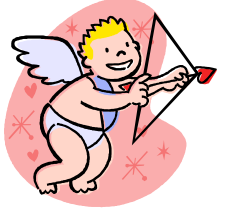


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Illinois Valley News



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Single Copy 50-cents

Meth labs so far all in I.V.; regrettably

All three clandestine methamphetamine labs shut down this year by Josephine County lawmen have been in Illinois Valley.

During January, officers of the Josephine Interagency Narcotics Team (JOINT) served search warrants at three residences within Cave Junction city limits, and two at dwellings in rural Cave Junction.

If the trend in the number of labs continues at three per month, said JOINT, it would break last year's record of 22 labs busted. Of those, four were in Illinois Valley, JOINT said.

Officers seized 47 meth labs in the county during 2003, 42 during 2002, and 63 during 2001.

The county, with 46 buildings declared unfit due to chemical/drug contamination, leads the state in the number of such buildings.

Besides the harmful effects on the users and society as a whole, officers note that chemicals used in manufacturing meth are volatile, and have caused intense flash fires.

In addition, combining such chemicals results in deadly phosphine gas.

Town halls set on meth, legislation

Three area legislators will conduct public meetings Saturday, Feb. 12 in Grants Pass to hear from constituents and discuss the continuing methamphetamine problem.

The meth problem will be addressed during a "regional town hall summit" by U.S. Congressman Greg Walden (R-Ore.) and others from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. in Anne Basker Auditorium adjacent to the county courthouse in Downtown GP.

Walden -- with invited experts from law enforcement, anti-drug coalitions, the governor's office and federal offices -- will "discuss the rampant use and production problems facing our communities and what can be done at the local level to help advance the fight against meth."

The public is encouraged to attend. Walden said that 35 percent of meth lab seizures during 2004 were in his congressional district. But, he added, the district has only 20 percent of the state's population.

"This drug affects us all," said Walden. "I believe that these forums will be informative for everyone: The threats posed by this drug are too close for any of

(Continued on page 8)

Illinois Valley girls varsity basketball team is 'hooping it up' with a 7-1 Skyline Conference mark and looking good.

See page 9.



WONDERFUL WOOLLY WINTER GALA - The third annual Woolly Winter Gala was held Sunday, Feb. 6 at Lorna Byrne Middle School to benefit the Illinois River Valley Arts Council. Olivia Fox, 2, enjoyed petting 'Nikodemos' with llama mama Joyce Abrams (left) and

baby mama Lacey Fox. In photo below (from left) Olivia; Alyssa Person, 8; BreAnna Allan, 15, a youth table helper; and Camelia Swenson, 7, had a good time with various gala craft projects. The arts council presents valley projects with the Southern Oregon Guild.



Among performers at the third annual Woolly Winter Gala was Second Friday String Band with Carol Valentine (substituting for Kent Fisher), Jack Dwyer and George Shook. Other performers included Alan Laurie, Jemarc Juggling and Patti Culver. The master of ceremonies was Smokey Little Hawk.



Cougar wrestlers show winning ways

Illinois Valley High School wrestlers have excellent chances of pinning and otherwise winning their way to the state tournament.

They'll be heading to the district championships first, but it looks as though the team will turn in outstanding performances, said head coach Jay Miller.

The meet will be in Klamath Falls on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 11-12.

Including his work with the valley youth wrestling group, Miller has 26 years coaching experience, about nine of them as head coach.

And the Cougar team, for the first time in memory, clinched the Skyline Conference dual-meet title. That notable achievement results from going undefeated against all-league competition, subsequent to a 61-15 victory against Rogue River Thursday, Feb. 3 on the Chieftains' home mats.

In addition, Miller and

his charges are anticipating also taking the district title, which would be another historic first for IVHS.

The Cougars have only three seniors, but are bolstered by a talented group of freshmen and others. The seniors, who are ready for district, are:

*Seth Green (130), a four-year wrestler, who was district champ as a sophomore and runner-up as a junior. "I believe he'll be a shoe-in at district," said Miller.

*Wescott Lynch (152), also a four-year man, who has made two trips to state.

