

Use of CJ City Hall for sheriff's facility mulled

By SCOTT JORGENSEN
IVN Staff Writer

Josephine County Sheriff Gil Gilbertson met with Cave Junction Mayor Tony Paulson on Friday, July 6 to explore the possibility of using the basement of city hall as a sheriff's office substation.

The basement was once headquarters for the Cave Junction Police Dept. (CJPD), disbanded in the early 1980s when federal funding under the Comprehensive Employment & Training Act expired.

Three cells formerly used to hold prisoners now serve as storage for CJPD equipment and other city materials.

Gilbertson said that he ultimately would like to establish three substations in the rural portions of the county. Facilities currently exist in Merlin and Murphy, as well as in the Josephine County Bldg. in the city of Cave Junction, but are not staffed.

"Decentralized law enforcement is what this county needs," Gilbertson said. "I want to set the Illinois Valley up as a template."

Illinois Valley is more remote than some parts of

the county, Gilbertson said, and Hwy. 199 only provides one way in and out of the valley. As such, a substation could reduce the time that deputies spend driving to respond to valley incidents.

Gilbertson said that he is examining possible use of the former jail cells as temporary holding cells. Doing so could free deputies to patrol and respond to crimes, rather than immediately transporting suspects to the county jail in Grants Pass, he said.

Paulson said that he would not be inclined to charge rent to the sheriff's office for using the facilities, but that such decisions would have to be made by the city council. Contributions to the utility bills at city hall could be considered under such a scenario, the mayor said.

In exchange for the use of space, Paulson said that he wanted a higher priority placed on calls within Cave Junction city limits.

Gilbertson said that his ultimate vision is to establish a "minipolice force" comprised of reservists, volunteers and a sworn deputy.

"I want somebody out here 24/7," Gilbertson said. (Continued on page 8)

Self-defense indicated, as father shoots his son

Preliminary investigation indicates that a rural Grants Pass man, who said that he sometimes gets "crazy," was shot in self-defense by his father.

Josephine County Sheriff's Office (JCSO) continued that the wounded man, Sigmund Ray Caswell III, 27, was shot in his abdomen with a .357-caliber handgun fired by his father, Sigmund Ray Caswell Jr., 54.

The younger Caswell was airlifted by Mercy Flights to Rogue Valley Medical Center (RVMC) in Medford following the incident, reported at 11:04 a.m. Wednesday, July 4.

JCSO deputies responded to 250 Sallsten Road to a report of a man with a gunshot wound. Subsequently, Caswell III was said to be in critical but stable condition in intensive care at RVMC, said JCSO.

Agency detectives reported that witnesses indicate that the son lives on his father's property in a separate dwelling with his common-law wife and her daughter. In connection with the couple arguing, the father ordered the son off the property to cool down.

The son left, but returned three times, and at the third return he was "armed with a baseball bat and making threats to injure his father."

The father ordered his son to leave, but he "advanced on his father with the bat raised in the striking position when he was shot."

A preliminary opinion shared by detectives is that the father acted in self-defense. Full documentation of the case will be forwarded to the county district attorney's office.

Berry fest softball tourney will be organized by Dees

Longtime Illinois Valley resident and sports coach Rick Dees has volunteered to bring back the annual

the '80s and '90s when the festival enjoyed its greatest attendance. "I get the people all the time asking me if it (the Tournament) will ever come back. Now I can tell them, 'Yes'."

Will it be difficult? Said Dees with a smile, "No, there are a lot of players out there, and they will bring their families. It's just a matter of getting the word out."

"The tournament brings a lot of people to the valley for the weekend event. It will be great for everyone."

Although times are still being worked out, the co-ed tournament will be scheduled for Aug. 11 and 12 during the Wild Blackberry Festival.

For more information, Dees can be reached at 592-3105 or 287-0221.



This sign was hung by some humorous wag during the clean-up after a dramatic crash at Pizza Pit (above). The debris pile (top) awaits removal. (Photos by Michelle Binker, Illinois Valley News)

RV driver said improved; others in crash released

'Street people' at site narrowly avoided death

Of five persons injured in a catastrophic crash in Downtown Cave Junction, indications are that only the driver of a large motorhome that destroyed the front portion of Pizza Pit restaurant still is hospitalized this week.

