

Armed confrontation ends with fatality

Paul Harrison Chesser, 66, died in rural Cave Junction, a short distance south of the downtown area, following a confrontation with deputies during which gunshots were fired. Indications were that Chesser was shot by deputies after he first fired his weapon at them, said Josephine County Sheriff Gil Gilbertson in a news release several hours after the incident.

Subsequently, Oregon State Police issued a news release stating that, “The deputies ordered Chesser to put the firearm down numerous times, but he refused, pointing it at the deputies several times. “During the standoff,” OSP continued, “Chesser pointed the handgun at one of the deputies and gunfire was exchanged.” The incident was initially a disturbance complaint from 28351 Redwood Hwy. said to involve several intoxicated persons. It was reported at 2:03 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 10, Gilbertson said, at the home. It is slightly more than 2 miles south of Downtown CJ, and next to J’s Feed & Tack. Names of the two deputies who fired their weapons, have not been released. The two officers who fired, among four deputies who responded, have been placed on administrative leave for approximately two weeks, the sheriff said. The two other officers who were at the scene likely will be on leave for a week, he said. Interviews of the deputies whose weapons were fired were to begin Tuesday, Nov. 13. Interviews were to

be conducted as a normal protocol when officers are involved in a shooting, Gilbertson explained. The interviews are to be conducted by personnel from Oregon State Police and the county district attorney’s office, he added. The names of the deputies who fired their weapons, said Gilbertson, “are being withheld at this time to cope with this tragic incident. Their names will be released by the appropriate lead agency and the district attorney when appropriate.” Illinois Valley Fire District and American Medical Response personnel were dispatched to the scene after the shooting. They were on-scene only a few minutes; then returned to quarters. Chesser was pronounced dead at the scene, OSP reported. Unofficial sources provided unconfirmed information that the Chesser did not live in the house on the property, but in a fifth-wheel trailer on the site. Sources also said that there was a birthday party that began at a Cave Junction bar, and then moved to the 28351 Redwood Hwy. residence. Regarding the shooting incident, the sheriff provided the following: “At 2:03 a.m. a call was placed from 28351 Redwood Hwy. reporting that

several intoxicated individuals were involved in a verbal and threatening argument. The caller told 911 dispatchers that shots had been fired. “Four sheriff’s deputies were dispatched to the address and arrived at about 2:30 a.m. Deputies confronted an armed male who refused to put down a handgun when ordered to do so. “During the standoff, the armed male fired his weapon at one of the deputies. That deputy, and one other deputy, shot the male, striking the male, resulting in fatal wounds.” It was not revealed whether the deputies involved were regular patrol officers, reservists, or a combination of the two. The sheriff also noted that “per agreed upon protocols between the sheriff’s office, OSP, Grants Pass Dept. of Public Safety and the district attorney, that OSP will be the lead investigative agency in this most tragic incident. “We have confidence,” said Gilbertson, “that all issues related to this event will be investigated thoroughly and completely with all public questions and concerns regarding our conduct and procedures being adequately addressed.” Additionally, the sheriff said that, “Our thoughts, prayers and support are with the deputies and their families who survived this all too frequent and tragic event. “We support them in this time of need, and ask that the public be patient while this incident is being investigated.” Anyone with information about the case is asked to contact OSP at 776-6114, Ext. 236.



(Photo by Michelle Binker, Illinois Valley News)

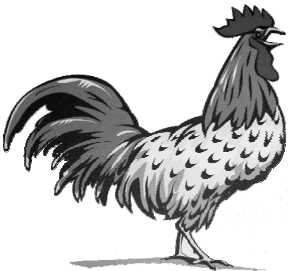
Veterans Day ceremony cites service

Sacrifice, valor and honor demonstrated by U.S. military personnel were highlighted during a Veterans Day ceremony at Cave Junction City Hall Sunday, Nov. 11: At the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, marking the signing of the Armistice that ended World War I hostilities. The brief, heartfelt ceremony was conducted by Glenn Morrison American Legion Post 70 and its Auxiliary. Post Cmdr. Jim Fuller spoke of the sacrifices of veterans, and how helping former members of the Armed Forces in need is a worthy, fulfilling goal. The principal speaker was Tina Haemmerlein, an Auxiliary member who is Dept. of Oregon Legislative Chairman. A memorial Poppy Wreath recalling the poem about Flanders Field during WWI, was placed on the monument at city hall by Auxiliary member Ellie Buell, who serves as Dept. of Oregon President. Haemmerlein provided a bit of Veterans Day history, noting that it is observed to honor American veterans of all wars. It originally was known as Armistice Day, she said. She quoted President Eisenhower, who said, in 1954 after signing the bill that established Veterans Day, “On that day, let us solemnly remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly, on the

