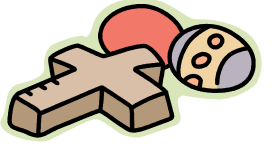


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Native myth performance set Friday

Clay Rattle Project work part of Art Walk opener in Downtown CJ

By LEAH PERSON
Special to 'I.V. News'

In March, nine youths and two adults participated in a project organized by the Illinois Valley Arts Council's Learning Through Art Committee.

The experience, known as the Clay Rattle Project, has become fun and memorable with the help of Stephanie Friedman, Kathy RatiuKelley, Penny Niemi, Connie Blakely, Ginger Nordal, Bridge Baker and George Fence.

The committee aimed not only to have the young people work with a local ceramic artist, but also to learn the basic techniques of working with clay.

Cone 10 studio owner, Friedman, generously participated in the project by volunteering her business as a work site, allowing the participants to work in an actual art studio.

While organizing the project, arts council members Ratiu-Kelley and Niemi arranged for participants to experience Native American storytelling by George Fence, of Selma. Goals for the group were to have them write a Native American myth and to make genuine clay rattles.

Inspired by Native American Fence's amusing and interesting storytelling, the group cooperatively wrote a myth about the arrival of spring in Illinois Valley.

Group members will perform their myth live at Cone 10 Studio during the Cave Junction Art Walk on



Young artist with project creature. (Photo contributed)

Friday, April 10 at 6:30 and 7:30 p.m.

Each participant chose a creature found in the valley to include in the myth. After much brainstorming and hard work, Ratiu-Kelley took the ideas developed by the group and pieced together a brilliant and funny myth about the characters, telling how they once brought Sister Spring to the valley.

Under the direction of Friedman and Blakely, each participant constructed a clay rattle to represent their character in the myth. Group members made rattles.

They are in the forms of creatures such as a

duck, dragonfly, bee, rabbit, turtle, raven, hummingbird, rattlesnake, salmon, frog, blue-jay, coyote and salamander.

There's even Father Winter, using clay donated by Georgie's Ceramic and Clay Co. in Portland.

After the rattles were made, an authentic pit firing was held at Sunsinger Ranch in Selma. A pit fire is a longstanding tradition of Native Americans, the purpose being to harden the rattles for use in celebrations.

(Editor's Note: Leah Person attends Illinois Valley High School. For the Art Walk schedule, see the ad on page 16.)

Wyden urges Biscuit Fire salvaging

Salvage logging of Biscuit Fire Timber should proceed, and could be expedited by using separate Records of Decision (RODs) for specific areas, according to U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (R-Ore.).

Wyden urged the Bush Administration on Friday, April 2 to move quickly on salvage operations. The 500,000-acre Biscuit Fire occurred two years ago and nearly caused evacuation of Illinois Valley's 15,000 residents.

Using separate RODs, noted the senator, "would allow less-controversial salvage operations to move forward while potential legal challenges in other areas are resolved."

Wyden hopes that this approach would allow work to begin more quickly than if the U.S. Forest Service's (USFS) 518 million-board-foot preferred alternative proceeds under a single ROD.

In pushing for salvage operations, Wyden also

urged the administration to give "strong preference" in jobs to Oregonians, "who bore the brunt of the Biscuit Fire."

Recent news articles in publications including the Eugene "Register Guard" were cited by Wyden as being possibly misunderstood. He said that additional jobs and delivery of salvaged timber to Oregon mills should be accomplished, but that no jobs will result until a ROD is approved by USFS.



SELMA GUARDRAIL MYSTERY - Illinois Valley Fire District reported a severely damaged guardrail at Hwy. 199 and Lakeshore Drive shortly before 8 a.m. on Friday, April 2. However, no accident was ever reported, and there seemed to be no evidence of same. Whatever hit, pushed the rail back several feet and clipped off road signs. The damage was removed Monday, April 5 by Oregon Dept. of Transportation. Two firefighters reported contacting two pedestrians, who refused assistance. There also was an unofficial report of American Medical Response transporting someone.

JoCo jobs show rise for March

Josephine County's unemployment rate dropped about half of 1 percent in March, dipping from 9.9 percent in January to 9.3 percent in February, said Oregon Employment Dept. (OED).

