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City council discusses park, Blackberry Fest

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By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

In a busy night for the Cave Junction City Council, Willa Gustavson was sworn in to Position Four at the regular meeting Monday, Feb. 14, with County Commissioner Simon Hare in attendance.

Gustavson was one of four people who applied for the position and was nominated shortly after the meeting began. Councilman Margaret Miller reminded those in attendance that other spots would soon open in the budget committee and planning committee.

Members of the Ford Leadership Institute presented a slide show highlighting the steps of the Jubilee Park improvement project, including new playground equipment, site excavation, wheelchair access and other steps in the process.

"We have a list of things we want to do and the playground is only the beginning," said Ford Foundation member Tim Leyba. "It's the hub of our community."

Ford Foundation and Leadership Institute members also commended the many people who agreed to help pitch in, whether with donations or materials.

Hare attended the meeting in part to show support for the community's ability to come together for projects such as Jubilee Park.

"It's a great testament to what the community can do when it decides to," Hare said.

Hare also mentioned grants in the works such as Safe Route to Schools to build sidewalks between Illinois Valley High School, Lorna Byrne Middle School and Evergreen Elementary.

Hare brought up the increase of rabies cases, including the most recent of a coyote found at Laurel Hill Cemetery. He added that if the coyote tests

positive, it will mean seven confirmed cases in the Valley since an infected goat was discovered about a year ago.

After the Jubilee Park presentation, council members approved park use requests for the Cave Junction Lions' annual car show and the IV Little League's opening and closing events.

In another exciting turn, city council members unanimously approved a request from IV Little League President Shelly Davis to bring back the Blackberry Festival.

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(Photo by Darcy Wallace, Illinois Valley News)

Illinois Valley tap dancers prepare to perform a routine at the pancake breakfast fundraiser Saturday, Feb. 12 at the Senior Center.

Soup, salad and dancing highlight Selma fund-raiser

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

Those who attended the Selma soup dinner and dance on Saturday, Feb. 12, enjoyed homemade soups such as lentil, minestrone and chicken posole along with a chance at several eclectic items in a silent auction.

Selma Center board member Kelly Green said overall the event went well, attracting a sizeable group considering that several other events were going on that same day.

"So many people work so hard on this," Green said. "We could work a little harder somehow on advertising I think. Our space was limited and we only had, I think, six or seven place settings left."

Guests also enjoyed homemade bread bowls, salad and dessert. After dinner, Green tried to find the perfect music for people to dance to, such as "Dancing

Queen" by Abba and "Brick House" by The Commodores.

"Kelly Green was awesome," said Christine Takaoka. "He was our DJ and our auctioneer. Terry Crawford did set up and decoration and she did a wonderful job."

Guenter Ambron, Melanie Tehan, Joan Guilbert and Jan Walker were some of the residents whom Takaoka said made the soups that guests enjoyed at the event.

The silent auction also included several items made by Illinois Valley residents, such as mason bee houses, a sandalwood box, a tool set and outdoor field guides.

"I think everybody on the board who attended was pleased," Green said. "That made us happy, because that way we're serving the community we're supposed to serve."

Proceeds raised from the event will go towards landscaping projects at the Selma Center such as the planting project in the spring.

Coyote tests positive for rabies

One more case of rabies has been found in the Illinois Valley.

Michelle Dennehy from the Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) said a coyote was collected from Cave Junction's Laurel Hill Cemetery on Monday, Feb. 7. It had been reported rolling on the ground, drooling and unable to stand up.

According to Dennehy, tests from Oregon State University came back positive for rabies late Thursday, Feb. 10.

"Residents in the area should continue to vaccinate their pets, report unusual wildlife behavior to ODFW and follow good wildlife stewardship practices," Dennehy said.

Those practices include observing wildlife from a distance, feeding pets indoors and avoiding feeding wildlife.

Residents who believe their pets might have interacted with the coyote at Laurel Hills are advised to contact a vet or the Josephine County Animal Control office at 541-474-5458.

Possible scabies outbreak at Frog Farm

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

On Thursday, Feb. 3, Spiral Living Center (SLC) Executive Director Debbie Lukas alerted Takilma residents that a farm worker from outside the area accidentally brought scabies when she came to help out at the Frog Farm.

The farm worker reportedly thought she had a poison oak infection, but found out after treatment that it was scabies, a parasitic mite that spreads from person-to-person contact.

Lukas alerted residents that those who visited the Frog Farm during the last few weeks before Feb. 3 could have been exposed via pets, sitting on the couch or using towels in the bathrooms, house and offices.

"If we can catch it now and keep it from spreading it hopefully won't become an epidemic," Lukas said. "If it does, everyone can get the treatment they need."

There are several different strains of the mite, some contagious and some less so. Lukas said the mite at Frog Farm was crusted scabies, an advanced and especially contagious form.

Scabies can be treated with prescription lotions and careful cleaning and sanitizing of any materials that might

have been exposed. Lukas suggested separating clean and dirty clothes into bags for washing to help prevent mites from spreading on clothing. Most mites can only live away from human skin for about 24 hours, but sometimes longer.

Lukas also recommended a black walnut tincture that can be applied to the skin from the neck down, along with Neem oil, made from a plant found in India.

Meanwhile, area residents have been hard at work cleaning and sanitizing materials that might have come into contact with the mites.

"We're at the farm vacuuming and mopping every day," Lukas said. "We're washing towels, bedding and clothes every day and using Neem oil which is supposed to interfere with the reproductive cycle [of the mites]."

Takilma activities were also postponed to allow time for facilities to be cleaned and any mites and their eggs to die out.

The Takilma library and the SLC were closed temporarily so people could be fully treated and all mites destroyed.

Lukas hoped to reopen the SLC office on Monday, Feb. 14.

Residents who are concerned they have been infected can get treatment at local health centers or at Josephine County Public Health in Grants Pass.

