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Mega-housing developments under way in Cave Junction

It's a possible population tsunami.

An unprecedented residential housing construction explosion that has the makings of a boom town scene for the city of Cave Junction is under way.

Based on information from Cave Junction City Recorder Jim Polk, it appears that more than 400 living units are currently planned or already under construction.

The figures involve ap-

proximately 10 developments of varying sizes -- including three gated communities. Completion of the 10 projects is estimated at six months to a year.

In addition, Polk told Josephine County commissioners Monday night, Jan. 24, the city is aware of another 500 single-family homes that could be built during the next five to 10 years. One project includes a planned destination resort and expansion of Illinois

Valley Golf Course to 18 holes.

Plus, the city has seen a preliminary application for an 86-lot subdivision on approximately 45 acres on the west side of Hwy. 199 opposite the site for the planned new Siskiyou medical center.

This development would include 250,000 square feet of commercial development.

Willow Development, of Grants Pass, is behind the

plan. Rick Fahey and Dan Hughes are among the project principals.

The long-term effects of that many new dwellings and the resultant population swell are a concern, he said. The city council, said Mayor Tony Paulson, is keeping an eye on how to accommodate and fund the effects on city infrastructure and services.

The current city population is estimated at 1,440.

But how will water and sewer facilities, roads, law

enforcement, fire protection, schools and medical facilities be expanded or improved to handle a major increase in population? Those are areas the council tries to consider during its deliberations as developers come forward with plans.

The city water and sewer plants are designed to handle a population of 3,500 to 4,000; so there is not a huge worry there.

Meanwhile, using information provided by Polk

and Paulson, here's an outline of city housing developments:

***Cedar Brook Estates** (originally planned as Sunny Brook Mobile Home Park) is a gated development, for those 55 and older, with a club house on Laurel Road between Hwy. 199 and N. Old Stage Road. Nine "stick-built" homes are under construction, and two manufactured homes are in place.

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City water will end for Forks Park, Dillon's

City of Cave Junction water service to seven sites on the south side of Hwy. 199 beyond "first bridge" will not be served after April 1.

The end of water service involves Illinois River "Forks" State Park, two residences above the park, Dillon's Nursery, and four residences on Rockydale Road.

Notices will be sent to those affected, who are not within city limits, as soon as possible.

Based on finances and in keeping with rules affecting only those within city limits, the city council voted 5-0 Monday night, Jan. 24 to only fund new lines for three users on the north side of the bridge and within city limits in connection with having to vacate water lines under "first bridge."

Oregon Dept. of Transportation plans to construct a new bridge this year, and has given the city an April 1 deadline to remove its pipes, said Gary Biggs, city public works supervisor.

He said that the work will cost an estimated \$24,000. The council agreed to fund the project, which must be completed by the deadline, using its reserve fund. It contains some \$40,000, said City Recorder Jim Polk.

The cost for those whose water service will end was estimated by Biggs at \$21,000. But the council declined to include that work. Biggs said it's possible that those involved could utilize wells, as they did before getting city water.

IVCDO seeking business needs

As part of its economic development efforts, Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (IVCDO) is distributing "Business Needs Survey" packets.

To obtain a packet phone 592-4440, said Bill Moore, IVCDO business consultant.

The survey is also online at ivcrt.org (local business needs survey).



Motor vehicle accidents and structure fires, but especially medical calls, contributed to Illinois Valley Fire



District recording a record number of runs during 2004. ('Illinois Valley News' file photos)

Fire calls reach all-time record of 1,176 in 2004

"Alarming" statistics show that Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) set a new record for emergency runs during 2004: 1,176.

The previous high mark, said Division Chief Joe Feldhaus, was 1,050 during 2003.

Already this year, up to Jan. 20, the district is past the same point last year: 92 runs vs. 68.

The primary reason for the continued rise in runs, he noted, is because of IVFD's mutual response to medical calls in cooperation with American Medical Response (AMR).

IVFD also responds to numerous alarms for structure fires, motor vehicle accidents, public assists and other incidents that are not necessarily emergencies. The latter include power line problems, open burns, and fuel spills, plus many other types.

Firefighters do not normally respond to calls

for sick persons, but sometimes do to help AMR medics with lifting patients or carrying medical equipment, said Feldhaus.

Responding together provides a safety margin, as when a "code" (not breathing) alarm is re-



ceived, plus more hands available to help in various ways, he said. The same applies to other calls.

