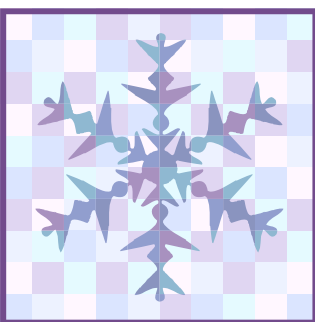




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SANTA CLAUS VISITED CAVE JUNCTION Saturday, Dec. 2, hearing the wishes of Sam Gilley, 5, at Darn Near Everything (photo at left), and those of Ian Binker, 3, and his brother, Paul, 7, at the Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce Community Christmas Tree



Lighting later the same day on the Junction Inn vacant lot. Numerous motorcyclists (photo below) converged at the JI Saturday for the annual Illinois Valley Bikers Toy Run, sponsored this year by the Sons of God Motorcycle Club. (More photos by 'I. V. News,' page 18.)



CJ fire truck theft suspects captured

Two suspects were arrested at a Gold Hill tavern in connection with theft of a fire truck from the Oregon Dept. of Forestry (ODF) guard station in Cave Junction. Grants Pass resident JoAnn Rhodes, 37, and Dennis Nesheim, 38, a transient, were taken into custody Sunday, Dec. 4, said Chief Dean Muchow, of Gold Hill Police Dept. They were charged, he said, with possession of sto-

len property, and taken to Jackson County Jail. Besides the red lights-and-siren-equipped fire truck, a 2004 Ford carrying 300 gallons of water, Rhodes was carrying a GPS device that belongs to ODF, said Muchow. The vehicle was taken around 6 p.m., said Brad Tally, forestry unit supervisor for ODF. Entry was made by breaking through an attic and then into the

building, where the keys were kept, he said. The theft occurred at a time when employees were absent for a short time, Tally said. Muchow gave the following account: A Gold Hill officer had just heard from a Rogue River officer to be on the lookout for a stolen ODF fire truck. The Gold Hill officer saw the truck at the Gold Hill Post Office, across from Sportsman Tav-

ern, at approximately 8:30 p.m. Bar patrons often use the post office lot, he said. The officer got other officers on-scene, and they contacted Nesheim inside the tavern. He and his companion had been described. After he was in custody, the woman was contacted and also taken into custody. It is unknown how often fire trucks are stolen, but the incident seems a bit rare.

Chateau Friends tied to interior improvements

**By CHRIS HILL
IVN Correspondent**
An interior facelift at The Chateau at Oregon Caves National Monument could be coming, thanks to Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (IVCDO). "We are establishing a fund for people who are interested in making donations to go toward the restoration of the interior of the building," said Bob Schumacher, IVCDO executive director. If the plan goes through, new lighting and furnishings, among other items, would be involved. "We would be starting the fund under the IVCDO umbrella, and if the fund gets large enough, it will roll off and become its own separate entity," Schumacher said.

This entity would be known as the Friends of the Oregon Caves Chateau. However, that wouldn't be for a while. Plans for the fund are just that, plans. It's in the very early, preliminary stages. "Right now, we're going around and trying to find people who are interested in establishing the fund," said Schumacher. "At our next meeting, we still have to approve the resolution to create the fund. Then, we'll start the fund next year, and we'll start to form members of that group; then we'll start to promote and market it," Schumacher explained. "We're looking at an advisory committee," he said. "We're kind of looking for people on a broader range that might attract funding for this," he added.

According to Schumacher, the interior of the Chateau is not in the best shape. "Most of the furniture and equipment in the Chateau was from the previous concessionaire and was not in the best of condition when we got it," he said. "We don't really have any specific plans as to what we want to do yet. We just want to establish an organization and promote it, so we can get a group to decide what to do with the funds once we have them," said Schumacher. One aspect is almost for certain -- funds will go toward restoration of the interior only, Schumacher said. The building itself is owned by the National Park Service. IVCDO owns all the personal property within the Chateau walls, exclud-

ing the Monterey furniture, he said. "We want to make improvements that would recreate the atmosphere of when it (the Chateau) was new," said Schumacher. "We would like to have some of this stuff done in time for the 2009 celebration, which is the 100th anniversary of the monument, the 75th anniversary of the chateau and the 150th anniversary of the Oregon statehood," Schumacher said. The celebration will start on the Fourth of July weekend and run through July 12th. For more information on the project, contact the IVCDO at 592-4440. The next board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 15 at 7 p.m. at the Illinois Valley Family Resource Center on E. River Street.

