

Governor on bandwagon in Kim inquiry OK with JCSO

Gov. Kulongoski's investigation in the Kim Family search is welcomed and appropriate, the Josephine County Sheriff's Office (JCSO) said last week.

The agency in late December asked the Oregon State Sheriff's Association for a full review of the search efforts. It added that the governor's recent press release about a separate inquiry only represents a "first round" look at facts relating to the state's support and efforts in the search.

"The review by the sheriffs association of the Kim search is continuing and is being conducted by a highly dedicated group of investigators from around the state of Oregon under the direction of Sheriff Tim Evinger of Klamath County," said JCSO.

"We remain confident that these investigators will do a thorough review of the circumstances surrounding the search for the Kim Family, and we look forward to making the results of the review public as soon as it becomes available," added JCSO.

The Kim Family -- a mother, father and two children from San Francisco -- were the subjects of a massive search-and-rescue effort by numerous agencies including JCSO. The family apparently tried to reach Gold Beach from the Grants Pass area by taking snowbound Bear Camp Road.

Although details conflict, it is indicated that their car became stuck, and the father hiked out for help after several days. He was found Dec. 6, dead of hypothermia, but his family was rescued.

A controversy has arisen due largely to out-of-the-area newspapers and politicians armchair-quarterbacking the search effort. Additionally, Kim's father is claiming that his son's death "didn't have to happen" in connection with the search-and-rescue efforts

Kulongoski opposes Bush strategy for Iraq ramp-up

Gov. Kulongoski has expressed his "strong" opposition to the proposal by President Bush to increase troop levels in Iraq as part of his revised strategy.

The governor highlighted that any increase in troops could ultimately affect Oregon's National Guard troops "here at home" who have already served, as well as the length of deployment for those currently serving overseas.

"Even if the Guard is not included in the initial deployment," the governor wrote in a letter, "more would likely be needed later this year to sustain the greater number of troops."

"Further, Guard members already in Iraq could be there for an extended period of time."

He reiterated his pride in the Oregon National Guard stating that, "I could not be prouder of our men and women for the role they play in protecting Americans at home and abroad. Their sacrifices -- and those of their families -- demand our deep gratitude, respect and admiration."

But he went on to raise his concerns for the strategy

in Iraq to continue to rely heavily upon the National Guard when they have duties at home, including work and their families.

"Already, hundreds of thousands of National Guard troops have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, leaving states with fewer resources -- soldiers and equipment -- to respond to domestic emergencies," the governor's letter continued.

"Furthermore, consider the difficult position of Oregon employers of National Guard members, who play a critical role in Oregon's overall economy. I am concerned it will create economic challenges for employers to continue to be as supportive as they have been of their employee participation in Guard activities if there are increased deployments."

The governor concluded by urging the president to consult with all governors and members of Congress before moving forward with a new strategy in Iraq.

However, Bush subsequently announced a surge in troop numbers to deal with escalating violence in the war-torn country.

Motorboats still permitted

A proposed rule to restrict motorboat operation on the lower Illinois River during low summer flows has been rejected by the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB).

The 3-2 decision came during the board's regular December meeting in Salem.

The purpose of the rule, said OSMB's Ashley Massey, is to ease conflicts between swimmers, rafters and powerboat operators on the lower Illinois by prohibiting motorboat use above the "Big Rock" swimming Hole at river mile 0.5 from June 15 to Sept. 15; and to prohibit nighttime motorboat use on the river year-round.

The board's consideration of the proposed rule was sought by the Curry County Sheriff's Office, which, according to Massey, was "uncomfortable putting their own boats in the river," due to traffic concerns.

Furthermore, property owners nearby had reported several near-collisions among river users. No acci-

dents were reported.

The board agreed instead that a "strong educational and enforcement effort" be made before adopting a powerboat restriction. Staff were directed to convene a working group to focus on "outreach, education, and enforcement."

Should an accident occur or if additional complaints are substantiated, Massey said, the board would readress the issue.

Information about this and other marine board ruling can be found at www.boatoregon.com/News/index.html.

Miller picked for national wrestling coach honor

By SCOTT JORGENSEN
IVN Staff Writer

Illinois Valley High School wrestling coach Ursal "Jay" Miller soon will be recognized for his "going-to-the-mat" achievements during the years.

Miller, a Selma resident, will be inducted into the Oregon Chapter of the National Wrestling Coaches Hall of Fame during a formal ceremony in Wilsonville in April.

"I'm happy to take this honor for the kids at the school," said Miller.

In 1978, the dedicated mentor began a youth program for the IVHS wrestling team. At the time, he was an assistant coach at the high school, and his oldest son was 5 years old.

"We started in 1978 with three wrestlers, one of whom is my assistant now," Miller said. "It just kind of evolved from that point."

When former head coach Wes Brown retired, Miller took his place. But the youth program was already up and running, forming the next generation of valley wrestling champions.

"The whole idea, not only with wrestling, but with any sport, is if you want to compete, you have to have a feeder program," Miller said. "The strength of our high school program is that by the time the kids get into high school, they're already wrestlers and some of them are very accomplished wrestlers."

"I've been sitting back and smiling most of the time, because a lot of the work was already done."

Miller said that much credit belongs to his various assistants during the years, as well as the wrestlers themselves and their families.

