



A HALLOWEEN POTLUCK PARTY was held at Illinois Valley Senior Center Friday evening, Oct. 27. Besides food and visiting, many attendees donned costumes. (Photos by Dale Sandberg for 'Illinois Valley News')



Oregon motorists cruising more at excessive rates
State troopers report more citations for 100 mph and faster; plus 70 to 99 violators

Two recent high-speed traffic stops are reflective of what Oregon State Police (OSP) troopers continue to see -- drivers traveling at dangerous speeds on Oregon freeways and secondary highways.

A preliminary six-month review of OSP enforcement statistics indicates Oregon is on track this year to easily stop and cite more drivers at speeds 100 mph and faster.

On Oct. 15, OSP Trooper Jess Elzy stopped a 1999 Toyota Corolla driven by Michael Jay Mitchell, 19, from Gresham, westbound on Hwy. 26 approaching Gresham at 117 mph. On Oct. 17, OSP Senior Trooper Ken Andrus stopped a motorcycle operated by Cintia M. Schutt, 38, from Vancouver, Wash., westbound on Interstate 84 near Corbett at 132 mph.

In both cases, the operators were cited for the violations with stiffened penalties (higher fines and mandatory minimum 30-90 day suspensions) as a result of a new Oregon law that took effect Jan. 1, 2006.

According to preliminary OSP enforcement data, during the first six months of 2006 OSP troopers issued 258 citations to drivers going 100 mph or faster. This was a 19 percent increase in comparison to citations issued during the same six-month period in 2005 when 217 citations were issued.

Statistics also indicate that OSP troopers are on track this year to match the number

of speed-related citations issued last year to drivers going 70 to 79, 80 to 89, and 90 to 99 mph.

"Where we are seeing the increase are in the higher speed ranges," said Capt. Gerry Gregg, director of the OSP Patrol Services Division. "Citations issued to drivers going 106 mph or faster are on track to easily surpass the number issued last year. In fact, troopers have already given out more citations to drivers going 116 mph or faster during the first six months than in all of 2005."

Gregg also noted definite increases in some areas on Interstate 5 and Interstate 205, both areas where OSP have positioned four of the five unmarked ADEP (Aggressive Driving Enforcement Plan) patrol vehicles to target high speed and other dangerous drivers. Troopers working in these four specially equipped unmarked vehicles have accounted for nearly 15 percent of all the citations, and approximately a quarter of the citations issued on I-5, to these high-speed drivers.

"The ADEP plan is paying dividends since we started the program a couple years ago," Gregg said. "Troopers in marked and unmarked patrol cars are successfully finding some of these drivers, but we know there are many more dangerous and intoxicated drivers that we are not able to stop because our staffing limits how visible and available we are to be in position to find them."

June 2006, the preliminary OSP enforcement data reflects the following on interstate freeways: Twice as many (12) citations have been issued on I-205 as compared with all of 2005 when six were issued.

Troopers issued 23 citations on I-5 between the Oregon/California border and Grants Pass, nearly matching the number (24) issued during all of 2005.

Troopers have already issued about a third more citations (48) from Albany north to Portland as compared to all of 2005 when 35 citations were issued.

Troopers are on track to issue more citations on I-84 from Biggs Junction east to the Oregon/Idaho border.

The statistics also show that young drivers continue to be more likely to drive at high speeds than older drivers are. More than half of all drivers stopped and cited by OSP at 100 mph or faster are between the ages of 15 and 24. More than three-fourths of those were male drivers.

Under authority of the new Oregon law (Senate Bill 568), the Dept. of Motor Vehicles report that driver licenses of convicted high speed drivers are being suspended. Between Jan. 1 and Aug. 31 a total of 212 court-ordered suspensions were posted on those convicted drivers, and the state is on course to suspend approximately 300 drivers for convictions of driving 100 mph or faster.

Dept. of Transportation, excessive speed is a factor in more than half of all traffic fatalities -- and the only factor in 30 percent of these crashes. Deaths and injuries from motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for persons of every age from 3 through 33.

Last year, there were 44,878 reported traffic crashes in Oregon. These crashes resulted in the deaths of 488 people, a 14 percent increase over the last four-year average. In addition, more than 29,000 people were injured.

Electrical safety pushed for contractors: PacPow

Pacific Power is committed to preventing serious accidents and fatalities that can result from contact with electrical facilities.

Contractors, due to the nature of their work, are a key audience for the utility's safety messages.

"Many contractors work near power lines every day," said Carrie Reese, Pacific Power's public safety manager. "Careless actions around power lines and other electrical equipment can have a lifetime of consequences."

Pacific Power offers the following precautions to keep contractors safe:

*Look up. Always be aware of the location of nearby overhead power lines so you don't accidentally lift long items, bump crane booms or raise truck beds into them. Point out power lines at daily briefings, and assume all overhead power lines are energized and potentially dangerous.

*Stay at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines. Keep equipment, vehicles, tools, and people at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines of 50,000 volts or less. Higher voltages require greater clearance. If you must work closer than 10 feet, contact Pacific Power well in advance so safety arrangements can be made.

