefighters had units on scene until 3 a.m. Monday. The state kept units on scene all night. Crews also worked through the night until Monday afternoon at River Valley attending to hot spots, Bailey said.

Several River Valley residents, however, remained in their homes even after the evacuation was ordered, he added.

"They just didn't feel it was necessary. They weren't chickens like me," said Dorothy Madison, who shares a home in the park with her cousin, Ernie Krake.

Madison said they were sitting outside Sunday afternoon when Krake looked up and saw a plume of smoke. He then noticed that there was a grass fire one block away from their mailbox, and he grabbed a hose to put it out, while she phoned IVRFD, Madison said.

"They were here Johnny-on-the-spot," she said, adding that volunteer firefighter Kathy Mechling informed her to start telling people to evacuate to the high school.

Once she did that, Madison then went inside,

packed some of her belongings, got her puppy and went to IVHS. Krake followed her in another vehicle.

Although threatened by the fire, Bailey said that there have been no reports of any homes in the park being damaged. Some residual retardant though, was left on some of the homes, he noted. Back home on Monday, Bailey and Madison said that they were glad that no one was injured in the fire and that their homes were spared.

"Scary is the word for it," Madison said of the experience. "(After the Biscuit Fire) we don't need this again."

Though saddened by the destruction nearby, Jones was also relieved her's and her neighbor's homes were OK.

"We were very fortunate that it didn't burn our houses," she said.

A small fire also broke out on Waldo Road on Sunday, started by a fallen power line. It burned a half acre of brush before two units from O'Brien extinguished the blaze.

-Steve Fairchild contributed to this story.

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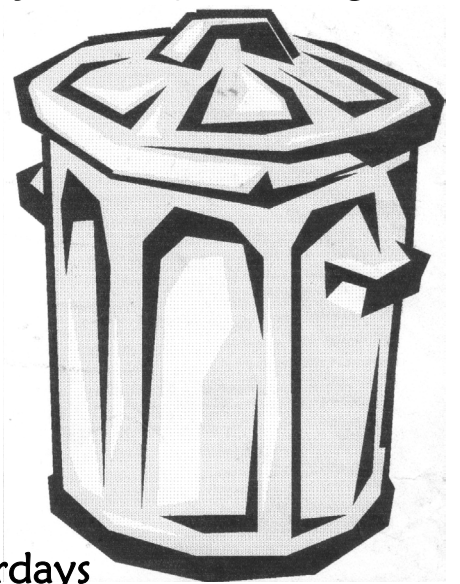
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Word of the Week

Jactation - An abnormally restless tossing of the body. Shaking, jolting.

Random House Webster's College Dictionary.

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