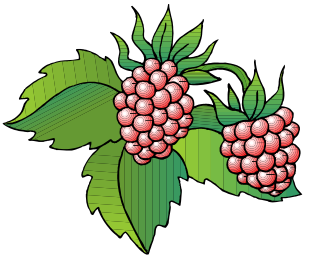


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‘Through the lens’ Lesson by a chicken has merit

By DALE SANDBERG
IVFD Photographer

No matter how bad a situation gets or how much the potential for disaster, there is usually a story with a touching lesson.

The fire Wednesday, Aug. 4 was no exception. The day after, I went around and took photos of the devastation.

At one stop I talked to a man, David, who lost everything he had. The travel trailer that was his home was burnt, as was the home of the folks who owned the property. I told him that he was indeed fortunate to have been gone at the time of the fire, as given the extent of the damage I doubted he would have been available for this conversation.

David’s comment was this: While the fire had been bad, his chicken, and the chicks she’d kept hidden under her body, had come through the fire with little or no harm, not even a singed feather.

Within a few short feet of the chicken coop was a van that had burned, and on the other side was a double-wide mobile home, also completely burned. Both of these would have been pretty hot.

Now, was this a near-death experience for the chicken? Did she look up and see that great KFC in the sky? We’ll never know, but the chicken did have a certain peace about her. I guess it must be a comfort to cheat death.

Let’s learn a lesson from that chicken. As chickens do, the area inside the coop was completely void of vegetation.

In a way, the chicken had created “defensible space” for herself -- and it worked.

When people make defensible space, it often works to save their houses. At one house the fire

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Weather Watch

Cave Junction	
Wed., August 11	
Sunny, very hot	
High--99, Low--59.	
Thursday, August 12	
Sunny, very hot	
High--97, Low--58.	
Friday, August 13	
Mostly sunny, warm	
High--95, Low--58.	
Saturday, August 14	
Sunny, partly cloudy	
High--92, Low--58.	
Sunday, August 15	
Mostly sunny	
High--91, Low--57.	
Monday, August 16	
Sun, some clouds	
High--90, Low--48.	
Tuesday, August 17	
Sun, some clouds	
High--88, Low--46.	



Some residents of Pine Ridge Estates off S. Kerby Avenue (top and right center) removed items from the path of the fire that seemed unstoppable due to strong wind and dry vegetation. The battle to corral the wildfire was greatly aided by Oregon Dept. of Forestry ‘bombers’ dropping retardant (second from top/Photo by G-Dub of G-Dub’s Fix it Shop). Illinois Valley firefighters (left center) were among many who responded to the 210-acre wildfire in Cave Junction. Flames (bottom) threatened many homes, including Pine Ridge Estates. (Also see page 5).

Berry Fest set for weekend; CRT changes

*The 23rd annual Blackberry Festival will be held in Cave Junction on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 14-15. A number of merchants are offering blackberry specials.

See pages 6 and 7 for a presentation co-sponsored by Home Valley Bank and First American Title.

*Ron Phillips will leave I.V. Community Response Team. And an I.V. Airport development grant has been approved. See page 20.

Wildfire in CJ brings grave fear

By SHANE WELSH
Staff Writer

Thick columns of smoke loomed as onlookers valleywide watched firefighters on the ground and in the air battle a fast-moving wildfire that burned 210 acres of grass, brush and timber in Cave Junction, and threatened some 200 homes, some of which were evacuated, on Wednesday afternoon, Aug. 4.

In the path of the fire, a double-wide mobile home was destroyed near “Forks” State Park, as well as three outbuildings, including a barn at another location near the park. The “Forks” also sustained heavy damage to fences and trees along the road leading into the park.

The situation began at approximately 2:30 p.m. when Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) staff and volunteers responded with seven units to what first was reported as a structure fire, but turned out to be a grass fire at Rough & Ready Park, a short distance south of Downtown Cave Junction.

Because of wind, smoke from the burning vegetation began blowing into the area northwest of the fire, including downtown, alarming a number of residents.

Upon arrival, IVFD crews were met with flames that already were becoming a threat to the caretaker’s house near a fallen electric line that may have been the cause of the blaze.

Aided by moderate wind, the blaze spread quickly across a dry field adjacent to Rough & Ready Park and into the neighboring woods and surrounding hillsides. Fanned by wind, it jumped Illinois River, staying ahead of firefighters, who battled the wayward flames to keep them away from residences.

Upon arrival, IVFD immediately set up a perimeter in an attempt to contain the fire and pre-

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