

Illinois Valley News

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“Dig into Reading” at the Library

Readers of all ages can explore all things underground this summer as the Illinois Valley Branch of the Josephine Community Library presents “Dig into Reading,” a free summer reading program which begins today and ends July 27th.

The 2013 Summer Reading Program is open to young people, preschool through young adult, with prizes, story hours and presentations. A big kick-off party will take place June 22, from 11 to 1 p.m. with story reading, sidewalk chalk drawing and finger painting activities. Participants will be planting scarlet runner beans in the garden area, and in keeping with the theme, everyone will be able to make a Dirt Sundae.

Children 12 and under who enroll in the program will receive a tote bag containing a reading log, book bingo and other surprises. All participants will win weekly prizes by visiting the library including coupons from Dutch Brothers, Elmer's, Kidzone and more. Power readers will be eligible for additional prizes.

Families with youngsters who have not yet learned to read are invited to join the Read-to-Me portion of the program. Participants are asked to log the books they read and the books that are read to them; then present the log to the librarians at the front desk to become eligible for prizes. An awards celebration will take place at the end of the program.

A special teen program titled “Beneath the Surface” offers a weekly raffle for a \$50 gift certificate to Oregon Books & Games.

See Library on A-12



(Photo by Judy Hoyle, Illinois Valley News)

The Occasional Two-Timing Double-Crossers play for change at ArtWalk. From left, they are Randal Cranor on dobro, Dave Spilantes on guitar, Karin Rohland on fiddle and Joe Flaherty on harmonica.

Problems plague Illinois River Scenic Corridor

By
Annette McGee Rasch
IVN Contributing Writer

Numerous world-class swimming holes along the National Wild and Scenic Illinois River corridor draw people from near and far, but due to Forest Service budget shortfalls, the area lacks adequate law enforcement and the Store Gulch Guard Station near Sixmile Creek is in danger of being closed next year. Residents and recreational users are concerned about public health and safety as well as impacts to the river's environment.

The corridor is heavily used in summertime and it is easy to understand why. On hot days, up to 2,000 people crowd into the few assessable spots along the Illinois River that feature beaches and warm emerald pools, just west of Selma from Sixmile Creek up to McCaleb Ranch. Many come from Grants Pass with their children because the Illinois River is safer and cleaner than the Rogue River.

But the constant parade of vehicles into the area, excessive litter, broken glass and run-ins with ruffians has put a damper on the crown jewel of the Illinois Valley's recreational river offerings.

The narrow Illinois River Road winds through steep canyon terrain and there have been many serious accidents around its numerous blind corners. A Forest Service analysis determined that up to 40 percent of drivers leaving the corridor are alcohol impaired.

Many Valley residents shy away from the area during the summer, but those who live there have no choice, and one resident recently had their car totaled after colliding with a speeding visitor. In 2010, after a woman was injured from jumping off the “Swinging Bridge” near McCaleb Ranch, traffic-clogged roads prevented an ambulance's access, so the woman was flown out of the canyon by helicopter, at taxpayer expense.

“We're struggling with how to address the issues,” said Virginia Gibbons, a Forest Service Public Affairs Officer. “Previously, we'd contracted with the Josephine County Sheriff's Department, but obviously, with the current sheriff's office budget, that's not really an option.”

Gibbons said the Forest Service secured Title II funding for assistance from the Oregon State Police along the corridor this year.

“The Wild Rivers Ranger District recreation technician will also focus on patrolling the developed recreation sites this summer and we also plan to get

additional patrol help from our fire patrol technicians,” Gibbons said.

While a seasonal Forest Service employee will live in the Store Gulch Guard Station this summer, according to Paul Galloway, a partnership coordinator for the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, there is not enough funding in future recreation budgets to maintain a live-in presence.

“We're concerned about public safety and fire prevention in the Illinois River corridor and the protection of the cabin from vandalism,” Galloway said. Several options are being considered, including having volunteers monitor or live in the cabin and the agency is exploring grant funding for costs associated with protecting the cabin, built 80 years ago by the Civilian Conservation Corps and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In the 1990's, problems associated with the heavy use of the river corridor prompted the Forest Service to launch a multi-year recreational planning process. Protecting and preserving the Scenic Section of the Illinois River while also providing suitable and safe recreational opportunities for visitors were the plan's key mandates.

See River on A-12

New solid waste ordinances will likely end up in voters' hands

By
Annette McGee Rasch
IVN Contributing Writer

Four solid Waste ordinances recently passed by Josephine County commissioners in a two-to-one vote are designed to deal with myriad waste issues on private properties that plague residents living nearby. While scheduled to take effect in July, petitioners opposed to the ordinances say they have collected enough signatures to trigger a referendum. Designed to increase enforcement for both solid and hazardous wastes and nuisance violations occurring within the county, the four ordinances may now end up going before the voters in November.