*George Middle (215), in his first year as a matman.

At Klamath Falls, the top three finishers in each weight category will go to state. The state contest will be in Salem Thursday through Saturday, Feb. 17 through 19.

"We have 26 kids on the team," said Miller, "which is up 14 from our normal size.

"We've finished in the

top 10 in past years; this time we're looking to be in the top five. We've got a lot of talent and a good shot."

Besides the seniors, he feels that three or four freshmen likely will place at the state contest. They include Jesse Swift (130), who'll be the #1 seed at district. He's won all his league matches this year, including opponents from 4-A schools. I.V. is 3-A.

Two others are Jacob Miller (119) and Jerrad Miller (125). "I believe they'll make it to state," said the coach.

"This is an exciting year for us," he added. He said that the program, bolstered by youth wrestling that prepares youth for the Cougar team, has and has had "a lot of outstanding individuals."

The team earns its major funding by running a food booth at the annual Josephine County Fair. It also holds other fund-raisers. Miller cited Jerry Sommers as the "main man" for fund-raising.

'Hearty' gifts for the love of your life

Those who want to add hearty power to Cupid's arrow need look no further than pages 4 and 5.

From candy and flowers, to jewelry, cards and various other thoughtful gifts, a fine "from the heart" Valentine's Day selection is available from merchants.

And to add to the heartfelt situation, a number of restaurants are offering special meals for sweethearts, lovers, partners, friends and spouses - or a combination.

See what's offered on pages 4 and 5.

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592-2541

Evergreen, Home Valley set \$500,000 in rec fund

A \$500,000 revolving "zero interest" loan fund to help establish and maintain recreation fields in Josephine County has been set up jointly by Home Valley Bank and Evergreen Federal Bank.

The program, with each bank providing \$250,000, was announced by Home Valley President Robert Ward, and Evergreen President Brady Adams.

The program will focus on an interest-free revolving loan fund for nonprofit groups. Funds could be used to acquire, improve or maintain community recreation fields.

"Today, many of our tax-supported public services are facing financial challenges," said Ward. "We wanted to come up with a program that would address some of the needs of our public recreation fields without requiring the use of taxpayers' dollars," said Ward.

"By creating an interest-free revolving loan fund," he said, "we can help the community keep and improve the fields that are such an important asset to our communities, without having to raise taxes or use existing taxes."

Added Adams, "Whether you are a player or a spectator, recreation fields provide positive experiences. These shared times help build strong families and strong communities."

The \$500,000 fund will be available without interest to "local nonprofits interested in improving the communities' recreation fields." The borrowers will pay back their loans from nontaxpayer sources such as fundraisers or concessions. The repaid money will then be available for other loans, said Adams and Ward.

"Being the only locally owned banks in the commu-

nity," said Ward, "we are in a unique position to be able to put together an innovative program like this one.

"In today's world of bigger and bigger megabanks," he added, "programs like this show that local community banks can still make a significant difference in improving the quality of life in our communities."

(Editor's Note: See the advertisement from the two banks on page 16.)

O'Brien weather, listing high-low temperatures and rainfall, as recorded by Cheryl & Harry Johnson:
*Fri., Jan. 28, 45-38; 1.81
*Sat., Jan. 29, 48-31
*Sun., Jan. 30, 45-30
*Mon., Jan. 31, 50-31
*Tues., Feb. 1, 47-31
*Wed., Feb. 2, 50-27
*Thurs., Feb. 3, 54-29

Weather Watch

Cave Junction

Wednesday, Feb. 9

Partly sunny, Clouds increasing late High--53, Low--26.



Thursday, Feb. 10

Variable sunshine, Cloudy evening High--54, Low--27.



Friday, Feb. 11

Partly sunny, Evening showers High--56, Low--34.



Saturday, Feb. 12

Possible showers, Mostly cloudy evening High--51, Low--30.



Sunday, Feb. 13

Showers likely, Cats & dogs late High--51, Low--29.



Monday, Feb. 14

Mostly cloudy, Partial evening clearing High--53, Low--31.



Tuesday, Feb. 15

Partly sunny, Clouds increasing late High--56, Low--32.

