



Chief Harry Rich



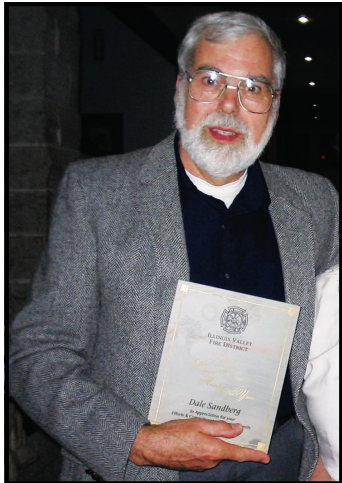
Battalion Chief Ken Gavlik



Fire Prevention Coordinator De Spellman



Lt. Dan Green



Dale Sandberg



Delaine Sherman



Firefighter Nick Bjornstad



Firefighter Kamron Ismaile

VALLEY SMOKE-EATERS HONORED - Illinois Valley Volunteer Firefighters Association held its annual banquet Saturday, March 19 at Illinois Valley High School cafeteria. Delaine Sherman, a volunteer in the support group, received the Administration Award, the Chief's Award, and the Board of Directors Award. Jeff Gavlik also received the Board of Directors Award. Daniel Green was given the Top Training Award and promoted to lieutenant. The Prevention Award went to De Spellman, and the Maintenance Award was given to Kamron Ismaile. The district's volunteer photographer,

Dale Sandberg, who works with his wife, Elaine, received the Support Member of the Year Award. Ken Gavlik was honored with the Officer of the Year Award. The plaque he holds contains a replica of a staff officer badge and will be passed on to the 2005 award recipient. The same holds true for Firefighter and Rookie of the Year. The Rookie of the Year award went to Nick Bjornstad. Chief Harry Rich was recognized with the Staff Member of the Year Award. The guest speaker for the ceremony was State Fire Marshal Charlie Chase. (Photos by Shane Welsh)

FD gains reimbursement

By SHANE WELSH
Staff Writer

Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) will receive \$10,632.49 reimbursement for Workers Compensation insurance overcharges.

According to Beth Beards, IVFD administrative secretary, the charge stems from a misunderstanding that occurred during the 210-acre 2004 Rough & Ready fire. She reported the situation to IVFD directors during a meeting in administrative headquarters Thursday evening, March 17.

Apparently, a SAIF Corp. auditor had assumed that IVFD fought wildland fires. District firefighters respond to wildland fire calls to help prevent structure loss and to extinguish and control fire damage to structures.

"We do structure protection during these wildland fires," said Beards. "She (the auditor) assumed this included wildland firefighting," said Beards.

In December 2004, IVFD met with representatives from Special Districts, an organiza-

tion IVFD uses for many services including Workers' Compensation and health insurance. During that meeting, it was decided that IVFD could greatly reduce costs by switching its policy from SAIF Corp. to Wilson Heirgood Associates, a company recommended by Special Districts.

Beards noted that prior to changing the IVFD insurance provider, the district had to pay approximately \$26,000 for Workers Comp insurance every four months.

Under the new company, IVFD only has to pay \$10,000 a year for the same coverage. The reason this figure is so much lower than SAIF is that the new policy provides one set fee for firefighters, board members, and clerical workers.

"Our guys are on scene only about 5-10 percent of the time we're charged for," said Beards. "The new policy provides the same coverage at 1/3 of the price."

She said that SAIF will reimburse the district for a percentage of charges incurred from July to October 2004.

Merging advisory boards for airports at Illinois Valley and Merlin pondered

Josephine County commissioners are discussing plans to recombine advisory boards for the Illinois Valley and Grants Pass (Merlin) airports.

The boards now are separate, but there was a combined board several years ago. However, because of a number of factors, the boards again became separate bodies.

Members of the I.V. Airport Advisory Board heard about the proposal from county Commissioner Jim Raffenburg during their meeting Thursday evening, March 17 at the airport.

Under the proposal, the existing seven-member I.V. board and the eight-member GP board would be disbanded. In their place, said Raffenburg, there would be a nine-member combined airports board.

Three members would represent I.V. Airport aviation interests, and three would represent Grants Pass Airport aviation interests.

In addition, there would be three members representing nonaviation interests. One each would represent

I.V., Grants Pass and citizens-at-large, Raffenburg outlined.

He added it's likely that the two current advisory board chairmen would be retained for the new board, but that all other seats would be filled via applications.

Raffenburg indicated that commissioners are concerned because of a lack of progress at both airports. He linked the situation to "a real problem in structure," noting that under the new arrangement, if approved, the advisory boards would address long-range visions for the facilities and not day-to-day operations.

"The current structure is not working," said Raffenburg. "We need to change the way the boards do business," he said.

The advisory boards, he noted, would be responsible and report to the county commissioners, not the director of airports. Airports Director Alex Grossi was out of town and unable to attend Thursday's meeting.

Much of the 80-minute meeting involved discussion by I.V. board members

about the differing philosophies between the airports.

Although the I.V. site could attract commercial ventures, it also is seen by the board as a unique, prime recreational attraction for pilots and others.

Board members also expressed concern about a possibility that the historic buildings, from when the airport was the Siskiyou Smokejumper Base, would be destroyed under the current Airport Layout Plan (ALP).

There also was considerable discussion about a grant, received through the former I.V. Community Response Team, for the airport industrial park. The board and Raffenburg said it appears that discussion with Federal Aviation Administration officials could iron out some wrinkles regarding the ALP in connection with that grant.

Raffenburg said that he would try to set up a meeting with FAA. He added that the plan for combining boards will be brought before both boards before any action is taken.

Horsemen win

Sisters Kelsey and Kaylah Arnett, members of the Illinois Valley High School equestrian team, took some top competition places.

They and fellow teammates competed in a Southern Oregon High School district meet at Central Point Expo March 11-13.

Kelsey took a 3rd place in Driving. Kaylah took a 1st in Individual Flags, 2nd in Figure 8, and 3rd in Steer Daubing.

In Two-Man Birangle School, Illinois Valley took a 3rd place.

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Hotline time set March 30

Four legislators will review measures on which they're working during the legislative hotline session with Josephine County commissioners next week.

The public meeting will be held Wednesday, March 30 in Room 154 of the county courthouse from 7:30 to 8 a.m.

Legislators are to be state Sen. Jason Atkinson, and Reps. Gordon Anderson, Dennis Richardson and

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Due to a death in the family, King's Chinese Cuisine in Cave Junction will be closed from Friday, March 25 through Monday, March 28. The restaurant will reopen Tuesday, March 29.

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- George Santayana -

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