

Fire level increased

Increased fire danger on forestlands protected by the Oregon Department of Forestry's Southwest Oregon District has made it necessary to increase the fire prevention measures on industrial operations, such as logging sites and other commercial operations. Industrial Fire Precaution Level II (two) takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on Monday, July 15, and includes the following restrictions:

The use of fire in any form will be prohibited.

The use of power saws will be prohibited, except at loading sites, between 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

The use of cable yarders will be prohibited between 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Blasting will be prohibited between 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Welding or cutting of metal will be prohibited between 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Additionally, commercial operators on forestlands are required to have fire suppression equipment on site and provide watchman service.

These regulations affect all state, county, private and Bureau of Land Management lands in Jackson and Josephine counties. The regulated use zones affected by this proclamation include SW-1, SW-2, SW-3, SW-4, SK-3, RR-1, RR-2 and RR-3, and all forestland within one-eighth of a mile of these zones.

Also, a reminder of the Public Regulated Use restrictions that will remain in effect on Oregon Dept. of Forestry protected lands include:

Use of fireworks on forestlands is prohibited.

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(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Brent Ridley of Brent Ridley Construction cleaning up debris from the Cave Junction Post Office fire Thursday, July 11.

Conservation district passes out awards

By
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IVN Contributing Writer

The Illinois Valley Soil and Water Conservation District recognized its 2012-2013 “Partners in Conservation” at an annual meeting June 20. Awards were presented to two individuals and one group who’ve “achieved exemplary conservation results through public-private cooperation and community engagement.” The recipients represent a variety of interests and organizations throughout the Illinois Valley.

“The Partners in Conservation Awards recognize the breadth of great conservation work that is going on in our Valley,” stated Assistant District Manager Nancy Smebak, who presented the awards. “Our annual meeting is a chance to celebrate the year’s accomplishments and prepare for future success. It is good to be able to include others in that process.”

Award recipients are nominated and selected by members of the Illinois Valley Soil and Water

Conservation Board. For 2012-2013, a “Partner in Conservation: Environmental Resources Award” was presented to Michael Bollweg for his “behind the scenes” work promoting watershed health; particularly for efforts in organizing this spring’s waste tire collection event.

Partner Awards for Community Resources recognized local education and outreach efforts surrounding natural resource conservation. Debbie Lukas, founder of the Spiral Living Center (SLC), was recognized for the plethora of annual events and educational activities organized in the Valley; including the upcoming Siskiyou Regional Herbal Gathering August 16-18 at SLC in Takilma and the Farm & Garden Festival in September.

A Partner in Conservation: Community Resources Award was also presented to Local Illinois Valley Enrichment (LIVE). This second cohort of the Ford Institute for Community Leadership Training has chosen to transform a ditch in front of Evergreen Elementary into a “Bioswale” to improve water quality in the Illinois Valley, create learning

opportunities and beautify the neighborhood.

When it rains, water runs over the parking lot pavement at the school, picking up pollutants, oil, and toxins along the way. Much of this polluted storm water runoff flows directly into groundwater. The bioswale will be a gently sloping landscaped depression that will collect, slow and clean storm water utilizing soil and plants.

Native flowers, shrubs, and grasses will line the 330-foot ditch forming a bioswale designed to slow the flow of storm water runoff. The bioswale bed will be lined with 4-inch rocks and dotted with large boulders. In select areas between the established bushes, the linear bioswale will widen in several areas to create retention ponds. The steeper banks along these ponds will be reinforced with stair stepping boulders and planted with hardy native vegetation. The area will no longer be sprayed with pesticides, and it is hoped that students will be able to sit along the bioswale’s banks to watch frogs that have made the bioswale their home.

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IV Fire District gives thanks for community support

By
Annette McGee Rasch
IVN Contributing Writer

The Illinois Valley Fire District Board of Directors met last Thursday and new board President Ron Humphres swore in recently elected members Carol Dickson and Richard Bouchard who will join Vice President Edwin “Bob” Butler and Jerry Lamb. Now retired from the board are Sam Michel and Jim Minervini.

Fire District Chief Dennis Hoke welcomed the new board and said its primary responsibility is policy making for the district and fiscal responsibility for the budget.

