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County to reduce Old Stage speed

By SCOTT JORGENSEN
I/V Staff Writer

Throughout the years, Dave Toler, a Josephine County commissioner and Illinois Valley resident, has heard countless complaints regarding speeding motorists on Old Stage Road in the city of Cave Junction.

But the most immediate obstacle to changing that was the fact that the stretch of roadway always has been under the jurisdiction of the state of Oregon.

But on Wednesday, July 21, Toler and his fellow commissioners were set to finally fix the issue with an official order.

Last summer, there were a few instances of bicycle vs. vehicle collisions near Old Stage and River Street. That prompted some citizens to request that the board of commissioners intervene.

"Having been out there for 21 years myself, I know that Old Stage has been a problem for a long time," Toler said. "I certainly am aware that there is a problem. I know it's been complained about for years."

Newer housing developments and the increased urbanization of the area have further exacerbated the issue, Toler said. However, the commissioners had the ability to begin the process of petitioning the state to lower the speed limit, which previously was unsigned.

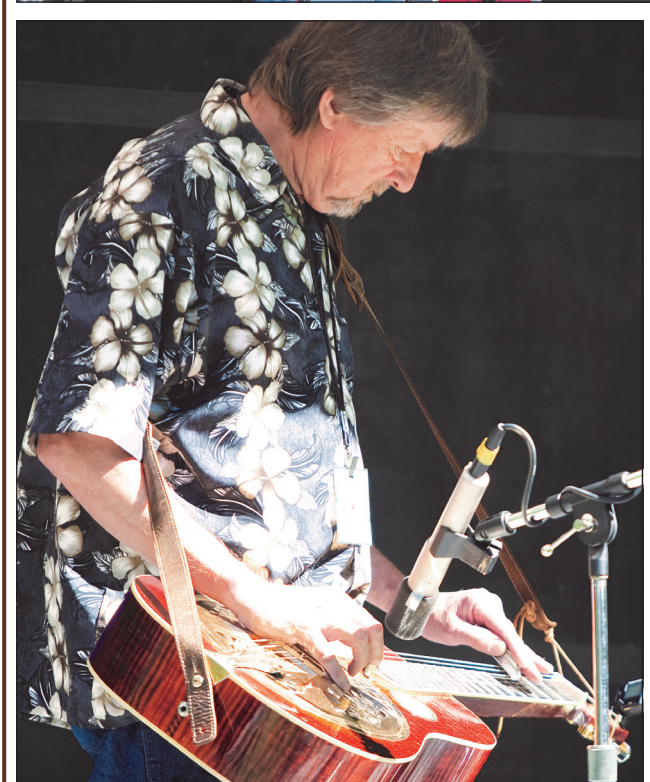
"We do have the ability to petition for it, and that's what we did," he said.

The county public works department conducted a traffic count, which was submitted to Oregon Dept. of Transportation (ODOT).

"We have to be able to show the state that there's a certain amount of traffic and speed out there," Toler said.

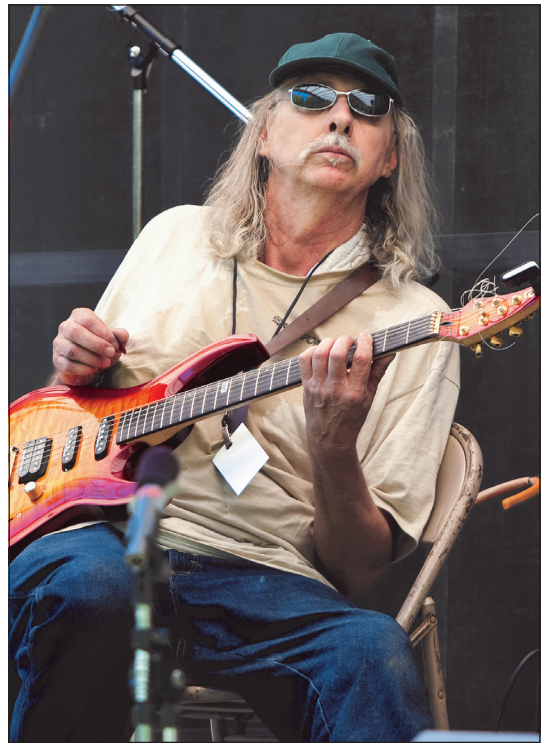
ODOT gave the green light, so to speak, for the limit along the section of Old Stage from Laurel Road to E. River Street to be lowered to 35 mph. Toler said that signs posting the limit soon will be purchased by the county.

"This is one of the great examples of people having concerns that they take to their local government," he said. "It will make for a safer community out there."



The seventh-annual Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce-sponsored Siskiyou Bluegrass Festival was held on Saturday, July 17 at Lake Selmac. Featured were performances by (From top) Laurie Lewis & Tom Rozum, Eight Dollar Mountain, Jefferson, The Goldman Family and Eastfork. An ad hoc band (bottom left) prepares to perform in the Band Scramble, a popular event that invites participation from audience mem-

bers. Fair weather contributed to the overall success of the well-attended event. More photos on page 14. (Photos by Michelle Binker, *Illinois Valley News*)



Arraignment set in embezzlement case

By SCOTT JORGENSEN
I/V Staff Writer

On June 30, in connection with the loss of some \$56,000 from an Illinois Valley nonprofit organization, Robin Wilson was booked on charges of identity theft, aggravated identity theft, first-degree forgery and two counts each of first-degree theft and aggravated first-degree theft.

