

Here, There & Everywhere

BLACKBERRY VINES - Meetings of the Blackberry Festival Committee, seeking help and suggestions, will be held Wednesdays, May 3 and 24. Both informal gatherings will begin at 7 p.m. in the Josephine County Bldg. in Downtown Cave Junction. The 25th annual Wild Blackberry Arts & Crafts Festival, with plans to make it spectacular, will be held Aug. 12-13.

BOOKS, CAKES 'N' MORE - From 5:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday April 27, Family Night at Lorna Byrne Middle School will be observed with the theme, "Celebrate Reading." A cake walk and games, plus a Book Fair will be among features. Adults who dress as authors or book characters will receive a special prize.

BE A HERO - Opportunities to help in various ways will be available during the Illinois Valley Family Coalition Community Volunteer Recruitment Fair on Saturday, April 29. Set in the Josephine County Bldg. in Downtown Cave Junction, it will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Many of the valley's nonprofit organizations will be represented to inform the public about their missions so that potential volunteers will know about opportunities. There will be door prizes. The fair will correspond with National Volunteer Week, April 23-29.

TIME TO PRAY - Two gatherings to help observe the National Day of Prayer will be held Thursday, May 4 at noon and 5 p.m. at Valley Evangelical Free Church at Laurel and Old Stage roads. "The need is great," note sponsors, for praying together for the community and nation.

LA CASA BENEFIT - Community Bible Church will hold a bazaar Saturday, May 6 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. to benefit the La Casa Ministry's Building Fund. Knick-knacks, and costume and antique jewelry will be among offerings. (Enter from Lister Street). There will be complimentary cookies and beverages. All bazaar proceeds will go toward construction of home #11 in Tecate, Mexico, Baja California for a family pre-selected by Christian missionary nationals.

WHITHER WEATHER - A summer weather spotter training class will be given May 16 at Wild River Brewing & Pizza Co. in Cave Junction by Ryan Sandler, from the National Weather Service in Medford. No-host dinner will start at 5 p.m., and the class at 6. Anyone can attend. For additional information phone Cheryl & Harry Johnson at 596-2104 or use cherhar@frontiernet.net; or Sandler at ryan.sandler@noaa.gov or phone 776-44303.

NOTEPAD - **ODOT** said that the Seventh Street Bridge closure that has caused so much fun in Grants Pass was to be lifted as of Monday, April 24 ... **Wheelchair basketball**, pitting the Rolling Rogues vs. I.V. Fire District, will be held Wednesday, April 26 in the Evergreen Elementary School gym beginning at 6 p.m. There is no admission charge ... **A jog-athon** at Evergreen Elementary School to help raise money for field trips and award programs will be held Friday, April 28 ... **Free clean clothing** will be given at Takilma Bible Church on Saturday, May 13 from 9-5 ... **Cinco de Mayo** (Friday, May 5) will be observed at Evergreen Elementary School from 5:30 to 7 p.m. with free food, games, music and dinner in the cafeteria and gym ... **A rummage** sale by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church women will be held Saturday, May 6 from 9 to 1 at the church behind CJ Swimming Pool ... **An IVHS Grad Night** benefit dinner with silent auction and fashion show will be held at the school Saturday, May 13 beginning at 5:30 p.m. ... **JoCo Master Gardeners** Plant Clinic has new hours for questions about gardening: Mondays through Thursdays from 9 to 2:30. Phone 476-6613 for additional info ... **O'Brien Country Store** will hold a fund-raiser for Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance on June 10 to celebrate the first anniversary of Jimmy & Salena Su owning the store. A barbecue, games and many other attractions are planned. Watch the "Noose" for details ... **Actual headlines:** *Grandmother of eight makes hole in one. *Two convicts avoid noose; jury hung. *Milk drinkers are turning to powder. *Queen Mary having bottom scraped.

