



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

The Illinois Valley Garden Club had their annual plant sale Saturday, May 7 at the County Building on Redwood Hwy.

Safe House garden nears fruition

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

A new community garden in downtown Cave Junction could be ready for residents to begin planting by June 1.

Sign-ups for planting, meanwhile, could start as early as May 15.

The I.V. Safe House Alliance held a work party April 9 to till, remove rocks and level a section of property behind its building to make room for 24 individual garden plots about 120 square feet in size.

According to Alliance volunteer coordinator Marcy Sowa, this project might never have emerged without the help of many individuals and local businesses.

“It was a real community effort,” Sowa said. “It was amazing. When we first got the Alliance building [in 2007] all the staff wanted a garden, but we didn’t think we’d have the resources to pull it together. But the community just stepped up.”

Residents will be able to rent plots for a suggested donation of \$40 per year and a \$20 refundable clean-up deposit, though a limited

amount of scholarships will be available.

Sowa said Harmony Gardens has taken a lead on the project. Additionally, Ewing Irrigation provided hardware for the garden water system, with a well drilled by Clouser Drilling. Suri Futures, one of the largest alpaca farms in the Valley, also provided “Paca Poo” fertilizer. Good Earth Organics will also provide compost, just to name a few contributors.

Sowa also credited Four Way Community Foundation and the Spiral Living Center for their role in bringing a community garden to Cave Junction.

“It’s a really large undertaking,” Sowa said. “We’re looking to break ground by June 1 but we really need help still.”

According to Sowa, the community garden “Wish List” includes volunteer help to build raised beds and haul compost. Other supplies on the wish list are organic compost, cardboard, wood chips, 50-foot hoses and garden tools.

Besides individual plots, Sowa said IVSHA will partner with local organizations and

groups for sustainability and related projects. Conservation or youth-centered groups and organizations could arrange a test plot to work on a garden together. She said the Boys and Girls Club already expressed interest in a plot where children and teens could learn gardening.

Community gardens are not uncommon in neighborhoods and urban areas. Cities such as New York have been known for starting shared gardens to grow flowers and fresh vegetables to encourage growing local food and sustainability. Community gardens are also getting more common in Portland, Eugene and other Oregon cities and towns.

Sowa said these types of gardens also provide a place for residents to learn skills and tips from more experienced gardeners.

“I used to think, what is the point of a community garden?” Sowa said. “But people love to garden together. The purpose is to engage the community and get people involved in a safe place.”

IVHS office manager set to retire

By Darcy Wallace
IVN Staff Writer

Illinois Valley High School office manager Janie Pope recently decided it was time to retire after this year, wrapping up a 25-year career at the school.

Born in Grants Pass, Pope went to school in the Valley and graduated from IVHS — though she’d rather not mention what year.

“I have lived here [almost] all my life,” Pope said. “After my husband [was] in the service, we came back because we have a lot of family here, and we’ve stayed ever since.”

Pope hasn’t always been office manager. She started out on the kitchen staff for four years, then moved to the front office. After that, she was athletic secretary for 13 years, a busy but rewarding job going back and forth to various sporting events.

“I have three children and I wanted to work [for the school] so I could be off work at the same time they were off school,” Pope said. “With young children I think it was important. My husband worked full time...but this worked out perfectly.”

Her last five years have been as IVHS office manager. After 25 years, Pope will finally depart from the Cougar lair to spend more time with her husband and enjoying the outdoors.

Pope said that even as a student at Illinois Valley, budget concerns remained a major issue. But attendance has gone down over the years, with about 365 students this year instead of 525 when she started working. She feels that difficulty finding work is one reason for decreased enrollment, but that the natural resources are what set the Valley apart.

“We don’t have the things to keep them here,” Pope said. “There aren’t enough good-paying jobs...but you have everything at your back door: you can hike, bike, swim, go to the snow park...and shopping really isn’t that far away.”

When not at school, Pope is an avid biker, taking periodic trips around the Northwest. Recently, she and seven others took a 65-mile “Monster Cookie ride” to Salem. Her next big biking trip might be a cross-country excursion.

“My ultimate goal is to bike back to Missouri where my brother lives,” Pope said.



(Photo by Darcy Wallace, Illinois Valley News)

Janie Pope looking forward to her long-deserved retirement. Photo from Tuesday, May 10.

Senior Lunch Menu	True Value	541 592-3562
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THURSDAY, May 12		country gravy, Capri blend vegetables, dill wheat bread, peanut butter bar
Hamburger Pacifica, Italian blend vegetables, blushing pears, cracked wheat roll, rhubarb crisp		TUESDAY MAY 17
FRIDAY May 13		Teriyaki meatballs w/rice, oriental blend vegetables, carrot mandarin salad, seven grain roll, peach crisp
Peppered beef & onions, whipped potatoes, Scandinavian blend vegetables, rye bread, frosted cake		WEDNESDAY MAY 18
MONDAY MAY 16		Three cheese lasagna, country trio vegetables, tossed salad, garlic roll, Birthday Cake
Chicken fried steak w/		
Meals are served in the Cave Junction County Building.		
541-592-2126, 541-955-8839		



The IV Library landscaping project would like to begin installation of two benches to help library patrons enjoy the new outdoor space.

The Library is seeking donations for these benches. If you can help, please mail a donation to : Friends of the IV Library P.O. Box 190 Cave Junction, OR 97523. Thank you for supporting our community library!

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