Morale is also a key concern for Hoke, who announced plans for a Firefighter’s Ball to help “bring some of the fun back” into the district. Lamb also requested that the board organize an awards banquet to honor staff and volunteer contributions.

The district is set to participate in the formation of a multi-county management team that would coordinate response during region-wide catastrophic events, according to Deputy Chief of Training and Safety Jeff Gavlik. He also said a three-day certification course in vehicular extrication for firefighters will soon be offered in the Valley. The group also discussed the district’s need for new equipment.

Gavlik — who began his career as a volunteer — is organizing a student program to help increase volunteer numbers. The district is actively engaged in recruiting volunteers to participate in the upcoming training cycle set to begin in September. While seven people are currently signed up, the goal is to train 20 new volunteers.

Both young adults and those in career transitions sometimes volunteer to gain valuable vocational insight and experience. Others get involved because they recognize the critical

importance of volunteers to rural fire districts, asking themselves: “If not me, then who?” Some say they feel compelled to sign up after witnessing or experiencing a devastating fire.

“When I’m hiring, I always look at peoples’ volunteer experiences,” Hoke said. “Volunteering demonstrates high levels of commitment to the community and the fire service.”

The past month has been very active for the district, with numerous structure fires and serious car accidents. Chief Hoke handed out awards to recognize citizens and businesses in the community who stood out during these recent fire responses.

Staff members of Dutch Brothers Coffee were awarded for donating coffee to firefighters during two recent late-night fires.

“This firefighter, for one, really appreciated the hot coffee on scene,” Hoke said.

Roy Leon, of The Good Earth Organics,

though unable to attend the meeting, was acknowledged for bringing a backhoe and a front-end loader to the scene of the recent warehouse fire in O’ Brien. Hoke said Leon’s actions “solved a problem in minutes that would have taken us hours to do by hand.”

Jesse Robertson, of Meriweather Printing received an award for providing some of the district’s new-member recruitment media.

“Even though his business was severely damaged by an electrical fire, he still came though,” Hoke said.

Judy Hoyle, a freelance writer with the Illinois Valley News was also awarded for her stories about the district that included coverage about the men and women who make up IVFD.

See Support on A-3

Volunteers spruce up Laurel Cemetery

By
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Over the past two months, a group of volunteers have spent each Friday morning knocking back brush at Laurel Cemetery. The clean-up crew, led by longtime Cave Junction resident Holly Warner, has steadily gained steam, as many feel strongly about the need to better maintain the historic cemetery.

“I went to the cemetery with my boyfriend, Damon Ellis, whose

grandmother is buried there. We were really disheartened to see the conditions there,” Warner said. “I knew something needed to be done.”

Warner pulled in numerous friends and family members to help with mowing, weed-whacking, raking and litter removal tasks. Many grave sites were buried by non-native invasive sweet pea plants and other prolific growth.

“I want to make it look good again. To give back dignity and respect to those buried there,” Warner said. “This should be a nice place for people to visit and remember their

loved ones.”

Joining Warner and Ellis to tackle the job are Charlene “Charlie” Hickerson, Sally and Howard Yarbrough, Wendy Williams, Mel Wilson, Bob Pierce, Terry Hicks, Dixie Cegelnik, Kathy Cunningham, Dennis Murphy, Sue Bryant and others.

“I’ve known Holly and Damon a long time. They’re industrious and good-hearted. They think about more than themselves,” Hickerson said. “They decided to do something about the situation and the rest of us just fell into place.”

Hickerson wants more young people to get involved.

“I’m 75 years old,” she said. “If I can get out there, why, let’s get some of these young bucks who have relatives buried there to help out too!”

Kuri Gill, with the Historic Cemeteries Program, an arm of the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department, explained how even when rural cemeteries have few new burials, that they remain an important part of communities by providing great places to take walks and opportunities to learn local history.

“When more people become involved in care-taking an old cemetery, we see less vandalism, and overall, there’s fewer problems,” Gill said. “I’m excited to hear that folks are pitching in at Laurel. It’s a beautiful place. A town’s cemetery is a reflection of their community and tells an important part of their story.”

Henrietta Ann Hendershott, who died in Kerbyville on Nov. 10, 1862, was the first person buried in Laurel Cemetery. She was only one year old and her grave is still marked.

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