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Some off on Oct. 8

Post offices and banks will be closed Monday, Oct. 8 in observance of Columbus Day, marking the arrival to the Americas 515 years ago by Europeans.

Three Rivers School District schools will be open, although there will be no classes on Friday, Oct. 5 because of a statewide in-service day.

On Monday the 8th, there will be no holiday for the city of Cave Junction, DMV, or Josephine County employees.

Kerby H2O district goal being realized

By WALLY AIKEN
For IVN

"It's been a really neat civics lesson."

This is how John Plute, chairman of the Kerby Water District (KWD), describes his now eight-year odyssey to establish a viable water source for the Illinois Valley community.

Plute said that he had been delivering water to people with holding tanks as a water source. He found the cost to be approximately \$65 per month to the customer and hoped a water district could save people money. His goal is about to be realized.

The surveying of potential sites for a 125,000-gallon holding tank should begin next month, Plute stated. Sites being surveyed are on the ridge line just south of Glendon Road.

Water to fill the tank will come from the city of Cave Junction and be delivered to customers via an 8-inch water main. Also included in the plan is a series of hydrants that will aid greatly in fire suppression.

The cost for the project will exceed \$3 million, Plute said, while noting that grants from USDA Rural Development and Oregon State Community Development will cover 75 percent. The remainder of the funds will come from a general obligation bond passed by Kerby voters in May 2005. The bond allowed a loan of \$550,000 at a 4.5 percent interest rate.

The city of Cave Junction has agreed to provide the water at the same rate it charges its current customers, and Crocker Financial Services, of Cave Junction, has agreed to handle customer billing at a reduced rate. With all factors taken into consideration, Plute said that the minimum charge to customers will be slightly more than \$30 a month, showing a more than 50 percent savings vs. delivered water, he said.

Currently, residents in Kerby are allowed to join KWD for a fee of \$5 per month with no initial connection fee. But Plute emphasized that once the surveying starts next month, new members will be charged for connection costs which can exceed \$2,000.

He said there are currently 70 households in the system that has a capacity to serve approximately 200.

For information about signing up, or other data; contact Sharon Miller at 592-2722, or Illinois Valley Community Development Organization at 592-4440.

Federal funds for timber counties pending

Positive action in Washington, D.C. is occurring that could result in a four-year extension of federal funding for timber-dependent counties such as Josephine County.

U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) lauded passage of the Public Land Communities Transition Act of 2007. It would reauthorize the successful "county payments" law for an additional four years.

The legislation, HR 3058, was introduced in July by DeFazio and Rep. Nick Rahall (D-West Va.), chairman of the House Natural Resources Com-

mittee.

The bill was reported out of committee on Wednesday, Sept. 26, and headed for a House vote. Rep. Greg Walden (R-Ore.) also has been instrumental in pushing for the extension.

* * *

The potential loss of the federal funding, which represents some 65 percent of the Josephine County general fund, will be addressed by county commissioners in Cave Junction on Thursday, Oct. 11.

The town hall is set for

Lorna Byrne Middle School from 6 to 8 p.m.

One also will be held Thursday, Oct. 4 at the same time at North Valley High School.

* * *

DeFazio last week offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to reduce the cost of the bill and to change the offsets used to fund it. The bill was approved by voice vote.

"The county payments program is the lifeblood of rural counties across America who serve as stewards of our federal lands," DeFazio said. "These

rural counties cannot continue to survive indefinitely in crisis mode. They need certainty, and they need time to transition and plan how they're going to operate with reduced federal assistance.

"This legislation accomplishes that goal."

Of Oregon's 36 counties, 32 received payments through the program totaling more than \$282 million last year. Because of the large amount of timber historically harvested from federal land in the Beaver State, Oregon counties have received

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Illinois Valley Cougars are on a hot winning streak. They demolished Sutherlin Friday night, Sept. 28. The offense did well, includ-

ing (above) quarterback Doug Hoskins and running back Eric McConico. Story on page 6. (Photo by Jennifer Newsted, IVN)



Volunteers and staff from Illinois Valley District (IVFD) participate in training exercises Tuesday nights. Although no one wants to encounter tragedy, firefighters must be ready for any situation.

During a recent drill (above) firefighters practice in case of injury to one of their own during an emergency. (Photo by Dale & Elaine Sandberg, IVFD Media Dept.)



A Mercy Flights helicopter took a boy, 9, from the athletic field at Illinois Valley High School Saturday afternoon, Sept. 29. It was a precautionary measure due to his suffering possible back and neck injuries during a Boys & Girls Club football game. Chief Harry Rich of I.V. Fire District said Monday, Oct. 1 that the boy was "fine." (Photo by I.V. News)