LAST WORDS - The Bible tells us to love our neighbors, and also to love our enemies; probably because they are generally the same people. (G.K. Chesterton)

Letters to the Editor

(Continued from page 2)

demanding that Cessa Vichi resign, I had to laugh about the ignorance being spread in our community by people who seem to only want to hurt the library system.

Cessa is a true gem to have in our library system, and I think it's unfair to judge her when Long doesn't seem to even have a clue about how the library functions.

Long should not be so

quick in his judgments. If he had his facts straight, then I could see his argument, but attacking something he knows nothing about could be called contemptible. Our libraries need support, not some ill-advised husband to a library worker starting rumors about a system that is only trying to serve our community.

It's sad that he thinks spending his time spreading misinformation is helping anyone. He talks about ac-

countability, but where is his for causing problems in a time the libraries need all the support they can get?

I see the damage he is causing by his misinformation. If the libraries close, many children in this valley no doubt could thank him for helping destroy their libraries and taking away all the summer reading activities they need and enjoy.

Is he proud of himself? The fact is that the training money was not paid by the

taxpayers, it was grant money from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Long should get the story right next time.

Cessa used the money the Gates gave them for what it was intended for, training and education to help build a better library system. I applaud Cessa for her efforts to serve our community and save our libraries.

We need more people like her.

I.V. Merchants Association cites chamber linkage

Information about a new organization to work in concert with Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce in efforts to bolster the valley business community were announced recently.

A letter to the chamber board outlining plans of Illinois Valley Merchants Association (IVMA) is signed by the organizers: Bill Moore, president; F. John Abernathy, vice president; Linda Fisher, secretary; and Nancy Lewis, treasurer.

IVMA was formed "to offer specific training, educational and networking opportunities to the business community of Illinois Valley.

"IVMA can supply many of the basic, focused services for Illinois Valley merchants not currently available. There is no intent or desire by IVMA, its directors or staff to duplicate or overlap projects, programs or services currently offered by the chamber of commerce. To do so would be a waste of valuable resources for both groups,"

the letter states.

According to IVMC, its mission "is not in competition with, but is in harmony with the mission of the Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce. Our mission is to create a permanent support network for businesses of all types and residents in Illinois Valley." The mission statement states that it stands:

"To channel the benefits provided to a collaboration of merchant and non-merchant members encompassing Illinois Valley. Those purposes include, but are not limited to, collaborative advertising and sponsorship, and securing business for Illinois Valley merchants on a county, state, and national level."

Also, "to protect Illinois Valley merchants from the effects of crime, and to generally promote the merchant and residential members as well as the economic viability of Illinois Valley; to hold community forums on issues important to the com-

munity; to provide technical mentoring experiences, and to create community partnerships with individuals, Illinois Valley businesses, civic and community organizations."

Also, "to provide other programs and services aimed at improving economic stability within the valley through IVMA programs."

The new group states that some of its main objectives are to:

"Provide frequent and meaningful opportunities for local business owners to meet and network with those owners that share common goals or have common needs.

"Provide monthly workshops to I.V. businesses briefly addressing topics such as product and service pricing; business communications, etiquette and work ethics training; effective advertising; and store layout and appearance."

Additionally, "market research, customer research

and tracking, home-based businesses, employment issues and needs, insurance, and I.V. product branding."

IVMA said that it wants to provide a master community calendar to encompass all local nonprofit meetings, events, and educational opportunities.

As well, it wants to "offer merchant product and service discounts to members on a merchant-to-merchant basis; spearhead and manage a Welcome Wagon-type group to deliver information and sample of local goods and services to new residents."

Other goals are to "partner or provide for an online merchants site, with online newsletter and 'chat' room for small or immediate businesses needs, coordinate a business suggestion box system, and coordinate a master business referral system, encompassing as many identified resources already existing in I.V. as possible."

Additionally, the group

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eligible for free basic membership

Come to our Open House
Friday, May 5th 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Josephine County Building in Cave Junction
P.O. Box 2502, Cave Junction 592-4118