

# Illinois Valley News

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## I.V. Fire District honors volunteers

By **Linda Corey-Woodward**  
IVN Contributing Writer

The Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) held its 33rd annual awards banquet Feb. 23 in Cave Junction. New IVFD Chief Dennis Hoke said the program featured a special presentation for recently retired IVFD Chief Harry Rich. Rich was presented with a helmet, retirement badge and special gifts, along with heartfelt thanks for nine years of IVFD leadership by the district's board of directors.

Deputy Chief Ken Gavlik served as master of ceremonies for the evening, presenting certificates of appreciation to district members for years of service and to new recruits. Of note, recognition went to Jim O'Grady (12 years), Wayland Sherman (13 years), Sandy Humphries (14 years), Phil Aria (16 years), Ken Gavlik and Pearlene Gavlik (16 years), William Sowell (18 years), Joe Feldhaus (19 years), Steve Corwin (21 years) and Tom Zulliger (31 years).

The Firefighter of the Year award went to Jeff Bradshaw. Officer of the Year was awarded to Gerry Bjornstad and Rookie of the Year recognition went to Charley Lesiecki and Robert Sitton. Other awards were given for outstanding maintenance, 911 dispatches, stations, support member. Special recognition also went to longtime member and district photographer Dale Sandberg.

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(Photo courtesy of Wendy Williams for The Illinois Valley News)

**Christine Perala-Gardiner entertains the crowd with a little ditty about chocolate at the "Women's Cafe" March 9.**

## Expansion of Oregon Caves Monument gains steam

By **Annette McGee Rasch**  
IVN Contributing Writer

The decades-long effort to expand the boundaries of the 480 acre Oregon Caves National Monument was rejuvenated last month when Oregon's U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley re-introduced the Oregon Caves Revitalization Act (OCRA).

The legislation aims to enhance the existing monument by transferring management of approximately 4,070 acres, essentially the entire Lake Creek Watershed, from the U.S. Forest Service to the National Park Service. If the bill passes, the new monument land will be designated as a National Preserve, but will allow recreational access to hunters.

"These areas provide habitats to countless species of plants and animals, economic benefits to surrounding communities and recreational opportunities for Oregonians and visitors throughout

the nation," said Wyden, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. "Setting aside this additional land will increase tourism to the largest marble cave open to the public west of the Continental Divide."

The 4,070 acres slated for the expansion translates to about 6.25 square miles and represents less than one percent of the federal land in Josephine County, according to supporters.

"This is Cave Junction. We're the gateway to the Oregon Caves. We're proud to have this branding that a national monument provides," said local resident Greg Walter, who traveled to Washington D.C. to testify before an Energy and Natural Resources sub-committee in 2009.

"This expansion would give us a larger spot on the map — and that'll increase our visitor numbers," said Walter, who added that fifty local businesses and hundreds of petition signers support the OCRA bill.

A newly released National Park Service (NPS) report for 2011 shows that 76,194 visitors to Oregon Caves spent close to \$4 million in nearby communities.

This peer-reviewed spending analysis indicates that most visitor spending supports jobs in lodging, food and beverage services, recreation, entertainment, transportation, fuel and other retail sales.

The park service has also documented increases of visitation and tourism dollars to surrounding communities when national monuments are expanded. Nationwide, many other studies indicate that protecting and enhancing outstanding natural features contributes significantly to the long-term economic stability of adjacent rural towns.

"There's 75 businesses with tourist-related storefronts up Caves Highway and along Highway 199 between the California border and Sauer's flat," said Illinois Valley resident Roger Brandt. He says galleries and shops that sell products to tourists also support other businesses or entrepreneurs, including wineries, artists, cottage industry kitchens, agricultural products and more.

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## Women's Café show is a hit with fans

By **Linda Corey-Woodward**  
IVN Contributing Writer

"The Women's Café was so much fun!" exclaimed singer Carol Schloss Valentine after Saturday night's show at the Dome School.

"It was excellent!" added performer Maelagh Baker, grinning.

The show, in its 22nd year, featured art, music, song, poetry, and dance by Illinois Valley women. The show is a popular fundraising event for the Dome School and often features past and present students and teachers. The show's theme celebrated women of the world for National Women's History Month.

Dinner included quiche, salad, squash soup, bread and desserts made by volunteers. People gathered around bistro tables to chat and eat before the show. They inspected the colorful art displayed around the room and talked to the artists about their creations.

