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Aerial photo of Daisy Hill Fire showing the damage and scope of the blaze on Sunday, June 29. (Photo courtesy of LeRoy Clouser)

With loss Pruners find hope

By BRITT FAIRCHILD
Staff Writer

Donna and James Pruner heard the Daisy Hill Fire coming.

They just didn't think it would reach the outbuilding they had lived in for four years on West River Road.

The June 29 100-acre wildfire destroyed the couple's home and all their belongings.

Indeed, Donna has mourned what was lost that day. However, in the days since the fire, she's found herself overwhelmed with gratitude.

"We're in awe over how well we are blessed," Donna said. "We couldn't be anything more than thankful."

And not just because she and James, and their two dogs, "Oslo" and "Lizzy," evacuated the property injury-free (they were sitting in a trailer near the outbuilding when they began to smell smoke) before the outbuilding caught fire.

"We have had an excellent response (from the community)," she said.

And their faith in God has been strengthened as a result of the experience.

Donna noted that the American Red Cross arranged for them to stay three nights following the fire at an area motel, fed them and gave them a store voucher for clothing.

The couple is temporarily staying in a trailer on the same property as the outbuilding.

While thankful to and comforted by those who have shown their support, financially and spiritually, Donna said that she wants the community to know that she and her husband

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Donna Pruner and 'Oslo' in front of their burned residence. (Photo by Britt Fairchild)



More photos of Reunionmania on page 8 sponsored by valley merchants.

MANY MEMORIES - For the hundreds attending Reunionmania during the July 4 weekend, it was a time for reminiscing and greeting friends from yesteryear. A large number of people (top) toured Lorna Byrne Middle School, which originally served as Illinois Valley High School. The tour was sponsored by the IVHS Class of '78, the last class to attend there before it became the middle school. With new construction, part of the old school will be demolished. Many at the Cave Junction Cares breakfast (left) enjoyed visiting.

Football team huddles to earn pay for coaches

By BRITT FAIRCHILD
Staff Writer

With a strong pack of seniors returning in the fall, the Illinois Valley High School football team has a prime chance of making it to the Skyline Conference playoffs.

They just might have to get there with less help on the sidelines.

A tight Three Rivers School District budget for next year maintained funds to cover the sport -- as well as other athletics and extracurricular activities -- albeit with fewer dollars to pay for coaches.

Three of the five paid football coaching positions IVHS had last year have been eliminated.

But Lorna Byrne Middle School faces an even bigger threat -- no football program at all.

"(Funding for) the middle school is totally gone," said IVHS football coach Bob Thornhill, noting that there is a lot of interest in the sport on the middle school level.

"I don't want to have to cut kids," he said.

To help tackle the problem, high school football players, their parents and Thornhill are trying to raise approximately \$10,000 to cover salaries for three coaches at IVHS and two at LBMS.

Football coaches at

other high schools in the district are also holding fund-raisers this summer.

On the bright side, all transportation costs have



IVHS football coach Bob Thornhill

been covered by Laidlaw Transit.

A meeting regarding the situation at IVHS and LBMS will be held on Friday, July 11 at 7 p.m. in the Josephine County Bldg. in Cave Junction.

The football team will hold a car wash Saturday, July 19 on the Radio Shack/CJ Video Mart parking lot to earn funds.

Having area businesses sponsor game quarters during the season for \$100 is among several other ideas being discussed.

Jannie Heller, whose son, Nic Heller, is a senior on the team, said that initial response to the idea has been well received among those she's approached.

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Two valley pilots rising into world competition

By STEVE FAIRCHILD
Staff Writer

Two Illinois Valley pilots will be packing up an airplane like a piece of carry-on luggage and heading to England in August to compete in the Ninth World Microlight Championships.

Jack McCormack, 55, a businessman in Cave Junction, will be part of a five-person U.S. contingent. It includes team-leader and area pilot Sharon Westcott of Selma for competition in the championship at Long Marstin Airfield at Stratford-Upon-Avon in Warwickshire, England.

More than 160 competitors will show off their aerial talent. World championships are held biannually.

This is the fifth time McCormack has competed in a world microlight championship, but only his third competing as a pilot. He has won two national microlight championships in 1993 and 94. The best he has done in world competitions was fifth place,

he said.

Westcott will act as the team's liaison with the organizers. This is Westcott's second trip to the worlds, as she went with the team to Spain in 2001.

"I was very proud to be voted as the team leader," Westcott said.

McCormack will be flying a Pteradactyl Ascender in the competition. The plane is small enough that he can disassemble it and fold it small enough to get it on a commercial airplane for the same cost as a passenger with skis or a surfboard.

He said that the intense week of competition is an excellent way to improve his flying skills. The contests will include mixed tasks to show the capabilities of the pilots in traveling long distances, navigation, and landing on a dime.

McCormack will need to navigate an aerial course using compass and maps without the aid of guidance from a global positioning

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**Fund-raiser bingo
For Blackberry Festival
Friday, July 11 - 6 p.m.
I.V. Grange Hall
3781 Holland Loop**