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Inside:

"Slices of Life"
by Jill Perter
Page A-4

LBMS Honor Roll Students
Page A-8

Church News
Page A-4

New Branch Manager for I.V. Library
Page A-3

Kindergarten Class goes to the Library
Page A-3

IVHS Sports
- Baseball
- Track
- Golf
Page B-1

IVHS Office Manager Set to Retire
Page A-6

Obituaries A-2
Sudoku A-5
Crossword A-7
Classified B-3
Blotter A-5

City clued in about ODOT plans for CJ

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

Business owners in downtown Cave Junction recently found out that a state transportation project adding a light at River Street would also include a complete revision of the roadway to create a left turn lane and a median. Officials from the Oregon Dept. of Transportation (ODOT) said that the work could begin as early as next month.

Bear Images business owner Colene Gonzalez received a letter from the Oregon Dept. of Transportation (ODOT) saying the project would consist of medians and one lane in each direction with left turn "refuges" on River Street and Palmer Street. According to ODOT project leader Dick Leever, the road revision is known as a "road diet" that will change the current four-lane configuration to two lanes, which he says will improve traffic safety in Cave Junction.

"As you approach Cave Junction from either side where the road is curvy and not conducive to letting people pass, a lot of through traffic tends to use the downtown area as a passing zone," Leever said. "You end up with traffic going faster than it should. When you mix that with local traffic turning on and off the highway, [it causes] accidents." But some business owners said they did not receive notice that the roadway revision project was included

with the River Street light, and worry about the potential impacts on local businesses. Gonzalez said members of Cave Junction City Council said on Monday, May 9 that they did not know the project was taking place. Due to deadline constraints, the Illinois Valley News was unable to reach any other officials or business owners regarding the story. A fuller recap of the project and its status will appear in next week's paper.



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

All types of pets came out Saturday May 7 for the pet parade at Jubilee Park. This annual event draws many residents for activities and booths from local organizations, plus IV Fire & the CARE dental wagon.

Hare claims rule change won't affect Barter Faire

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

An April 25 quarterly commissioners meeting in Cave Junction proved several residents worried about the possible consequences of a mass gathering ordinance under evaluation by Josephine County Commissioners. The Hope Mountain Barter Faire is one such event that would be affected by a new ordinance. But according to commissioners Simon Hare and Sandi Cassanelli, the ordinance is still in draft form, and could take until next year to take effect. Hare said the Board of Commissioners discussed the draft again Friday, May 6 with county staff members. He also said he met with some Barter Faire organizers earlier in the week and felt it was successful.

Continued on A-7

First ArtWalk of 2011 features new artists,

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

As the days slowly get warmer and longer, the first ArtWalk of 2011 is set to come back to Cave Junction on Friday, May 13. The event is set to run from 5 to 8 p.m., featuring photographer Kevin Gillette and the Illinois Valley String Band. Several stores along Highway 199 in CJ keep their doors open later to showcase local artists, musicians, dancers and other creative groups and highlight local businesses. IRVAC member and ArtWalk organizer Rebecca Pearson said the String Band, with its longtime presence in the Valley, has consistently supported the event for a number of years. Its members, including Jack Dwyer, Mark Kelz and George Shook, are scheduled to perform at the County Building in CJ. Gillette, a newcomer to the Valley, will present his photography and selections of abstract oils and inks at the Illinois Valley Library branch.

Other featured artists include Crinkle Doodle Studios with a basket display and the Valley Girls, who will present their 2011 opportunity quilt and sell tickets to benefit the I.V. Boys and Girls Club. "I think the first ArtWalk of the season is always wonderful because people have been stuck inside all winter," Pearson said. "It's a great opportunity for the community to come together and see new artwork and businesses that are opening." Pearson said Dos Gringos, previously Nacho Mama's in Cave Junction under new ownership, will also open its doors for a "surprise" event during the ArtWalk. Just a few of the many businesses and artists include Artful Being Studio with watercolor painter Deborah Dawson, John Luerding at the Eye Care Group at 355 Caves Highway, Nancy Hall at the I.V. Visitor Center, and Taylor's Country Store hosting the String Bean Band and impressionist oil paintings by Linda Stevenson.

Continued on A-7

Frontier to upgrade

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

Problems with Frontier internet and phone service are nothing new for the Illinois Valley, but upgrades planned for this summer could begin to address some concerns. On April 7, Frontier Communications said in a news release the company would invest more than \$150,000 to increase broadband availability and capacity and "enhance" network performance. According to Frontier

communications manager Stephanie Beasley, the upgrades will replace older equipment with current infrastructure to help online traffic flow more smoothly during peak hours of use. "[The infrastructure] should fix that and be between one and three [megabytes per second] solid all the time," Beasley said. Frontier engineer Stephen Whitehorn said Cisco fiber optic terminals would be installed in Cave Junction and Selma to connect to Qwest in Grants Pass.

"This improvement will be four times the capacity of Frontier's old network," Whitehorn said. "It will allow for additional internet capacity to the outside world from Cave Junction and Illinois Valley helping to improve speeds during peak traffic times." At the last Quarterly Meeting with commissioners in Cave Junction April 24, some residents wondered if the planned upgrades would be enough to meet the needs of residents farther from the city of Cave Junction.

Continued on A-7