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No deputy patrolling without 'safety net' funding

'This is reality,' says Sheriff Dave Daniel while also announcing he will not seek a third term

Saying that he's tired of fighting for funding and dealing with politics, Sheriff Dave Daniel will not seek re-election to a third term, Josephine County's ranking lawman said Saturday, Oct. 1.

Additionally, Daniel expressed grave concerns about funding for the sheriff's office and other county operations, possibly as soon as the 2007-'08 fiscal year that will begin July 1, 2007.

Without the some \$15 million in "safety net" funding, "It will be the end of county government as we know it," said Daniel.

"There will be no patrol. It's not a threat. This is reality," he said.

"It's going to be absolutely terrible," he said.

The sheriff added that without the federal funding to offset lost timber receipts, his office likely would only be able to staff the jail and serve warrants, as required by statute.

With regard to candidates for his job, the sheriff said that he is endorsing Undersheriff Brian Anderson. He is a 21-year veteran, appointed to his current position last year.

Earlier this year, Gil Gilbertson, who said he has an extensive background in civilian and military law enforcement, indicated he would seek the office.

As of Monday, Oct. 3, no one had filed for the job, according to the county clerk's office.

The deadline to file for the May primary is March 7, said the clerk's office.

Anderson said that if there are only two candidates, one would be chosen in the November general election. But if there are more than two, they'd first

square off in May, he said.

Concerning the problem of funding, Daniel questioned comments by county Commissioner Jim Riddle, who told a Grants Pass newspaper that sheriff's patrols would continue even without the some \$15 million in "safety net" money.

Riddle was unavailable for comment in time for this issue of "Illinois Valley News."

The looming lack of lucre is linked to reauthorization of the "safety net" funding.

Although approval

seemed favorable earlier this year, financial factors including the Gulf Coast hurricanes, the war in Iraq and the federal deficit have cast a shadow on passage.

In challenging Riddle's comments, the sheriff noted that the \$15 million represents some three-quarters of the county budget.

"The county board really only deals with about \$20 million of the \$110 million budget," said Daniel. "The rest is pass-through money via grants and the like for specific operations."

"I'm stumped as to how

Riddle thinks that patrol could continue without 'safety net' money," he said.

"That money is needed for the criminal justice system that includes the DA's office and probation department," the sheriff said.

Daniel noted that he is down to 21 officers, including detectives, when 53 officers would be adequate for the segment of the population covered by the sheriff's office, based on one officer per thousand residents.

"I'm tired of politics and fighting for money," the sheriff concluded.

Sgt. Clarke among four leaving sheriff's office

Sgt. Stephen A. Clarke, a 24-year veteran of the sheriff's office is leaving, citing employment security doubts and "ongoing practices of the Josephine County commissioners" related to benefit reductions.

Oct. 20 will be his last day with the sheriff's office, as the current supervisor of swing shift will become a patrolman with the city of Brookings Police Dept. at a lesser pay rate.

In addition, three other deputies, including Sgt. Larry Michels, of Cave Junction, have left or will be leaving the sheriff's office. Michels, who works at county jail, has more than 20 years service with the sheriff's office.

Indications are that he is retiring, and that he and his

wife, Jan, a county probation officer, will retire, and they'll move to another state.

Also leaving are Deputies Ryan Brown and Mike Vorberg, who will join the city of Grants Pass Dept. of Public Safety. Sheriff Dave Daniel said that the city force continues to expand with added population, often hiring his deputies.

Meanwhile, the county force dwindles while the number of residents in the unincorporated areas covered by the sheriff's office continues to rise, he said.

Grants Pass officers are paid \$1,000 more per month than county deputies.

Clarke, noting that he is speaking only for himself and not the sheriff's office, said, "It has come to having

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Babyfoot open house Oct. 6

An open house to discuss a Draft Post-Fire Assessment for the Babyfoot Lake Botanical Area will be held Thursday, Oct. 6 at the Illinois Valley Ranger District Office/Butler Bldg. in Cave Junction from 3-7 p.m.

