

Letters ...

(Continued from page 3)

where the entire community can come together to work for the advancement of the valley. What really counts is not a person's political orientation but their ability to work effectively as a team to promote the interest of the community.

If anyone has a desire to work toward promoting the interests of their community, then yes, please join with us in the IVCRT.

Why not reappoint Metcalf?

From Jim Raffenburg
Josephine County Planning Commissioner
Grants Pass

I am deeply concerned about the decisions of Josephine County Commissioners Harold Haugen and Jim Riddle not to reappoint Planning Commissioner Elizabeth Metcalf to a second term.

Metcalf is an experienced, dedicated and highly competent member of the commission with a record of clear, thoughtful and responsible questions and deliberations relating to every land-use decision or recommendation in which she has participated. Metcalf is the only member of the planning commission to hold a master's degree in planning.

Riddle tried to explain his decision as one based upon a (new?) policy requiring all appointed volunteers to reapply upon their term's expiration.

He also cited concerns that automatic reappointment would look like an effort to create a rubber stamp review body. Yet,

only weeks before, the county commissioners re-appointed Planning Commissioner David Beck to a third term without any requirement to reapply.

Haugen noted in his comments that his decision was influenced by a Dec. 22, 2003 letter received from land-use consultant Bob Hart, regarding the county board's hearing of an application for a comprehensive plan amendment and zone change for Hart's clients, John and Joanne Devry. The planning commission had previously recommended denial of the application.

In his letter, Bob Hart voiced a complaint alleging conflict of interest and ex parte contact regarding the matter of Planning Commissioners Sunny Sunquist and Elizabeth Metcalf providing testimony before the county commissioners hearing on this matter.

Both testified as private citizens, not as representatives of the planning commission. The Josephine County Rural Land Development Code, Article 31 addresses issues of conflict of interest and ex parte contacts, prior to participating in a decision or recommendation, neither of which occurred.

There are serious questions that need to be answered as a result of this decision:

Is there an underlying issue at hand, namely that Metcalf often does not vote for development favored by (as per the public record) Haugen?

Is there any other form of discrimination involved?



'GO GUARD EDUCATION DAY' - An Oregon Army 'Delta Dragons' National Guard Blackhawk helicopter landed on the football field at Illinois Valley High School on Friday, Feb. 13. The visit was to help students 'recognize the importance of a high school diploma and furthering their education through vocational institutions, as well as showing how the Guard can assist in monetary and educational incentives.' IVHS students Jason Pernicke and Natalie Allen disembarked when the helo landed. (Photos by Shane Welsh)

Deputies aid despondent man; K-9 officer injured

A suicidal man from Ashland was taken into protective custody after a stand-off with law enforcement officers during which a K-9 officer was slightly injured.

According to the Josephine County Sheriff's Office (JCSO), on Sunday, Feb. 15, Michael Dawkins was attempting to asphyxiate himself by running a hose from the exhaust pipe through the window of his pickup truck. A passerby saw the vehicle, parked near the Green Bridge on Eight Dollar Road, and alerted law enforcement at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Dawkins drove on Eight Dollar Road toward Baby Foot Lake, and became stuck in snow near milepost 14.

The hose had come free of the tailpipe, eliminating an immediate threat. Due to concern that Dawkins might be armed, officers tried to engage him from a safe distance.

Dawkins refused to exit his vehicle and expressed his desire that he be killed by law enforcement personnel, according to JCSO.

Due to impending darkness, cold weather and Dawkins' refusal to comply with the officers and a negotiator, it was deemed necessary to remove him from the vehicle by force.

Officers approached

the vehicle at 4:10 p.m., and, finding the doors locked, broke the passenger-side window. K-9 Deputy "Smitty" was introduced into the cab of the vehicle as a distraction while officers worked to get the doors open.

Dawkins was not injured in the incident except for a small self-inflicted knife wound to one wrist. "Smitty" suffered a minor cut on the pad of one paw due to broken glass.

Dawkins was taken into protective custody and transported to Three Rivers Community Hospital.



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- Helen Keller -

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- Joe Namath -

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THURSDAY, FEB. 19

- *State wrestling at Portland
- To be announced

FRIDAY, FEB. 20

- *State wrestling at Portland
- To be announced
- *Boys basketball at Mazama
- 5:30/5:30/7 p.m.
- *Girls basketball vs. Mazama - here
- 5:30/7 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEB. 21

- *State wrestling in Portland
- To be announced

MONDAY, FEB. 23

- *Spring sports practice begins

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