A proud father, Alan Eisner, beamed after his young daughter, Annabelle, sang with a group of students led by singer Libby Goines, and later sang solos. Annabelle wowed the audience with her powerful voice. Chelsea Hocker, Carol Schloss Valentine, Christine Gardiner and Libby Goines also sang.

Lydia Robert's Zumba class danced to several fast belly dance tunes and some audience members joined in. Poetry was performed by Kindi Fahrnkopf and Andrea King. A newcomer to Takilma, Mindy King, gave an outstanding comic performance, spoofing Takilma lifestyle and culture, to the crowd's delight.

A quartet comprising Jennie May Donnell, Andrea King, Maelagh Baker and Jean Robertson, performed a humorous piece written by Alicia Ostriker. Donnell portrayed the Dog; King played the Old Lady; Baker was the Red Tulip; and Robertson was the narrator. The theatrical piece was directed by Donnell and will be part of Theatre Convivio's March 23 show entitled, "This One, That One, an Evening of Poetry, Prose and Music," at the Bellevue Grange in Ashland, according to Donnell.

Host Deb Murphy, had the packed house roaring with laughter during her monologue about traveling from New York with her elderly mother and her mother's Russian caregiver. In Murphy's story, neither woman had current I.D.'s as required by airport security, but she loaded her carry-on bag with birth certificates, expired passports and driver's licenses and prayed they would suffice. She had bought first class tickets thinking they would be treated better and so that they could bring nine suitcases. Her descriptions of their airport screening and the amenities provided to first class passengers were hilarious, according to several attendees.

"Deb is so funny. Her stories are priceless!" commented singer Libby Goines.

Several performers commented afterwards that they were able to get on the stage because of the support of organizers and friends in the audience. The applause was a huge reward for the effort and courage it took, according to Fahrnkopf and other performers. Murphy is already planning next year's show.

## Neighborhood patrols and watches tackle crime

By **Annette McGee Rasch**  
IVN Contributing Writer

O'Brien and Selma citizens have responded to local criminals emboldened by a budget-stripped sheriff's department. Patrols and neighborhood watches are producing the desired results, so groups around Cave Junction are now forming to defend their neighborhoods.

"About 60 people attended a meeting on March 4 at Wild River Pizza Brewery. They're serious about standing up to the criminal element," said Guenter Ambron, who is spearheading the effort to develop more neighborhood watches in and around Cave Junction.

"We have five new team captains and we're building communications and developing strategies," Ambron added, noting that more neighborhood leaders are needed, especially around the Dick George and Holland Loop areas.

"It's a shame that it's come to this, but now it's up to us to rely on each other," said Harry Bradley, a coordinator of efforts on Simons Cut and Ivy Drive.

Dwight Fickes has tackled the job on Mesa Verde Drive and Roan McClure

is organizing on Logan Cut Drive.

"The key to reducing crime is to know your neighbors and work together," said John Morris, captain of the White Oak Drive watch.

"We keep an eye on everything that happens here, so don't forget to smile when you visit, because you'll probably be on camera," said Gene Drake, Fernwood Drive's team captain.

Josephine County Sheriff Gil Glibertson says he's thrilled about the community response in the Illinois Valley and invites those interested in setting up new watches to call him for assistance.

"Law enforcement is weak right now. There's vultures out there. So we must build strong defensible neighborhoods," Glibertson said.

As a law enforcement officer in Bosnia and Kosovo, Glibertson served in a city where crime was rampant.

"We instituted American-style neighborhood watches, and within two years, we created safe communities," he said. "It worked because people were engaged in protecting themselves. I believe in this."

Glibertson talks to neighborhood-watch groups to provide safety and strategy tips and wants volunteers to understand the laws so they

comprehend their limitations and avoid mistakes that could get them hurt or make them "civilly or criminally liable."

"Watches are effective when done correctly. But volunteers must be clear that when it comes to force, there's two critical words in Oregon law: 'reasonable and necessary.' You must be able to articulate to a judge and jury how your actions met those two criteria," Glibertson said.

Sam Nichols, coordinator of the O'Brien-based Citizens Against Crime (CAC), said his group observes, but doesn't make physical contact with suspected criminals. They patrol nightly, take license plate numbers and physical descriptions of suspicious cars and occupants, then share information with the sheriff's office and other watches.

"What we do is working," Nichols said. "There's been no reported theft since we started patrolling last August, but before, it was almost nightly that something was stolen."

CAC volunteers, who always work in pairs, drive by people's houses late at night, around 15 miles an hour, in vehicles with flashing amber lights and 12 inch by 24 inch CAC emblems.

**See Crime on A-8**