Anyone interested in discussing the draft assessment can attend and find out more about the Babyfoot Lake Botanical Area Draft Post-Fire Assessment.

There is no formal presentation, and the public is welcome to visit with forest service staff anytime between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m..

The forest service said that it worked to identify actions to implement specific activities needed to restore native vegetation and reduce visual effect of the areas that were cut. It also wants to restore Brewer Spruce killed by the Biscuit Fire in the entire Babyfoot Lake Botanical area.

A Babyfoot Lake Botanical Area Draft Post Fire Assessment is available for public review at the Illinois Valley Ranger District Office at (541) 592-4000.



VEHICLE FIRES kept Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) and Oregon Dept. of Forestry firefighters busy. They responded Tuesday, Sept. 27 at 10:30 a.m. to a pickup truck blaze on Holland Loop. George McDowell was the driver. On Friday, Sept. 30, there was a van fire on Westside Road at 11:38 a.m. The owner is Roger Newton. Both vehicles were total losses, and the causes are unknown.



Photos by Dale & Elaine Sandberg/IVFD

Coming winter could be a doozy, expert opines

Climate forecasters predict the future by examining recent sea surface temperatures, regional climate patterns, and even Atlantic Ocean hurricanes -- and this year these indicators show a similarity to conditions prior to the winter of 1995-'96.

If such a pattern holds true, this winter in Oregon could be a doozy, said George Taylor, a faculty member at Oregon State University at Corvallis, who serves as state climatologist.

He said that the '95-'96 fall and winter will long be remembered for a powerful wind storm in December, two ice storms, and the massive "100-year flood" in February, which closed schools, isolated communities, and caused millions of dollars of damage.

"It was a wild year," Taylor said. "And because there is a strong correlation

between conditions during the first several months this year and early in 1995, it would appear that chances for an extreme event this winter are quite high."

Every year Taylor makes a prediction for fall and winter weather based on several factors, culminating in selecting "analog years" that most closely resemble current conditions. He takes into account long-term wet and dry cycles (known as the multidecadal phase), El Nino and La Nina episodes, sea level pressures, temperatures, wind speeds, and solar cycles. He even included hurricanes, which have a surprisingly strong correlation to Northwest climate.

"Based on a composite of analysis, we are usually able to identify four or five analog years that had similar conditions during the first several months of the year,

which helps us predict what the weather may be like in the fall and winter," Taylor said. "The 1995-'96 year was weighted twice as strong as any other year."

"That doesn't mean the outcomes will be similar," he warned. "Let's just say that things are leaning in the direction of extreme events and that an active year seems likely."

Taylor said that the trend this fall and winter appears to be warmer and wetter than normal throughout the state:

*Oregon Coast: Temperatures will be above-normal October-December, and January-March; precipitation will be near normal October-December and above-normal January-March.

*Southwest Interior: Temperatures will be above normal October-December

and January-March; precipitation will be slightly above-normal October-December and above-normal for January-March.

Other analog years for 2005-'06, and their extreme events, include 1952-'53 (flooding and wind storms); 1973-'74 (flooding); and 1969-'70 (ice storm).

Last year, Taylor predicted a wet, early fall despite a summer drought and was right on the mark. He also correctly predicted a wet spring.

But he added, "We experienced a very dry mid-winter last year, and that is something we never anticipated."

Taylor said that every year his most frequent request is to predict whether it will snow in the low elevations. Every year, he disappoints his followers.

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RIDING PHENOM- Lindy Davis, 14, a freshman at Illinois Valley High School, riding 'Asero,' won the coveted 2005 Junior Kiger Rider Silver Belt Buckle last month against top notch professional riders. She and her family recently moved to Cave Junction from Marin County in California. Story on page 5 (Photo provided)