Booked into Josephine County Jail in Grants Pass, Wilson, 50, a former Cave Junction resident, was being held on \$52,500 bail.

The criminal charges against her are based on allegations that she stole more than \$80,000 from the Illinois Valley-based Forestry Action Committee (FAC), a nonprofit organization where she worked for eight years.

According to a Josephine County Sheriff's Office (JCSO) incident report narrative, Wilson is accused of forging the signatures of two members of the FAC Board of Directors, and altering 36 checks from the organization between January 2006 and October 2008.

Court documents state: "Numerous irregularities were located in the Forestry Action Committee's bank



Robin Wilson (JCSO photo)

records. A total of 36 checks were identified as suspicious. The 36 suspicious or forged checks resulted in a loss to Forestry Action Committee of \$59,026.58."

Wilson also is alleged to have used a debit card issued to FAC and Susan Chapp, its executive director, on 108 occasions between July 2007 and November 2008. Documents state that although Wilson was not authorized to use the card, it was used in transactions at several places, including JD's Sports Pub in Grants Pass and the online gaming site, BigFishGames.

Those debit card transactions totaled \$24,455.74, court documents state, adding that numerous cash withdrawals by Wilson are alleged to have occurred, with

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Protectionist policies promoted by author

By SCOTT JORGENSEN
I/V Staff Writer

The downside of U.S. free trade policy was discussed by author Ian Fletcher on the Wednesday, June 30 KAJO Radio talk show, based in Grants Pass.

Fletcher is an adjunct fellow at the San Francisco office of the U.S. Business & Industry Council, a think tank founded in 1933. He has written the book, *Free Trade Doesn't Work—What Should Replace it and Why*.

Politicians still are reluctant to admit that free trade has become a problem, Fletcher said. He noted that the Obama administration currently is pursuing such an agreement with South Korea.

"The basic reality is that in the last 10, 15 years, the U.S. economy has lost the ability to generate any new jobs," Fletcher said.

Despite its rapid economic growth, U.S. trade partner China still is a very poor country, he said. Even relatively affluent areas abroad cannot afford to buy

American goods, he said, and tend to have export barriers.

Fletcher stated that from the time of independence to the end of World War II, the United States of America was a protectionist nation, which helped make the country an economic powerhouse.

Practicing free trade with poor, low-wage countries like China and India threatens the wages of working Americans, he said, as there are millions of people there willing to work for "absolute peanuts."

For the past 100 years, he continued, U.S. policies that have struck a balance between having free markets and reasonable restraints have worked well. As a result, the USA has environmental and labor laws and institutions such as the Securities & Exchange Commission to help regulate commerce, he said.

One common myth about free trade is that large companies have no allegiance to any particular country, Fletcher said, and that national boundaries are rapidly disappearing. (Continued on page 6)

Volunteers keep Illinois Valley Golf Course in full swing

By SCOTT JORGENSEN
I/V Staff Writer

Most days, Suzie Kennedy can be found behind the front counter to greet visitors at the Illinois Valley Golf Course in Cave Junction.

It's nothing new for Kennedy, as she's been doing it for around four years.

But in November 2008, Kennedy was laid off, having become a casualty of the course's deteriorating finances. The course was closed to the public until March 2009, and then resurrected by a volunteer board of directors, which decided to handle much of the maintenance and operations.

Kennedy, meanwhile, grew restless after months of drawing unemployment. She

agreed to start volunteering at the course and did so for about a year and a half.

Those efforts have paid off for the board, Kennedy and the course. In fact, operations are going so well that Kennedy was rehired for her previous job approximately a month ago.

The past few years have been somewhat tumultuous for the course, and its fortunes have risen and fallen with those of the town and the overall economy.

It wasn't too long ago that plans were made to begin expanding the course to 18 holes, with three separate subdivisions set to wrap around it. The course even spent nearly one year in escrow as the housing market

soared nationally and development in Cave Junction grew at levels never before seen.

That bubble eventually burst, and the grandiose visions for the golf course faltered accordingly.

Now, the course is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week. Kennedy said that the board of directors was concerned about the possibility of burning out its volunteers.

"They know it wasn't going to last forever," Kennedy said. "It's been a job keeping enough volunteers to keep it open that much."

Volunteers still do much of the maintenance, but someone has been hired to water the course at night for the

scorching summer months.

"The course has never, ever looked so pretty or so nice. It's in great shape," Kennedy said. "It looks really nice out there. It's really pretty."

She said that golfers often are waiting at the course when it opens in the morning. On a good day, she said, approximately 40 people play at the course. In recent weeks, people from as far away as Scotland and Germany have come to hit the links, Kennedy said.

Tournaments recently held at the course have been very successful, she said; weekends tend to be busy, and the financial bottom line is "much better."

The annual youth program ended Thursday, July

15, but twilight golf leagues have been in full swing on Monday and Wednesday nights. And although overall membership is down, Kennedy said, many former members still use the facility.

Summer rates are \$12 for nine holes; \$18 for 18 holes. Carts can be rented for \$8 for nine holes and \$11 for 18.

The biggest concern right now, she said, is making enough money to maintain the course during the winter.

At this point, it's difficult to determine what the future may hold for I.V. Golf Course, as it still is listed for sale. But that's fine with Kennedy, because like many Americans right now, she's just happy to have a job — especially one that she loves.