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Nicole Navarro sings tunes from her heart

She stands just 5-1, but 16-year-old Nicole Navarro has an extremely tall voice.

A junior at Illinois



Nicole Navarro

Valley High School, Nicole is diligently working to realize her aim for a career in the entertainment business as a singer. She practices two hours daily "doing vocal exercises to stabilize and anchor my voice." And she sings at various functions around Jackson and Josephine counties, including an occasional stint at Taylor's Sausage Country Store. She's also participated during the annual Labor Day Festival staged by Illinois Valley Lions Club; and at Josephine County Fair.

Last weekend she performed at "Women's Café" in the Takilma Community Bldg.

She's the daughter of valley residents Angel and Debra Navarro, and has four older brothers.

As part of her career planning, she will compete in America's High School Idol contest in San Jose, Calif. in May. She'll be among 40 participants from Oregon; each trying for a \$2,500 scholarship. The state winner will go on to Louisiana in July, as Oregon's representative, with the winner there receiving a \$10,000 college scholarship.

In San Jose, participants will perform songs lasting three minutes or less, and will receive feedback from a panel of professionals in the music industry.

Nicole, who said that she has been singing since quite early in life, began serious efforts in her chosen field while at Evergreen Elementary School. She was influenced there by valley resident Ross Welcome, a singer/guitarist/composer who taught a band class.

Four years ago, in seventh-grade at Lorna Byrne Middle School, it became extremely obvious that she had superior vocal talent, especially when she imitated a "Dixie Chicks" hit.

Besides Welcome, she also has worked with another valley musician, Carol Valentine. Currently she's "in training" with a voice coach in Ashland, one of several well-regarded professionals with whom she's worked there. Her current coach, she said, helped teach Barbara Streisand her craft, and "doesn't like country mu-

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ST. PATRICK ANNIVERSARY PROJECT - Approximately 60 persons from St. Patrick of the Forest Catholic Church in Cave Junction visited the 'Old Catholic Cemetery' at Allen Gulch off Waldo Road, site of the original church in 1864, on Saturday, March 13. The visit was part of the parish celebration of the 140th anniversary of St. Patrick Church. Parishioners have worked to spruce up the cemetery and keep it neat. On

Saturday at the site, the rosary was recited, led by the pastor, Father Gregory Moys, along with Father Harry Howell, parochial vicar. Parishioners then held a special dinner at the church in CJ. Attendees were delayed approximately 45 minutes from reaching the cemetery as planned because someone had blocked the access gate with their vehicle. 'It is the first time in history for gridlock at Allen Gulch,' said Father Moys.

Is there a former drug lab near your residence?

State notifying neighbors; Josephine County tied for second in state for 'unusable properties'

Other than Multnomah County, Josephine County is tied with Linn County for the highest number of illegal drug labs uncovered by law enforcement officers that have left properties "unfit for use."

Josephine County since 1991 has amassed a record of 47 such properties. Multnomah has had 52 during the same period; Linn 47. The information is provided by Oregon Dept. of Human Services (DHS), which began noti-

fying surrounding residents when "an illegal drug lab is busted in their neighborhood" as of Tuesday, March 9.

"People who live near these sites deserve to know that their neighborhood contains a potential health hazard," said Gail Shibley, DHS manager of environmental health problems. "We are especially concerned about protecting children."

Most of the properties are located in residential

areas, and most have been used to manufacture toxic methamphetamines, she said. The notification requirement was authorized by the 2003 Legislature.

"During methamphetamine manufacturing, dangerous chemicals are released, and can collect on walls and surfaces," said Shibley. "Although we are rigorous about the proper clean-up of these properties, until they are certified as safe, people and their pets should stay away from

them."

The 18 "unfit" properties in Illinois Valley, according to DHS, which notes that some owners live at the locations:

*A site on Waldo Road, approximately 6 miles southeast of Cave Junction, near the intersection of Suncrest Drive and Waldo Road. It was placed on the list on Nov. 5, 1991. The property owner lives on Rockdale Road.

*37626 Redwood Hwy., March 19, '93. The property owner lives in Colorado.

*113 Forest Creek Road, Sept. 30, '96. The owner lives in Selma.

*275 Kerby Mainline Road, Oct. 28, '97. The owner lives in California.

*9909 Takilma Road, April 29, '98. The owner lives in California.

*270 Draper Valley Road, Dec. 11, '98. The owner lives in Nevada.

*3914½ Rockdale Road, Feb. 8, '99. The owner lives in Cave Junction.

*17550 Redwood Hwy., Oct. 10, 2001. Owners live in Wilderville and Selma.

*168 Warren Road, Dec. 11, '01. The owner



DETERMINED DOGGY DEPUTIES - Sgt. Stephen V. Clarke (gesturing) and Deputy Keith Hubbard of Josephine County Sheriff's Office brought 'Piko' and 'Smitty' to the recent Lorna Byrne Middle School Career Day. Students learned about the use of K-9s and their training. A 'Howling Good Time!' fund-raiser for the K-9s will be held on April 3 at 7 p.m. Tickets will be available at the door at Grants Pass High School.

Bluegrass fest planned July 31 by I.V. Chamber

A day of plinkin' and pluckin' in the form of a Bluegrass festival is planned at "Forks" State Park on July 31 by Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Some six or seven bands tentatively are planning to perform, and there will be a booth by Oregon Bluegrass Association, according to a report to the chamber board on Tuesday, March 9. The luncheon meeting was held in Wild River Brewing & Pizza Co. in Cave Junction.

The report is from Director Dennis Strayer, who's working with Pam Cooper, who brought the festival idea to the chamber a while back. Strayer was absent due to illness. As part of arrangements, the chamber board will need to produce a \$500 security deposit check, which will be returned if the park isn't damaged, said Strayer. The board could not act on the matter due to lack of a quorum, as only five of 13 directors attending the meeting, conducted by Vice President

Bill Reid. "Pam," reported Strayer, "has a local artist who has completed a nice poster, which we have talked about selling as limited, signed editions for a chamber fund-raiser. I have contacted a local T-shirt maker, who will use the poster design for the T-shirts, which will help generate additional funds for the chamber."

"We are planning to work with several local business sponsors to help offset the cost of each band. Pam has contacted the county sheriff's office reservists, who will provide security."

"Because the state park people don't allow an admission charge, we will ask for donations per person. We have several 'volunteers,' who will walk through the crowds and ask people for their donations." Details of this item are to be discussed when a board quorum is present.

Strayer added that two food vendors already are on board: Taylor's Sausage and a snow cone vendor.

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