

Rumor of the Week

Dreams of Pulitzer fly away from I.V. Airport saga

By **WALLY AIKEN**
For IVN

The rumor this week is one being bandied about by those in favor of downgrading Illinois Valley Airport to a designation involving what size aircraft can land at the site.

This rumor is accepted as truth by many because it seems logical. Also because it is directed against Josephine County Airports Manager Alex Grossi, who seems to be seen as evil incarnate by the proponents of downgrade. The use of this particular rumor seems designed to make Grossi appear to be totally self-serving and disingenuous.

In fact, the rumor just confuses the issue by making legitimate discussion more difficult. But logic has never stood in the way of the Illinois Valley Rumor Mill (IVRM) in the past, so:

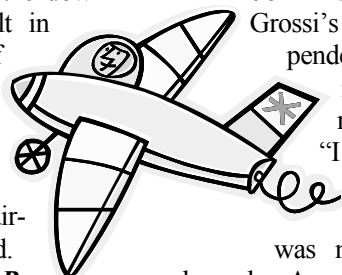
The Rumor Of The Week -- Alex Grossi opposes downgrading the airport because part of his pay is a percentage of any grants the air-

port receives, and the downgrade would result in the loss of most of these funds. He would therefore lose a substantial portion of his income should the airport be downgraded.

The Truth Behind The Rumor --When I first heard this rumor it had that ring of truth to it that told me, "You need to check this out." I mean, if I could prove that selfish reasons were behind any of the participants' motives, it would be a great muckraking story. Reporters live to rake muck.

My first step was to ask Grossi straight out, "Do you receive any monetary compensation from any grants to the airport?" I awaited his response with poised pen eager to record the details of potential scandal. "No," he said. Well, that was no fun.

Determined to unearth a major money scandal I was not easily deterred. I went to a county commissioner for more information. I asked this



commissioner if Grossi's pay was dependent on grant money and received an, "I don't know" answer.

Clearly this was not going as planned. As I dejectedly turned to leave, this commissioner's parting statement revived my hope. "Just where does his pay come from?" I was asked. "It doesn't come out of the general fund," he said.

Any competent reporter would have immediately questioned the commissioner about his lack of ability to determine the source of pay for a county manager. But being desperate and not too bright I believed I was being fed one of those "wink, wink" leads that turn into Pulitzer

prizes. I dug deeper for the real story.

I discovered that a proponent of downgrading the airport also had been down this path and that encouraged me. Certain of discovering felonies galore I checked out the records.

It seems that Grossi's pay is derived from three sources. Seventy percent comes out of money generated from the income produced by Merlin Airport. Thirty percent is supposed to be generated by income from I.V. Airport, but because it doesn't generate enough revenue, an economic development fund is used to make up the shortfall.

As my dreams of a Pulitzer faded into the sunset I realized a sad truth. If only rumors were true, I could have been a contender.

Portland-Vancouver link eyed

Gov. Kulongoski and Washington state Gov. Gregoire have announced a bistate commitment to replace the Interstate highway bridges that connect Vancouver and Portland. Details were not immediately announced.



(From left) Sgt. John Justema, Sheriff Gil Gilbertson, and Sgt. Edye Deubert. (Photo courtesy of JCSO)

Sheriff's office promotes two to rank of sergeant

Two deputy corporals have been promoted to the rank of sergeant, said Sgt. Jeff Michael of Josephine County Sheriff's Office (JCSO).

Promoted are Edye Deubert, who has become the first woman advanced to Patrol sergeant in the 167-year history of JCSO; and John Justema.

Deubert began her career in law enforcement in July 1998, working with the Josephine Marijuana Eradication Team. With JCSO she has worked in Corrections and the Detectives Division, and was promoted to corporal in November 2005.

Besides her regular responsibilities and assignments, she took on the task of coordinating and overseeing the reserve program, and worked with Search And Rescue.

Noted Michael, "Despite

being laid off due to budget cuts, she remained loyal to the county and sheriff's office." Deubert is married to Jer Deubert and has two sons, Josua and Miles.

Justema has been a full-time deputy since September 1990. He was promoted to Patrol corporal in February 2000. He has worked in Corrections and was part of the former sheriff's SWAT Team in the early 1990s.

"John has been instrumental in obtaining grants and donations for the sheriff's office to have up-to-date equipment in the patrol vehicles," said Michael. "He also remained dedicated to the sheriff's office during a lay-off period.

Justema's wife's name is Julie, and they have a son, Christopher; and a daughter, Natalie.

Tales from the Police Blotter

(Editor's Note: Factual information for 'Blotter' is provided by official law enforcement agencies. All persons listed are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. Charges can be amended or dismissed.)

Friday, Feb. 1

*Following a report at 2:40 p.m. by a concerned caller regarding a man intoxicated and repeatedly falling over in the 100 block of N. Redwood Hwy., an uncooperative Otis Jones was lodged in Josephine County Jail because his probation officer said to do so.

*Someone attempted to purchase checks from an online source using her account without permission at a valley bank, a woman reported.

*Some six to eight loose cows were corralled, and their owner was contacted in the 2000 block of Holland Loop at 4:42 p.m.

