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FALL 'N' FOOTBALL - The football season is under way at Illinois Valley High School. The JV Cougars played Sutherlin in Cave Junction on Thursday, Sept. 16, but lost 28-22. Helping with cheerleading is the JV rally squad, which also will be on hand for the home game against Gold Beach on Thursday, Sept. 23 at 5 p.m. The varsity Cougars will play the Panthers on the Gold Beach field on Friday, Sept. 24 at 7 p.m. It is hoped that the new field at IVHS will be available for the varsity home game that will be announced in the 'Illinois Valley News.'

Invention of Fire Bloc by CJ resident shows possibilities for fire protection

By SHANE WELSH
Staff Writer

A non-toxic, biodegradable polymer could be the solution to fighting fires in Illinois Valley.

On Friday, Sept. 3, Illinois Valley residents gathered in the Josephine County Bldg. in Downtown Cave Junction to see an evening demonstration of a "revolutionary product," Fire Bloc.

According to Russ Bambrough, owner of Fire Bloc Inc. of Cave Junction, the product, "when combined with water, holds tiny droplets of water beneath a thin polymer shell; preventing evaporation.

"Evaporation is what causes water to dissipate, allowing surfaces to heat up. Without evaporation, the water is held in, which keeps a treated surface from igniting.

"The substance," said

Bambrough, was discovered by a firefighter in Florida when he noticed a baby diaper amid the blackness of a burned area. He noticed that the diaper

Observation of an unburned diaper after a fire led to the discovery.

hadn't burned, and was still holding water.

"Pursuing this mystery, the firefighter talked to the diaper manufacturer and discovered the reason the diaper didn't burn was due to a polymer that was holding in the water."

Bambrough showed a film to illustrate the product's effectiveness. One demonstration in the film showed a man with a blow torch walking through dry, 3-foot tall grass that had been treated with Fire

Bloc. No matter how hard he tried to ignite the brush, it wouldn't light. All that burned was a few strands of grass that hadn't been treated, according to what was shown in the film.

Also on the film, Bambrough substantiated how surfaces beneath the product are protected from heat by dipping his finger in the solution and putting it into a hot, bright blue flame of a torch. Even after several minutes of exposure to the open flame, he was unharmed due to the thin coating of Fire Bloc and water on his finger.

He said that only five gallons of Fire Bloc, mixed with 2 to 3 percent water, can cover an area as large as 2,500 square feet. When properly applied, it can withstand temperatures of 5,000 degrees for up to 30

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Masked 'bat men' linked to med pot hunt

Four masked men with baseball bats apparently were seeking a medical marijuana marauder on Saturday, Sept. 18, according to Josephine County Sheriff's Office (JCSO).

At approximately 9:27 a.m., JCSO received a report of a trespass in progress at 550 Rock Creek Road in Williams.

The caller said that they saw men with baseball bats and that yells for help could be heard coming from near a residence.

The masked men fled after threatening a victim with a handgun. They were seen leaving in a newer, white four-door Ford pickup truck, said JCSO.

Reported victims were

Neil Sinnott, Robin Wilkins, and Autumn Wilkins-Kahn, all of Williams.

JCSO later determined that the masked suspects were searching for persons responsible for the theft of marijuana from a neighboring medicinal marijuana garden, said Deputy Cory Krauss. An investigation is continuing.

Three injured in Takilma Road head-on; suicide and fire in Wilderville on page 16

Despite recent rain it's still fire season

Despite recent cool weather and rain showers, the Oregon Dept. of Forestry (ODF) said that seasonal fire bans are still very much in effect in Southwestern Oregon.

"Just as weather conditions vary around the state, beginning and ending fire season dates vary as well," said Dennis Turco, fire prevention specialist with ODF.

Some local areas received little rainfall, and the heavy vegetation is still dry, ODF said.

Dry and windy conditions are predicted this weekend.

"In (Josephine and Jackson) counties, the declaration of fire season's end will be announced by ODF's Southwest Oregon District," Turco explained.

ODF emphasizes that certain activities are still banned at all times. They include all outdoor burning, campfires outside of designated areas, fireworks, use of vehicles off improved roads and smoking in wildland areas except in enclosed vehicles on improved roads.

New I.V. Fire mechanic 'can't be beat' - Chief

By SHANE WELSH
Staff Writer

Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) has been saving a bundle since hiring its new mechanic, Kenny Pangburn.

Chief Harry Rich praised Pangburn's work during a district board meeting Thursday evening, Sept. 16 in Cave Junction City Hall.

"We're doing really well with our mechanic. He has been extremely busy," Rich said.

According to Rich, Pangburn replaced an engine in Battalion Chief Ken Gavlik's brush truck when the engine "blew" with 280,000 miles on it.

"The last brush truck engine we replaced (prior to hiring Pangburn) cost the district \$4,000; and I think we've had problems with it ever since," said the chief. "Our mechanic found an engine that he removed from another vehicle... for \$750.

"We saved a ton of money on replacement. He had the engine (repaired) in less than a week," said Rich. "I haven't found a thing that he can't fix. Everything we've thrown at him he has fixed. I'm extremely pleased with his performance so far.

"I think this is a win-win situation (for the district)," said the chief.

Homecoming set Oct. 11-16

Illinois Valley High School is planning the 2004 homecoming program for Oct. 11 to 16.

The homecoming game against Rogue River will be held on Oct. 15. The homecoming queen and court will be introduced at the half. The homecoming dance is scheduled for Oct. 16.

During the preceding week there will be a number of 'spirit' event, including a parade in Downtown Cave Junction.

Weather Watch

Cave Junction

Wednesday, Sept. 22
Mostly sunny
High--80, Low--43.



Thursday, Sept. 23
Sunny & Delightful
High--83, Low--46.



Friday, Sept. 24
Sunny & pleasant
High--84, Low--45.



Saturday, Sept. 25
Sunny to part cloudy
High--83, Low--45.



Sunday, Sept. 26
Sunny to part cloudy
High--80, Low--45.



Monday, Sept. 27
Sunshine
High--83, Low--45.



Tuesday, Sept. 28
Abundant sunshine
High--81, Low--43.



Volunteer Capt. Ken Gavlik receives battalion chief pin from his son, I.V. Fire District staff Deputy Chief Jeff Gavlik. (Photo by Shane Welsh)

I.V. Fire Dist. Capt. Ken Gavlik promoted to battalion chief

Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) volunteer Capt. Ken Gavlik of the Selma station was promoted to battalion chief during a district board meeting held Thursday, Sept. 16 at City Hall.

"Capt. Gavlik has been with the district for many years and has shown extreme dedication. (He is) an individual (who) shows integrity and the ability to lead and perform," said Chief Harry Rich.

Rich joshed the newly promoted Gavlik about his uniform, which includes a blue shirt as captain.

"Your son said he had some white shirts that fit you, so next time I see you, you better be in a white shirt," he said.

Rich turned the new badge over to Deputy Chief Jeff Gavlik, Ken Gavlik's son, who proudly presented his father his new badge.

- Shane Welsh