"We have a close-knit organization here," Miller



said. "I seem to be getting the limelight, but the praise goes to everybody."

Despite the recent accolades, Miller said that his seven children are still his proudest accomplishment.

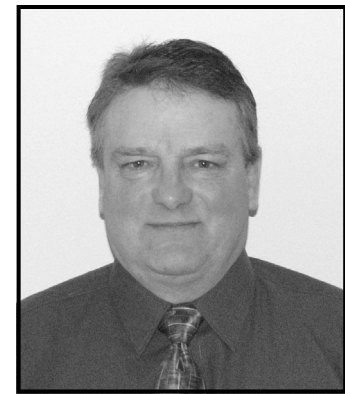
Of the seven children raised by him and his wife, Lynn, all six of their boys were IVHS wrestlers. Their success on the mat was due in part to the very program Miller began when they were young.

"That's the key," said the honoree. "Years ago, we had a good basketball team because the coach back then nurtured those kids up from grade school," Miller said. "I think if we did that with all sports, they would all have a good measure of success."

Under the tutelage of Miller and his aides, the Cougar wrestling team cap-

tured the Skyline Conference title for 2005 and 2006, and took dual title honors.

Additionally, the team has grappled its way to sec-



ond-place finishes at the Oregon Classic in '06 and this year.

As well, the IVHS squad took second place at the state championship last year. And it looks like the

odds-on favorite to take first place this year.

Miller is highly regarded, with recognition including being chosen Citizen of the Year by Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce a few years ago. Plus, he has been singled out by his peers in the Skyline Conference as Coach of the Year more than once.

As part of his dedication to youth and the wrestling program, he was instrumental in construction of the training room at IVHS.

"He's a heck of a coach, and a great guy with a big heart," said one observer. "We're lucky to have a man of his character leading the wrestling program."

(Photos courtesy of Ward Winter)

Related wrestling photos on page 15

Mandatory education cards outlined for Oregon boaters

The Mandatory Boater Education Program is past the half-way point of the age-required phase-in.

Beginning this year, powerboat operators 60 and younger will be required to take a boating safety course and carry their boater education card when operating boats with greater than 10 hp motors.

"This is our largest group of registered boat owners," said MariAnn Koloszar, education coordinator for the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB).

"There are approximately 36,000 registered boat owners between 51 and 60 years old who will need their education cards in 2007," she said.

Boaters have several options to meet the mandatory education requirement. "We encourage boaters to take advantage of classroom courses," said Koloszar.

"Boaters also have an

opportunity to learn about local hot spots and hazards -- information you can only get in a classroom with other boaters," Koloszar added.

County sheriff's offices offers free equivalency exams that are designed for experienced boaters. Approved Internet courses are also available, and course information can all be found at www.boatoregon.com. Prices for the different education options range from free to approximately \$45. Classes and equivalency exams are scheduled to fit boaters' needs.

So far, OSMB has issued nearly 150,000 cards and has one of the top compliances for mandatory education in the nation. The fine for not carrying a card, along with other law enforcement violation fines, was increased in 2006 from \$94 to \$97.

LUZ MOORE TO CONDUCT USDA WORKSHOP FOR LOW-INCOME AND FIRST-TIME HOME BUYERS

Bret Dixon and Susan Cherry representing the Rural Development Division of the USDA will speak at a workshop to be held in the Cave Junction City Hall Council Chamber on Friday, Feb. 9, 2007, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

This workshop is open to the public. They will discuss USDA Programs available to low-income and first-time homebuyers in Josephine County. The focus of the workshop will be USDA home ownership programs that will help low-income homebuyers who would not have a chance to own a home any other way.

Three homebuyers programs will be discussed. The first of these is the Direct Home Ownership Program through which it is possible to receive financing for up to 100% of the loan value with no down payment required. Depending on the buyer's income/household size, the interest rate can be reduced to as low as 1%. The USDA will provide help with the initial process of determining a person's eligibility for this program. They will work to find options and to address any problems. A USDA representative will provide help to complete the application and conduct an orientation interview. This process would provide the applicant an eligibility certificate so that they can shop for a house.

When you have a Direct Home Loan with the USDA, there are several servicing options available for times of hardship or emergency. For instance, if you experience a reduction in income, you may receive

an additional reduction in your interest rate. Or, if you experience circumstances beyond your control that have seriously affected your standard of living, you could receive a payment moratorium for up to two years.

The other two programs to be discussed will be Loan Note Guarantees and a Home Repair Program. USDA provides a loan note guarantee with 100% financing that includes the added feature of NO MONTHLY MORTGAGE INSURANCE in the payment.

This allows the buyer to qualify for and afford more. The Home Repair Program is for very low-income homeowners and offers up to \$20,000 over 20 years at 1%. There is also a grant program for homeowners age 62 and older who cannot afford a loan payment and need to remove health and safety hazards from their home. The grant is for up to \$7,500.

This workshop is being conducted by Luz Moore with the endorsement of Century 21 Harris & Taylor and the IV Chamber of Commerce. This is an effort to educate the people of our community about the opportunities available to them and their families. Seating will be limited. For registration and for those wishing to apply for a housing loan, please phone Luz at (541) 415-1961.



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