Powerless!

Due to a major transformer malfunction, some 3,785 residents of Cave Junction and Kerby were without power from approximately 9:30 a.m. until 8 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 4, said Pacific Power. It immediately dispatched crews to Cave Junction once the power outage was noted. Selma and O'Brien receive power from different grids than the central valley, and were not affected by the interruption, although some Selma residents were affected.

American Medical Response brought oxygen to city hall to aid those whose needed it, but could not access it because of the power lack. American Red Cross was responding from Medford to set up cots and provide food, but it was turned back once power was restored. A couple of families took advantage of the medical help before electricity flowed again, said City Recorder Jim Polk. Among businesses affected:

Jessica Clark, store director at Shop Smart Food Warehouse, said "Not much you can do." Shop Smart was closed for the day, losing sales as well as a few hundred dollars worth of food that couldn't be saved. Janice Bruner from CJ Select Market was still trying to get cooling unit compressors to run at full capacity Monday morning, Dec. 5. She was "very frustrated" after losing quite a bit of money from being closed all day Sunday. Selma Select market was not affected by the power outage. Steve Anderson from Stevereno's Family Restaurant catered to his church clientele by cooking pancakes and French toast on a 4-foot propane grill. But he eventually had to close when there was no way to make coffee.

The three sets of traffic signals in Downtown CJ were inoperable. Candles, kerosene lanterns and lamps, plus flashlights were much in evidence at many homes in the affected area. The cause of the equipment failure was not immediately determined. "It could be that the transformer simply failed, as equipment sometimes does," said Pacific Power. Many businesses were affected by the loss of power, especially grocers and restaurants. Pacific Power said that it was going to bring a mobile transformer to the substation from Medford. It had estimated that power would not be restored until around 10 a.m. Monday, Dec. 5. But utility workers at the substation discovered a way to repair the problem, and power was restored area by area. Some areas experienced temporary "brown-out" conditions for a time. Working with Pacific Power, the city of Cave Junction began a transformation to an emergency shelter, as it has a generator for heat and lights. Dome School relied on generator power to host its annual Christmas Bazaar. Jeff Stiles at Oregon Caves Chevron was prepared with a generator, but was unable to pump gasoline. New technology in the microprocessors for the fuel dispensers conflicts with generators, he said. However, Stiles and his crew stayed open all day to sell a variety of snack items. Said Stiles, "It could always be worse. Think of all those who lost power for weeks due to natural disasters. The power outage gave families extra time to spend together."



An American Medical Response team brought oxygen to city hall, and was available in case of emergency during the power outage. (See related photo, also by 'Illinois Valley News,' on page 10))

Burn permit fees on IVFD list

Consideration of a controversial ordinance that could result in fees for seasonal burn permits is on the Illinois Valley Fire District agenda for Thursday, Dec. 8. The public meeting will begin at 7 p.m. at the district administrative office, 28195 Redwood Hwy.

Dec. 9 will mark the final 2005 Second Friday Art Walk in Downtown Cave Junction. Numerous artistic endeavors will be featured. Advertisements for the event are on page 11.

The Service Directory offers a wide range of products and services to 'Illinois Valley News' readers. See page 17.

I.V. holiday hoop tourney set Friday, Saturday

Illinois Valley High School is hosting its annual Holiday Basketball Tournament Friday, Dec. 9 and Saturday, Dec. 10. Participating high schools will be Glide, Brookings-Harbor, and Cascade Christian.

Game times Friday will be 2 p.m., (girls) Cascade Christian vs. Brookings; 4 p.m. (boys) CC vs. Brookings; 6 p.m. (girls) Glide vs. I.V.; and 7:30 p.m. (boys) Glide vs. I.V. On Saturday, at 2 p.m. the game 1 loser will play

the game 3 loser; and at 4 p.m., game 2 loser will play game 4 loser. The finals will start at 6 p.m. with the winner of game 1 vs. the game 3 winner. The championship will be at 7:30: game 2 winner vs. game 4 winner.