*Following an accident on Reeves Creek Road reported around 7 p.m., Job Christopher McGhee, 21, was cited on charges of driving under the influence of an intoxicant (DUII) driving with a suspended license (DWS) and driving uninsured. The vehicle was impounded. His blood alcohol content was listed at .14.

*A continuing problem with people sleeping under the back porch and lighting fires in the trash can of a business in Downtown Cave Junction was reported.

*A woman in the 36000 block of Redwood Hwy. said that her neighbor was attempting to build a fence on her property. She reported that she pushed the pile of wood off her property with her vehicle while her neighbor yelled profanities.

*Around 7 p.m. a woman in the 36000 block of Redwood Hwy. said that her neighbor destroyed her fence and tried to run her down with a vehicle.

*The Oregon State Police agency was notified that "some kids" were throwing rock-filled snowballs at passing cars on Redwood Hwy. near Draper Valley Road at 11:14 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 2

*George Allen Van Nuys, 42, was cited on a federal charge of possession of a controlled substance at Hogue Meadows on Takilma Road at 1:24 p.m.

*A resident in the 500 block of Schumacher Street noted a strong odor of marijuana coming from a neighboring apartment.

*Wade Kelly Holder, 32, was cited on a charge of DWS on Holland Loop at 7:31 p.m. His vehicle was impounded.

*Deputies were attempting to track a 4x4 pickup that had been "spinning out" at Illinois River "Forks" State Park. The driver headed toward the river and neither he nor the vehicle were located.

*A driver stuck in snow on Happy Camp Road requested a tow at 11:45 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 3

*Two young men were seen walking into "Forks" state park at 12:26 a.m. They

were advised of park hours and told to leave.

*Drug paraphernalia, found after a guest had checked out of a motel room, was confiscated.

*Someone attending a gathering on Ken Rose Lane was asked to move their car as they'd parked on the roadway.

*James B. Rankin, 52, was lodged in county jail on charges of felony and misdemeanor attempted eluding, reckless driving, reckless endangering, and interfering with a peace officer following a pursuit on Westside Road at 8:42 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 4

*Aaron M. Baker, 18, was cited on charges of DUII, refusing a breath test, DWS and driving without insurance on Redwood Hwy. near Westside Road at 12:45 a.m.

*Five golf carts were removed from storage at Illinois Valley Golf Course without permission and were missing for a time. All were damaged by hot-wiring; one was damaged extensively.

*A young runaway person who needs medical attention was reported in rural Cave Junction.

*Copper wire was reported stolen from a subdivision under construction on Green Valley Drive. Also, a demolished golf cart was discovered.

Tuesday, Feb. 5

*Contacted on N. Junction Avenue, Chaz Lindsey, 23, was cited on two warrants charging failure to appear in Medford Municipal Court on charges of second-degree theft.

*An uninjured man was reported crawling on S. Redwood Hwy. in the 400 block at 8:30 a.m.

*In the 27000 block of Redwood Hwy. a woman reported theft of a pink wallet containing cash and IDs. She

thinks she knows who did it.

*On Norman Road a wolf-hybrid puppy was reported to be running loose, and it was stated that it tried to attack someone.

Wednesday, Feb. 6

*A report of identity theft was made in Cave Junction.

*Robert Breakfield, 44, was cited on warrants charging failure to comply with terms of probation on original charges of DUII and second-degree criminal mischief.

*A Waldo Road resident who reportedly slit his own throat was transported to Three Rivers Community Hospital in Grants Pass.

*Located around 9 p.m. in Downtown CJ, Allison Marie Gowney, 44, was arrested on a warrant charging escape from a correctional institution. She also was charged with possession of a controlled substance methamphetamine.

*A man said that his ex-girlfriend had been phoning him several times per day, and he wanted it to stop.

*William D. Sheff, 53, was cited on a charge of improper right turn, and warned for having no proof of insurance on E. Lister Street.

Thursday, Feb. 7

*Complaints of loud music came from the 5000 block of Westside Road at 4:44 p.m.

*A driver on Redwood Hwy. was warned for having inoperative tail-lights on a trailer. After repairing a loose connection, the driver was warned for having a white light to the rear of the vehicle.

*Warned at 8:26 p.m. for a defective license plate light, Cordon Burnell Wise, 30, was cited at 9:04 p.m. for failure to obey a red light in Downtown CJ.

*Several drivers were warned about speeding or defective equipment around Cave Junction.

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Pasta with Marana/meat sauce, beef & bean burrito, chicken burger, Hawaiian pizza, ham & cheese sandwich & garden salad.
FRIDAY, FEB. 15
*Daily Favorites
Nacho Supreme, corn dog, hot dog or Polish dog, spicy chicken burger, supreme or taco pizza, Italian sandwich, & chicken Caesar salad.
MONDAY, FEB. 18
President's Day
NO CLASSES
TUESDAY, FEB. 19
*Daily Favorites
Chicken fajitas, Rib-B-que sandwich, chicken burger, supreme pizza, roast beef & cheese, garden salad.
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 20
*Daily Favorites
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