Sometimes firefighters ride in ambulances to hospitals to assist an AMR medic, said the division chief, especially when it's a critical case.

Also in cooperation with AMR, IVFD often is placed on medical standby for the valley. This occurs when AMR units are tied up on medical calls in I.V., and the condition lasts until another ambulance arrives from Grants Pass, or

complaints, 13 allergic reactions, 12 cases of bleeding, 36 cases of priority 1 choking and 83 cases of priority 3 choking.

Other statistics from last year involved one airplane crash, 71 cases of priority 1 heart pain, 13 cases of priority 1 diabetic problems, 21 strokes, and 43 unknown problems.

In addition, IVFD responded to 34 roll-over motor vehicle accidents (MVAs), 19 other priority 1 MVAs, 28 MVAs with lane blockage, 74 MVAs with unknown injuries, and two accidents with persons needing extrication.

IVFD also responds to assist Rural/Metro Fire Dept. and Grants Pass Fire & Rescue under mutual aid pacts. In addition the district has responded to areas including Medford and Rogue River as part of special strike forces.

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JoCo employment rate better than '04 state average

Josephine County's job-growth rate during 2004 outpaced the statewide average -- 2.8 percent vs. 2.2 percent for Oregon overall -- said Oregon Employment Dept. (OED).

And Josephine County's unemployment rate dropped slightly during December to 7.5 percent from the 7.7 percent noted in November, said OED.

With a labor force of 32,672 there were 30,212 persons employed in the county during December vs. 30,242 during November, said OED, when the labor force totaled 32,766.

The county's unemployment rate in December '03 was 8.0 percent.

Payroll employment in the county "trended slightly lower" during December, "as seasonal industries such as natural resources and mining, construction, and leisure and hospitality trimmed payrolls for the winter season."

During December, said OED, the construction industry shed 40 jobs. Construction employment growth "has been strong through the year in Josephine County, up by 170 jobs, or nearly 15 percent.

"Manufacturing, while gaining only 20 jobs in December, also has posted solid growth during the past 12 months, up by 240.

"Wood product industry jobs," continued OED, "have accounted for 100 of the new jobs in manufacturing. Retail trade employment increased by 40 during December, and is up by 80 jobs since December 2003.

"Leisure and hospitality employment dipped by 60 jobs in December, and now stands at 20 jobs below the total in December 2003."

OED added that other industries adding to the

county's job gains during 2004 were wholesale trade (+60), financial activities (+40), professional and business services (+40), and health care and social assistance (+40). Government employment payrolls declined by 20 last year, OED reported.

The jobless rate in Jackson County during December was 5.7 percent vs. 5.9 percent the month before.

The Oregon "raw" rate for December was 6.5; seasonally adjusted to 6.8. The U.S. "raw" rate was 5.1 percent; seasonally adjusted to 5.4 percent, OED said.

Ambulances could be in fire stations

By CHRISTINA HILL
Correspondent

A new ambulance/fire district plan is in the works; one that it appears will benefit the entire Illinois Valley community.

"The Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) and American Medical Response (AMR) are in the evolutionary stages of developing a plan that will scratch each other's backs," said Steve Zabriskie, an AMR paramedic, volunteer I.V. firefighter, and IVFD emergency medical services coordinator.

"My understanding is that it's pretty much set in stone, but they haven't solidified all the particulars yet," said Zabriskie.

"Nothing's official," stressed IVFD Deputy Chief Jeff Gavlik. "Nothing is ironed out yet."

The money-saving idea is to have IVFD "station" AMR ambulances in the new fire stations being built in Selma and Cave Junction.

"As a private agency, AMR rents its headquarters, so how that benefits AMR is they would have those quarters provided by the fire district," said Zabriskie.

"The fire district would

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Weather Watch

Cave Junction

Wednesday, Jan. 26

Scattered puddles, Evening showers

High--54, Low--37.



Thursday, Jan. 27

Mostly cloudy, Cool, breezy evening

High--52, Low--37.



Friday, Jan. 28

Mostly cloudy, Evening showers

High--50, Low--35.



Saturday, Jan. 29

Possible showers, Clouds increasing late

High--48, Low--29.



Sunday, Jan. 30

Early showers, Overcast evening

High--51, Low--31.



Monday, Jan. 31

Showers possible, Partly cloudy evening

High--52, Low--34.



Tuesday, Feb. 1

Variable sunshine, Cloudy evening

High--54, Low--34.

