



Suri Futures, an alpaca farm in Cave Junction, welcomed visitors Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 29 and 30. Displays of award-winning fleece and products, refreshments and educational material were among features. (Photos by Michelle Binker, *Illinois Valley News*)

Raffenburg, Ellis describe reinstatement of salaries

County commission chairman indicates personal disagreements with daily newspaper and Dave Toler

By **WALLY AIKEN**
For IVN

Citing a long-standing history of animosity between himself and Dennis Roler, editor of the Grants Pass *Daily Courier*, Josephine County Commission Chairman Jim Raffenburg labeled an article published in the *Courier* Wednesday, Sept. 26 as a politically motivated “hatchet job.”

The article stated that Raffenburg and Commissioner Dwight Ellis had agreed to take a 10 percent pay cut prior to their elections, but that both had reversed the pay cut in July at the beginning of the 2007-08 fiscal year.

Ellis reinstated the pay cut three weeks ago, a week and a half prior to announcing his intention to run for re-election. Ellis said that he reinstated the pay cut at the urgings of his family, who said he had made a promise to the voters and that he should live up to it.

Raffenburg, however,

left the pay cut reversal in place, saying that he is “working much harder now.” He said that 60-hour work weeks are the norm, and that special events such as his recent trip to Washington, D. C. require preparation, adding to an already heavy work load.

He also said that he had hoped others would follow his lead, but that there was “no willingness on the part of elected officials or non-contract managers.”

Concerning his stated problems with the Grants Pass newspaper, Raffenburg said that during his campaign for the county commissioner seat, the *Courier* backed his opponent, Jim Brock. He claims a specific example of bias on the part of the *Courier* when Brock questioned Raffenburg’s credential as printed in the Voters Pamphlet.

Raffenburg said that the *Courier* had seen the documentation of his credentials long before Brock questioned them, but still ran the story on page one. A story contradicting Brock’s assertions later was printed on page 12.

Referring to the recent announcement by retired insurance executive Harry Mackin stating his intention to run for Raffenburg’s seat, the commissioner said that “now he’ll become their darling.”

Raffenburg also said that his problems with the *Courier* have been created because, “I don’t work for any special-interest group. My goal has always been limited government and lower taxes.”

The incident also marks the beginning of what Raffenburg termed “a new cold war” between himself and fellow Commissioner Dave Toler. He is characterized by Raffenburg as an environmental extremist. He said that a “clear line in the sand has been drawn between myself and Dave Toler.”

Toler declined to comment on the *Courier* story, but reiterated his support for making the county commissioner positions part time with the daily business of the commission being handled by a county manager. He said he feels that the current pay for the commis-

sioners, at slightly more than \$70,000 annually, is in line with comparable positions in the private sector.

“You get what you pay for,” he added.

Concerning the “new cold war,” Toler stated that he feels, “It is time for leadership to fall in line with the majority of citizens in Josephine County, and that position (which he holds) is in the middle.”

Land group opposes M49

Measure 49 on the Nov. 6 ballot would limit more than 4,000 Measure 37 claims demanding large subdivisions, reported the American Land Institute (ALI) based in Portland, which is against passage of M49, as are many in real estate development.

Approved by 61 percent of voters in November 2004, M37 basically states that land owners must be compensated if a public entity enacts or enforces a new land-use regulation that reduces the fair market value of that property.

In its report on M49, ALI, which studies land-use policy issues, states:

“For voters who thought M37 was not supposed to allow large subdivisions on prime farm and forest land, M49 cancels no claim, but offers an alternative. Instead of subdivisions averaging 25 to 33 lots, M49 would limit divisions to:

*“Three lots on ‘high-value’ farm or forest land, and in groundwater-restricted areas.

*“Four to 10 lots on other land, to the extent that an appraisal shows a land-use regulation reduced value.”

The study also finds that 3,153 M37 claims, or 42 percent of all claims, seeks one to three lots. However, “under M37, even if an owner can prove a loss that would entitle the owner to a ‘waiver’ for one to three houses, relief under M37 might not be worth much.

“This is,” said ALI, “because the courts have ruled that the right to develop via a Measure 37 waiver is ‘personal’ and not transferable; that is, the owner must develop lots before selling.

“For voters who thought M37 was supposed to help ‘the little guy,’ M49 provides a second alternative: the 42 percent of claims seeking one to three lots get approval without proof of loss, and, along with other valid claims, automatic ‘transferability’.”

The ALI report adds its finding that “1,738, or 61 percent of farmland subdivision claims, are in nine Willamette Valley counties, which have only 10 percent of Oregon’s farmland, but nearly half the state’s ‘high-value’ farm land, and 53 percent of the state’s \$4.4 billion in annual farm sales.”

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Pasta with Marinara/meat sauce, beef & bean burrito, chicken burger, Hawaiian pizza, ham & cheese sandwich & garden salad.
FRIDAY, OCT. 5
*Daily Favorites
Nacho Supreme, corn dog, hot dog or Polish dog, spicy chicken burger, supreme or taco pizza, Italian sandwich, & chicken Caesar salad.
MONDAY, OCT. 8
*Daily Favorites
Beef soft tacos, chicken nuggets, spicy chicken burger, vegetarian or sausage pizza, ham & cheese sandwich or fiesta salad.
TUESDAY, OCT. 9
*Daily Favorites
Chicken fajitas, Rib-B-Que sandwich, chicken burger, supreme pizza, roast beef & cheese, garden salad
WEDNESDAY, OCT. 10
*Daily Favorites
Taco salad, chicken or beef rice bowls, spicy chicken burger, taco pizza, veggie sandwich, antipasto salad

DEQ fines reach \$1.7 million

Twenty-five penalties totaling \$429,806 during August were announced by Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

Through August, DEQ has issued 145 penalties totaling \$1,763,823 this year.

The month’s largest penalty, making up more than half of the total, went to California-based Granite Construction Co. DEQ fined the company \$240,000 for numerous water quality violations during its work on

the Hwy. 20 reconstruction project east of Newport in Lincoln County. Granite has appealed.

The second-largest penalty served in August went to Salmon Creek LLC, based in Damascus, Ore., for violations of a key component of its stormwater discharge permit issued for construction work at the Salmon Creek Estates housing subdivision in Sandy.

Salmon Creek LLC appealed the penalty Sept. 7.

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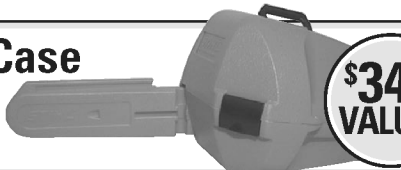
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