*Use a safety watch. No equipment operator working alone can safely judge the distance from the equipment to overhead power lines. A designated spotter on the ground has a much better view. The spotter's only job should be to keep you and your equipment a safe distance from overhead power lines and other hazards.

*Phone before you dig. Digging into underground power lines is just as dangerous as contacting an overhead line. In addition to possible injuries, contractors can incur costs associated with repairing damaged lines. Call the local utility locating service at least 48 hours before excavating. For the number of the locating service in your area, phone Pacific Power at (888) 221-7070, visit www.pacificpower.net.

If the vehicle or heavy equipment you are operating contacts a power line, follow these guidelines:

*If you can do so safely, move the machinery or equipment away from the line.

*Stay on the vehicle or equipment until rescue workers say it's safe to get off.

*Warn others to stay away. Anyone who touches the vehicle or equipment, or even the ground nearby, may be injured or killed.

*Have someone phone 911 and Pacific Power immediately at (888) 221-7070.

*If fire or other danger forces you off, jump clear, keeping both feet together and without touching the ground and the equipment at the same time. Shuffle away with little steps, keeping your feet close together and on the ground, or hop away on two feet, keeping both feet together.

*Phone 911 if someone makes contact with electricity and needs immediate medical attention.

*If a line has fallen on the ground or on some other object or piece of equipment, always assume it is energized. Stay clear, keep others away and phone Pacific Power at (888) 221-7070.

To schedule a free safety presentation or to order free safety education materials, phone Pacific Power at (800) 375-7085 or visit Pacific Power at www.pacificpower.net.

SOFCU aiming to aid food bank

SOFCU Community Credit Union is conducting a food drive to benefit the Josephine County Food Bank in Grants Pass and is seeking community help.

Any nonperishable donations that people can afford can be left at any of SOFCU's offices: 103 S. Redwood Hwy. in Cave Junction; and in Grants Pass, 1551 Harbeck Road and 108 N.E. Savage St.

From July through September the food bank distributed 1,955 boxes of food in Josephine County -- and provides food to an average of 6,036 people a month.



THE BOOKWORM
Sponsored by Clear Creek Family Practice

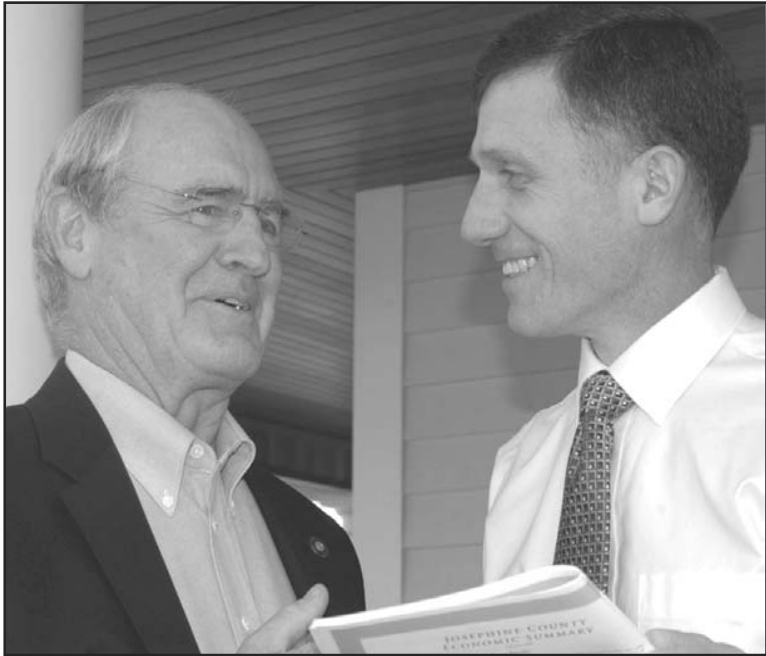
I. V. Branch Library News & Happenings
Library hours: Wed. 12-6, Sat. 1-5
Check out your library online at www.solis.lib.or.us

"A democratic society depends upon an informed and educated citizenry." Thomas Jefferson

Why wait in line? Ask the librarian to show you how to use the self-checkout system and you'll be through in no time, which could be especially helpful during the upcoming holiday season.

You might be interested to learn more about our local area. The Friends of the Illinois Valley Library have donated a number of new books on a variety of such topics, including flora, fauna, hiking, indigenous peoples, weather and geology.

Let's All Stand Behind Ron
He's Concerned for Health Care



Four years ago I made the decision to serve only two terms as your State Representative in Salem. I was hoping that just the right person, qualified to best represent Josephine County's core values, would come along.

I believe this quality leader is Ron Maurer. He and his wife Sheila own a small health care clinic together. He has many years experience in hospital administration in the armed services. Today Ron serves on the board of Three Rivers Community Hospital Foundation and is a fourth generation Oregonian.

Ron knows government is not the solution to a healthier Oregon, but should be an effective partner willing to look for new and creative ways to address our needs.

Please join me in Voting for Ron Maurer as our next State Representative.

Gordon Anderson
-Retiring State Representative-District 3



www.ron-maurer.com

Paid for by the Committee to elect Ron Maurer State Rep-District 3. Kathy Luther, Treasurer.