The county's unemployment rate was 9.7 percent in February 2003 with 28,269 people employed. Payroll employment rose by 60 during the month.

Since February '03, the county has added 450 payroll jobs, increasing employment to 29,140 people, or a growth rate of 2.0 percent.

While many residents polled recently feel that the city of Grants Pass may be growing too quickly, this recent growth trend has created demand for more services and has added to the local job base, OED reported.

During February, the wood products manufacturing sector added 20 jobs, but employment in this once-dominant industry of the local manufacturing base has fallen by 210 jobs during the past year, said OED.

Total manufacturing employment has fallen by 50 jobs during the past 12 months. OED added that with the recent purchase of the U.S. Forest Industries mill by Timber Products, some of the job loss may be reversed in coming months.

Retail trade employment fell by 30 in February, but has shown an over-the-year gain of 120 jobs in the county. Wholesale trade was unchanged in February, but has also increased during the past 12 months, up by 80 jobs.

Small monthly gains were reported in some county industries including construction (+20), professional and business services (+20), financial activities (+10), and federal government (+10).

Employment in the health care and social assistance sector grew by 40 jobs in February, and has risen by nearly 100 this year, said OED. Nursing and residential-care facilities account for about half the annual gain.

Local education employment increased by 50 in February. During the past year, local education employment lost 160 jobs.

	Unemployment Rates		
	Feb. 2004	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2003
JoCo	9.3	9.9	9.7
Jackson	8.1	8.3	8.8
Oregon (raw)	8.4	8.9	9.2
Seasonally Adjusted	7.1	7.7	7.9
U.S. (raw)	6.0	6.3	6.4
Seasonally Adjusted	5.6	5.6	5.9



HONEY BUNNY - Illinois Valley Lions Club annual Easter Egg hunt in Jubilee Park is set for Sunday. See the ad on page 5, and check the Easter Rabbit interview on page 13. (Photo by Shane Welsh)

Limiting fire hazards aim of rural changes

April 19 hearing set in GP to continue deliberation and accept public input

By MICHELLE BINKER
Staff Writer

In an effort to mitigate hazards to life, property and wild lands due to fire, the Josephine County Planning Commission's Wild-fire Safety Standards Committee has proposed amendments to the Rural Land Development Code (RLDC).

The draft amendments to Article 76 of the RLDC were discussed during the second of three community meetings last month in the Josephine County Bldg. in Downtown Cave Junction.

Meetings also were held in Wolf Creek and Williams.

regulation as an end result of the Biscuit Fire," said valley resident Jim Nolan. "I feel this process is really jumping the gun to create rules which will be costly to local people, especially since the economy doesn't exist to support these costs," Nolan said.

The amendments, derived with considerable input from structural firefighters, include requirements for driveway engineering and surfacing, among other details. They could make development or implementation prohibitively expensive for some property owners.

Most disturbing for

Some say that optional provision, if approved, could prove costly for new or 'substantially improved' county residences.

The amendments are intended to clarify and expand fire-safe construction methods, according to Don Rubenstein, a county employee who helped draft the proposed changes.

Furthermore, the draft aims to improve and clarify access and vegetation mitigation standards; and provide a review process for deviating from development standards, among other considerations.

The driving principles behind the amendment are to improve the safety, survivability and defensibility of structures and developments without imposing a "utopian, idealized" model on county residents, Rubenstein said.

However, some Illinois Valley residents who attended were not comfortable with many of the potentially costly and "onerous" draft provisions.

"I'm concerned that this is a lot of unnecessary

some was an optional provision which, if adopted by the county board of commissioners, could make all new or "substantially improved" county residences subject to the new standards, not just those in forest zones, new subdivisions or those requiring a site plan review.

"These provisions are simply not made for the real world," said valley resident Bill Reid, of Oregon Mt. Real Estate.

The planning commission will continue considering this matter during a meeting on Monday, April 19 at 7 p.m. in Anne Basker Auditorium adjacent to the county courthouse in Grants Pass.

During this meeting the commission will initiate deliberation on the proposal, and take additional input.

The public is strongly encouraged to attend, officials said.

Celebrate Easter in the valley

Special section on pages 4 and 5