Leading the opposition's charge is Jack Swift with the Southern Oregon Resource Alliance. He says the new ordinances are unnecessary and that the existing solid waste ordinance, passed by voter referendum in 1990, is adequate. Swift says the county's Environmental Heath Department Director is currently authorized to deal with the problem and that when people complain about neighbor properties littered with trash, they typically run into bureaucracy by making their complaints to the wrong departments.

Countless county residents disagree and say they've been long-frustrated by properties in their neighborhoods that look like “landfills and junkyards” and are thrilled that ordinances with some teeth were adopted so that out-of-control situations might be resolved in a matter of months, as opposed to years or never.

The package of ordinances numbered 2013-002 through 2013-005 provides for “the elimination of Solid Waste, Hazardous and Nuisance Conditions and a Repealing Ordinance;

for providing an Enforcement Officer; for establishing and providing rules for a County Hearings Officer and rules and procedures for County Hearings; and for providing for the Enforcement of Environmental Health Laws.”

The ordinances closely mirror state law.

“We wrote the ordinances so people can get a warning,” said Commissioner Cheryl Walker. “If there's mitigating circumstances they can get help. But if the situation is serious enough and the people refuse to deal with their mess, the compliance officer can tell them the county has the right to clean it up and send them the bill.”

The new ordinances would assess fines for non-compliance that could run up to \$200 a day, not to exceed \$10,000. The money would go to the county department that issued them and unpaid fines would result in liens assessed to the properties involved. Violators would be warned and then issued citations and given ten days to resolve the situation. They can also make an appeal to the hearing officer.

County officials drafted the ordinances in response to the high numbers of complaints from citizens frustrated by their neighbors' huge heaps of garbage and numerous junk cars that cause all manner of distress, poison pets and wildlife, create community health hazards and pollute nearby creeks.

“There's a lot of people who literally cannot sell their properties because of a bad situation nearby,” Walker said. “The whole idea is for citizens to get some resolution in weeks or months, instead of many years.” She added that the process is complaint driven and that complaints cannot be made anonymously.

See Waste on A-12

ArtWalk draws crowds in Cave Junction

By
Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

Illinois River Valley Arts Council's (IRVAC) Second Friday ArtWalk got off to a slow start June 14 due to hot weather, but by 6 p.m. the event was in full swing around Cave Junction. The sidewalk was filled with socializing Valley residents from Taylor's Country Store all the way to Get Somes. A handsome quilt by Patti Brain was displayed in front of Taylor's by Kerbyville Museum supporters dressed in costume to promote both the museum and the quilt raffle later this summer.

ArtWalk Featured Artist Alexandria Natalie Stargirl Marie Valentine's (ANSMV) paintings “The Enchantment Exhibition” that drew a large, enthusiastic crowd at Commune I Tea. Her work will continue to be on display through the month of June.

Next door, the Diggin' Livin' local food market was buzzing with activity. Their new hand-built business signs were installed in time for the grand opening and Bruce Stone's eclectic paintings and mixed media show enhanced the space. This show will also be on display all month.

Outside Ravenswood Gallery, the Occasional Two-

Timing Double-Crossers band performed for an appreciative audience.

Inside Cave Junction Acupuncture next to the Red Garter, the atmosphere was beautiful and Zen-like; a complete transformation for the former machine shop. Artist Johnnie Walker's fine pottery and painted portraits enhanced the space. Maelagh Baker read from the children's storybook, “Beauteous Black and the Mysterious Forest,” which was illustrated by Walker.

Further north, Soul Shine Studio hosted a fund-raiser for Jubilee Skate Park in the Perfect Pizza mini-mall parking lot. The music and fun lasted until almost dark with live BMX and skateboard demonstrations for an estimated crowd of 80 supporters. Studio owner Ashly Wissler hosted fellow IVHS classmates Dawna Crocker and members of “Only Natural.” A special guest appearance by Alcyon Massive playing acoustic guitar was enthusiastically received and around \$150 was raised for the skate park upgrade according to organizer Stacey Williams.

Fantasy Dreams converted one room into a psychedelic black light lounge with neon-colored furniture. Frank Anderson's unique min-

ature hats were featured along with Jill Shidler's imaginative costumes for youngsters and the young at heart.

Cave Junction Farmers Market observed their regular hours of 4 to 7 p.m. and served as a hub of activity

on Caves Highway. At The Bead Cave, Luna Crow's beautiful pendants of hand-gathered serpentine highlighted the store's regular offerings. At the Illinois Valley Visitor Center, Brianna Kochick's metal jewelry and sculpture were featured; and Michael Spring read poetry on the front deck.

Asked to summarize the event, IRVAC vice-president Linda Corey Woodward stated: “It was a highly successful night with lots of people visiting various businesses. I was impressed by the diverse creativity shown at this ArtWalk. I was also blown away by three young artists, Ash Wissler's paintings at SoulShine Studio, ANSMV's paintings at Commune I Tea and Brianna Kochick's ingenious copper and steel sculptures and jewelry at the Visitor Center.”

Second Friday ArtWalk is sponsored by the Illinois River Valley Arts Council, a 501c3 public benefit organization. Visit www.irvac.com for more information.