



A street sign at Redwood Hwy. and Burch Drive is among recent casualties by vandals, who have been busy around the valley. (Photo by Shane Welsh)

Sign vandal suspect sought

Help in solving crimes involving removal of county road signs is requested by the Josephine County Sheriff's Office and Josephine Public Works Dept.

These incidents occurred between Friday, March 4 and Monday, March 7, said sheriff's Lt. Lee Harmon.

Twenty-four road signs were removed from their locations within Illinois Valley. Five of these signs were "Stop" signs, which creates a very hazardous condition, said Harman.

Those arrested for these crimes will face charges of recklessly endangering and second-degree criminal mischief, Harman said. Both are Class "A" misdemeanors and are punishable by up to one year in custody and \$5,000 fine.

Should injury or death occur due to this type of incident, those subjects responsible would be charged with more serious crime such as criminally negligent homicide, said Harman.

Anyone with information related to these incidents is asked to contact the sheriff's office at 474-5123.

Drug law nabbings cause 120% rise in CJ arrests

Arrest went up 120 percent during January compared to December, according to Deputy Ray Webb, contract officer for the city of Cave Junction.

The report from Webb, a member of Josephine County Sheriff's Office, was read by City Recorder Jim Polk during the city council meeting in city hall Monday night, March 14.

Webb noted that incidents during January rose 14 percent from December. He said that arrests climbed by 120 percent mainly from warrants and drug law arrests. There were 231 calls

or incidents during January.

The deputy said that he has been seeing more transients in Jubilee Park because of warmer weather. "I will continue to patrol the park, hoping the presence will keep down the loitering," Webb wrote. "I also will be enforcing city ordinances," likely in connection with drinking alcoholic beverages in the park.

He noted that January statistics include seven stolen cars, nine reports of criminal mischief, 22 arrests, nine burglaries and 13 thefts, plus two incidents of shoplifting.

I.V. Lions Club advised on Jubilee Park festival fees

Illinois Valley Lions Club probably will not have to pay for using Jubilee Park for its annual Labor Day Festival.

The club plans to use the park from Aug. 30 through Sept. 7 -- including set up and dismantling. The festival will last three days.

Club President Steve Culver asked the Cave Junction City Council, during its meeting in city hall Monday evening, March 14, to waive the \$450 fee. However, the council, advised by City Recorder Jim Polk, instead

told Culver to present a \$450 request for state revenue-sharing funds held by the city.

Polk said he's confident that the fund has enough to cover the fee.

Besides extending appreciation to the city for its suggestion, Culver said that after the festival he wants to go through the park to find any damage. He would be accompanied by Gary Biggs, supervisor of public works. "We want to take care of any problems," said Culver.

Tax-exempt times near

Filing deadlines are near for exemption and special assessment programs, said Michael L. Schneyder, Josephine County assessor.

**April 1 Deadline**

\*Real and Personal Property Tax Exemptions for Specific Organizations:

Oregon laws provide a property tax exemption for property owned or leased by certain qualifying organizations which use the property for the intended purpose of the organization.

The most common qualifying entities are: religious, fraternal, literary, benevolent, or charitable organizations and scientific institutions. Changes in the ownership or the property, a change in the purpose of the organization or a renewal or modification to a lease require a new application. In certain cases later filings may be allowed.

\*Commercial facilities under construction:

A building in process of construction and not in use or occupancy on Jan. 1 and being constructed in furtherance of the production of income may be exempt from taxation.

\*Farm Special Assessment:

Land farmed with the intent of gaining a profit, may qualify for a special assessment. Application must be made by the deadline.

\*Forest Special Assessment:

Land currently used for growing and harvesting timber may qualify for special assessment. Applications for new assessment under two forestland programs must be filed by the deadline.

\*Veterans' Property Tax Exemption:

Qualifying veterans who are 40 percent or more disabled, or the surviving spouse of a qualifying veteran, may be entitled to receive a partial exemption on their property. Applications are required annually.

The filing deadline for new qualifying veterans or new surviving spouses may differ from April 1. In certain cases later filings may be allowed.

**April 15 Deadline**

\*Senior and Disabled Citizens' Property Tax Deferral:

Senior citizens who are 62 or older by April 15, and disabled citizens younger than 62, who have total household incomes of less than \$32,000, may defer paying property taxes on their residence.

The taxes, plus interest and lien recording fees, must be paid when the owner dies or sells the property, moves, or the property changes ownership. Disabled citizens must have received federal Social Security disability benefits for the previous year to qualify.

If taxpayers have any questions regarding these programs, they should contact the Josephine County Assessor's office in the county courthouse in Grants Pass, or phone 474-5260.



CHAMBER WELCOMES JEFFERSON STATE - Members of the Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce Greeters Committee visited Jefferson State Financial Group in Downtown Cave Junction Thursday, March 10. The business is operated by Mary Reynolds (seated) and Tammy Smith (behind Reynolds). Committee members are (from left) Vicki Gill, of SOFCU; Dennis Strayer, of the I.V. Visitor Center; and Dulcie Moore, Chamber office manager. (Not shown, Bob Rodriguez, of the 'Noose.') Jefferson State offers a range of health insurance and home mortgage programs.

Dr.-assisted deaths drop to 37 in '04

Thirty-seven patients in Oregon participated in legal physician-assisted suicide in 2004, a decrease from the 42 who did so during 2003.

Additionally the first decrease in the number of prescriptions written for lethal doses of medication since legalization in 1997 occurred during 2004.

Both findings are contained in the seventh annual report of Oregon's experience with the Death with Dignity Act, released by the Oregon Dept. of Human Services (DHS).

"The findings are similar to those previous years," said Dr. Mel Kohn, state epidemiologist. "And, as before, the number of physician-assisted suicide deaths reflects a very small portion of the average 31,000 annual deaths in Oregon."

As in prior reports, participants were more likely to have cancer (78 percent), be younger (average age of 64) and have more formal education (51 percent with at least a baccalaureate degree). Other findings:

\*Forty physicians wrote 60 prescriptions for lethal doses of medication.

\*Thirty-five patients took lethal medication that was prescribed in '04; two patients took medication prescribed in '03.

\*All patients died at home, except one who died in an assisted-living facility. Eighty-nine percent were enrolled in hospice care.

\*All patients had some form of health insurance; 73 percent had private insurance, and 27 percent had Medicare or Medicaid.

\*Three patients experienced complications; all involved regurgitation.

\*The percentage of patients referred for psychological evaluation has declined, from 31 percent in 1998 to 5 percent in 2004.

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