seas, in the air, and on foreign shores, to preserve our heritage of freedom.” Haemmerlein also said, in part, “The willingness of America’s veterans to sacrifice for our country has earned them our lasting gratitude. On this Veterans Day 2007, we celebrate and honor the men and women who have fought to protect the democratic ideals that are the foundation of our country. “Today, our veterans inspire new generations of American military personnel as they work to defeat terrorism and advance toward peace. I encourage all Americans to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our military, and to pray for our veterans of the past, present and future -- not just on this day, but every day of the

year.” Other ceremony participants included Don Stafford, Frank Mowery, Laurel Warden, Joyce Mustol and Hazel Smith. Fuller concluded the ceremony by recalling that two young men, Wesley Woodcock and Floyd Wells, “passed through Barracks 146, which was in Cave Junction. “They went on to Camp White (now White City in Jackson County) before deploying to Europe for service in World War I,” he said. He and others then went to a marble monument, now 100 years old, to pay their respects to the two young men and many others who served in “the war to end all wars.” The monument is near Family Tree Garden Center in Cave Junction.

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Property rights revision measure passed

Josephine County voters showed strong opposition to revise a property rights measure approved in 2004, but Measure 49 was approved statewide in the Tuesday, Nov. 6 vote-by-mail special election. Measure 50, seeking a higher tax on cigarettes to fund health care for certain disadvantaged children, was defeated in Josephine County and statewide. In the county, there were 18,559 “No” votes cast against M49, and 9,740 “Yes” votes. County voters also balloted to extinguish M50 with 21,093 “No” votes vs. 7,330 in favor. Voter turnout was 57.5 percent in Josephine County. M49 will allow rural land owners to construct some homes, three in most cases and as many as 10 for some. But the measure puts the brakes on larger subdivisions and industrial development allowed under Measure 37, passed three years ago. In the Voters Pamphlet, there were 69 arguments in favor, with submitters paying \$500 each for their statements. Among supporters were 1000 Friends of Oregon, Illinois Valley resident Dorothea Hover-Kramer, Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), the League of Women Voters, Oregon State Fire Fighters Council, Oregon Farm Bureau, and Oregon Association of Realtors. “No” votes against the property rights measure were supported in the Voters

Pamphlet by 48 submitters. They included the Josephine County Farm Bureau, Jackson County Farm Bureau, Oregonians in Action, several attorneys, and Stop Taking Our Property PAC. M50 proposed raising the state tax on a pack of cigarettes by 84.5-cents a pack to \$2.02 per pack. It would have been one of the highest rates in the country, behind only Rhode Island and New Jersey. Supporters of the cigarette tax increase for children's health apparently could not convince voters that it was improper to revise the state Constitution.

The tobacco industry paid for a record-breaking \$12 million television advertising campaign. The result showed Nov. 6, as voters snuffed M50 by a 60 percent to 40 percent margin. Some have pointed out that it is not unprecedented to place a proposal such as a cigarette tax in the state Constitution. Oregonians have amended the it 240 times during the past 100 years. (Editor’s Note: Information for the preceding article came from several sources including the Josephine County Clerk’s Office).

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Time for the Illinois Valley Family Coalition
"Caring Tree"

This project collects holiday wishes from I.V. senior and disabled persons in home care. Those wishes are displayed on ornaments on our Caring Tree. I.V. residents can then select ornaments and assure them a gift for the holidays. More than 140 applications were mailed to eligible seniors and disabled persons this year.

Please help to make their holiday wishes come true. The Caring Tree will be decorated the week before Thanksgiving and you can pick your ornament between 11/19 and 12/14. All gifts must be returned to the Coalition by 12/17 for distribution.

Those gift requests that are not met will be provided by the Coalition. Cash donations to help with those requests will be appreciated. We guarantee you will be filled with great joy when you participate in this program.

Call or stop by the Coalition.

Sample of requests received so far:

- 90 year old female ~ hair items.
- 88 year old male ~ flannel shirt.
- 66 year old male ~ new white t-shirt.
- 95 year old male & 94 year old female ~ new slippers.
- 48 year old male ~ diabetic ID necklace.



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