

Inside:

Blast from past
Heritage Day at Kerbyville Museum
Page 5

Man with a plan
Candidate Lesh offers platform
Page 6

Losses listed
Home foreclosure rate extreme
Pages 10-13

Here to help
LBMS students aid Haitian victims
Page 14

Sports round-up
Golf, baseball, softball events
Page 15

Dudley pledges reforms in taxes

Republican gov candidate talks issues, vision

By **SCOTT JORGENSEN**
IVN Staff Writer

Chris Dudley, a Republican gubernatorial candidate and former Portland Trailblazers basketball star, discussed his plans for Oregon's future during the Wednesday, April 14 talk show on Grants Pass-based KAJO Radio.

Dudley moved to Oregon in 1993 to play professional basketball. Prior to that, he graduated from Yale University, where he majored in economics and political science.

After retiring from basketball, Dudley became a certified financial planner. He worked as the senior vice president of a Portland-based investment firm and is now the partner of a similar operation. In 1994, he founded the Dudley Foundation to focus on providing programs to children with diabetes.

He has traveled throughout the country and testified before the U.S. Senate regarding diabetes.

Dudley was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at the age of 16.

"It really taught me about dealing with adversity at a young age," he said. "It really shook my world."

Although having the disease made his professional basketball dreams a "long shot," Dudley said, he overcame the odds, becoming the first National Basketball Association player with diabetes.

The race for Oregon's top elected office features former Gov. Bill Sizemore and former Secretary of State Bill Bradbury, both of whom have considerable political experience. Dudley said that the fact that he has never held elected office is "a very good thing," as he doesn't have the "political scars from the partisan fighting."

He said that his gubernatorial bid was prompted by

(Continued on page 3)



Hundreds of protesters seeking changes brought by the current administration participated on Thursday, April 15. (Photos by Ali Madjdi for *Illinois Valley News*)



Community volunteers were working early this week through Wednesday, April 21 to construct a bridge at Illinois River Forks State Park, on the south side of Cave Junction. As part of the effort, backers obtained 35-foot long logs. (Photo provided)

LBMS in top 100 schools

Lorna Byrne Middle School in Cave Junction has been honored as among the Top 100 Schools in Oregon in a program of Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth (CTY).

"We love sharing this good news with the community," said LBMS Principal Damian Crowson.

Stated Johns Hopkins CTY, of Baltimore: "We looked at the top 100 schools by state to determine the number of student enrollments we received into our annual Talent Search, and we're pleased to let you know Lorna Byrne Middle School received this honor."

"We hope that this achievement will be a source of pride for you, your staff, students and families."

"We're very thankful for your participation, of course, but we are also mindful of what this award says about your school. It suggests that you have a solid core of very high-achieving students."

"It also suggests that you look out for your top students' best interests by encouraging them and their parents to investigate outside academic options like CTY."

Crowson noted, "This recognition is because of the hard work and dedication of our students, families and LBMS staff."

"I thank them all."



Tax Day Tea Party crowd wants end to federal growth

By **SCOTT JORGENSEN**
IVN Staff Writer

Hundreds of people swarmed in front of the Josephine County Courthouse in Downtown Grants Pass on Thursday, April 15 for a tax day Tea Party protest.

The event was one of many being held in Oregon and nationally. A similar protest in Grants Pass last year drew some 1,500 people.

Participants of all ages hoisted U.S. flags and a series of signs while drivers passing on Sixth Street honked their vehicle horns in support, and a series of speakers took to the podium.

The first speaker was Bill Waggoner, chairman of the Illinois Valley Chapter of the 9-12 Project. That group organized the protest.

Waggoner read a list of rules, urging protesters to be respectful and clean up after themselves. He then said that the rally should be focused on "what Congress just did to us" by passing national

health-care reform legislation.

Many states, Waggoner said, have filed lawsuits questioning the constitutionality of that bill (Oregon did not), and others plan to do so. Waggoner cited some court cases to support his claims regarding the bill, and discussed the importance of elected officials upholding their oaths of office.

Ron Gibson, Southwest Oregon Mining Association vice president, shared the story of the battle that inspired Francis Scott Key to write *The Star Spangled Banner*, in which the American flag was still standing, despite direct bombardment from British military forces.

Josephine County Commissioner Sandi Cassanelli expressed her enthusiasm for the First Amendment rights granted to U.S. citizens.

"Here in Josephine County, we see those rights gradually eroded," she said. Citizens are being denied

(Continued on page 7)

Medical marijuana work ruling issued

By **SCOTT JORGENSEN**
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Medical marijuana advocates suffered a pair of setbacks last week, as separate court decisions spelled out clear limits for the program approved by voters in 1998.

On Thursday, April 15, the Oregon Supreme Court overturned a previous Court of Appeals ruling in the case of Emerald Steel Fabricators Inc. vs. the Bureau of Labor & Industries (BOLI).

"The decision now means that employers can be assured that they can consistently enforce their zero tolerance drug policies without regard to an employee's medical marijuana registry status," stated Associated Oregon Industries (AOI).

The Emerald case stemmed from the termination of Anthony Scevers from his job as a steel press operator, according to AOI. Scevers held a medical marijuana card and used the drug up to three times per day, AOI said.

Upon termination, Scevers filed a charge with BOLI, AOI said, alleging discrimination due to disability and the company's failure to accommodate him. BOLI issued an order in Scevers' favor and the Court of Appeals agreed in a June 2008 ruling.

AOI characterized the ruling as a "fairly technical opinion that focused more on procedural issues than it did on the underlying issue of drug use in the workplace."

"However, the decision gave comfort to medical marijuana advocates and left most employers in a state of confusion, unsure about the legal boundaries and what was permitted in the workplace," AOI said.

AOI filed a brief of the court brief as the case made its way to the state Supreme Court. In a 5-2 opinion, that court reversed the lower court's decision, and ruled

that although medical marijuana still is excluded from state criminal statutes, it is an illegal drug under federal law.

"Therefore, no employer could be forced to accommodate the use of an illegal substance because state disability discrimination law specifically says that illegal drug users are not protected by the statute," AOI said.

In light of the ruling, AOI said that "employers should feel free to consistently apply zero-tolerance policies, consistently disciplining those who violate the policy and refusing to hire those applicants who fail drug screens."

AOI recommends that such policies be issued in writing to applicants and employees.

J.L. Wilson, AOI's vice president, said that the organization has tried to address the issue of what he characterizes as "forced accommodation" to the state's lawmakers on multiple occasions.

"We've made that exact argument in front of the Legislature for three consecutive sessions, and they absolutely botched it," Wilson said. "It took the Supreme Court to finally inject common sense into this."

The Oregon Court of Appeals also ruled last week to uphold the conviction of a California man who argued that his physician from that state had authorized his use of medical marijuana. The patient, stopped for speeding near Portland in November 2006 while taking a friend from California to Washington, was arrested for having more than 2 pounds of marijuana in his car.

However, legal battles regarding medical marijuana are far from over. Efforts are under way to put a measure on the November ballot to further expand access to the medical marijuana program.

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