The condition of William E. Mohler, 64, from Livermore, Calif., was downgraded to "serious" early this week at Oregon Health & Science University intensive care unit in Portland. He had been listed in "critical condition."

His wife, Nancy Mohler, 62, was treated and later released from Three Rivers Community Hospital (TRCH) in Grants Pass, and is with him at

OHSU, according to a relative, Sharon McKeown, of Eureka, Calif.

The couple with the Mohlers in the 38-foot-long RV, that smashed explosively into Pizza Pit on Sunday, July 1 shortly before 1 p.m., were released from TRCH Sunday, July 8, said Mrs. McKeown.

She said, "They're sore, but doing OK."

Oregon State Police identified the other couple as Robert Johnson, 69, and Dianne Johnson, 60. Like the Mohlers they are residents of Livermore.

Cave Junction resident Audrey F. Miller, 79, whose car was one of two struck by the (Continued on page 4)

Residents, developers vie over road assessments

CJ Council continues public hearing to July 23 on business, residential improvement district

By SCOTT JORGENSEN
IVN Staff Writer

Some 30 persons packed Cave Junction City Hall for the city council's Monday night, July 9 meeting for a public hearing on a proposed \$2.56 million Local Improvement District (LID) on Redwood Hwy. at the north end of town.

The LID includes work such as Hwy. 199 widening and the addition of a turn lane in connection with projects involving 77 residential and five business sites planned by Willow Development, of Grants Pass.

John Chmelir, of Willow Development, said that the city should add accumulated interim costs to the LID. He stated that the council should approve the developers' assessments proposal based 50 percent on highway frontage and 50 percent on total acreage.

Chmelir characterized

that proposal as the "most fair to all."

The city has so far proposed three separate options. One calls for the developers to pay two-thirds of the LID costs, with the remaining third paid by the other property owners; then 50 percent for area and 50 percent for highway frontage.

Land and frontage owned by ODOT would be excluded.

A second proposal by the city calls for the developers to pay two-thirds of the cost; and other property owners paying a third, with several properties excluded. That proposal also retains the 50 percent frontage and 50 percent area formula.

The city's third option excludes several lots, and utilizes the 50 percent frontage and 50 percent area methodology.

Chmelir said that the city's options "show favorit-

ism" towards some property owners and may lead to "unintended consequences."

Developers paid \$600,000 to acquire right-of-way for three roadway intersections relating to the project, Chmelir said.

"We stepped up to the plate," he said. "We didn't have to do that."

Chmelir added that the developers did so "at the behest" of ODOT and the city, and that they spent 18 months on the LID proposal.

The highway roadwork went from a \$900,000 project to more than \$7 million, Chmelir said, because the developers leveraged their funding for a greater commitment from ODOT.

Many property owners with highway frontage have been paid by ODOT for rights-of-way, Chmelir said. He presented the council a list of those payments.

The developers donated their rights-of-way, and the payments to property owners for those were made with "our money," he said.

Chmelir said that the 50-50 proposal is a "very standard split." He reiterated his opposition to the city's proposed LID funding options, which excludes St. Mathias Episcopal Church.

Holger Sommer, a Hugo resident and land-use activist, spoke in opposition to the developers' proposal. Sommer emphasized that Josephine County is supporting the actual road project, not the LID.

The city can't assess county properties, Sommer said, because it does not have the authority to do so.

"That's impossible," Sommer said. "You don't have the power to do it."

He added that the developers' LID funding plan (Continued on page 12)



ILLINOIS VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT (IVFD) staff and volunteers aided American Medical Response in rescuing a man with a broken left leg out Illinois River Road Sunday afternoon, July 8. The man, identified only as 'Fred' from Grants Pass, was believed to be 56 years old. Firefighters and civilians in the Six Mile Campground area carried the injured man to a waiting AMR ambulance after his leg was splinted. He was down a steep embankment near Illinois River. (Photo by Dale & Elaine Sandberg, IVFD Media Dept.)



Rick Dees

Blackberry Co-ed Softball Tournament.

It will be held concurrent with the 26th annual Wild Blackberry Arts & Crafts Festival in Cave Junction on Aug. 11 and 12.

"We used to do it all the time," he said, referring to