

Illinois Valley News

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Labrador Fire likely to keep growing

By
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"The goal is to keep this fire as small as we can, for as long as we can," said Public Information Officer Howard Hunter. "There will be hot dry days ahead, where growth is inevitable."

The 2,000-plus acre Labrador Fire burning 13 miles northwest of Cave Junction has 366 firefighters making good progress on shoring up contingency lines and connecting the dots between areas already burnt by the 2002 Biscuit Fire, but the fire remains zero percent contained.

Heavy smoke from the Douglas Fire created a cap over the Labrador Fire, and that, combined with cooperative weather, helped slow the fire's growth last week. When smoke lifted over the weekend, helicopters were able to dump water on hot spots. Still, the fire remains a dicey proposition, with steep dangerous terrain littered with drought-stressed fuels and soft flammable snags conducive to fire spotting.

With scattered thunderstorms in the forecast this week, it is hoped that possible heavy rain could ease the situation; however between now and mid-September, more potential lightening episodes make the next five weeks the fire's most potentially dangerous time-frame.

See Fire on A-12



(Photo by Dale Sandberg, IVFD Media Dept)

An area near Miami Bar burns Thursday, Aug. 1. The Labrador Fire has burned more than 2,000 acres since it started July 26.

Smoke impacts felt throughout the Valley

By
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The wildfires burning throughout the region have consistently pushed punishing levels of smoke into the Illinois Valley, creating hazardous air quality conditions and causing myriad medical, economic and social impacts on residents and businesses.

It won't let up anytime soon. The majority of smoke in the Valley is from the Douglas Complex Fire to the north, now over 35,000 acres in size. There will be good days and bad days and air quality can change from hour to hour.

People can go to <http://oregonsmoke.blogspot.com/> to view graphs that show hourly concentrations of Particulate Matter (or PM2.5) in communities affected by the fires, including Cave Junction. Particulate matter, including smoke, dust, dirt and soot, can remain suspended in the air for long periods of time and can pose health risks when inhaled.

According to experts, when we breathe, these fine particles can reach the deepest regions of our lungs. Excessive cumulative particulate exposure is linked to a variety of significant health problems and

is sometimes referred to as the "Invisible Killer."

"A lot of people are coming in with respiratory issues, sore and raspy throats and headaches," said Karen Stewart-Sinnwell, Manager of Siskiyou Community Health Center, who advises that people stay indoors when the smoke is heavy. Children and the elderly are also more vulnerable to the effects of the smoke.

When headed outdoors on smoky days experts recommend the use of respirator masks: either the P95 or N100 models. They cost around \$5. The mask should fit securely and those with obstructive facial hair might consider shaving it off.

These masks are not for everyone. Those with cardiac or lung issues should see their medical provider before using a mask because the restriction of air flow may cause negative health effects.

"People may become dizzy, get headaches, or experience shortness of breath," Stewart-Sinnwell said. "People should call us with their questions, we have live nurses on staff 24/7."

The smoke is also hard on many local businesses that peak during the summer season and many Valley residents will feel the crunch.

So far, visitor numbers are "down somewhat" at

the Oregon Caves National Monument, according to John Roth, Chief of Resource Management. Monument visitors and others drawn to the Valley's outstanding natural features bring badly-needed tourism dollars into the local economy.

"People are staying away. Word's gotten around," Roth said. "When it's smoky down below, we're sort of on the cusp of where the smoke is. When there's incoming air from the west or southwest, this tends to blow it away. But it varies with the time of day, and by the next day, sometimes reverse air flow brings smoke back in."

"Our business has slowed way down," said Dos Gringos owner Jenessa King. "This is our busy season. It's going to make it hard to save up for winter. I hope people realize they can still order food to go and take it home to escape the smoke."

Popular events in the Valley also bring critical commerce and the smoke is causing cancellations or poor attendance. The tenth annual Bluegrass Festival held at Lake Selmac on July 27 was upstaged by the logistical needs of the fire-camp coming together in the same location. Firefighters took over the entire ball field, eliminating festival parking. It was unavoidable.

See Smoke on A-12

Cave Junction loses a second leader

By
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Just days after the tragic death of I.V. Grange leader Kendall Phillips, who succumbed to smoke in a house fire, the Illinois Valley lost a second dedicated community leader.

Cave Junction City Council President and veterinarian Dr. Dan Fiske, D.V.M. was found deceased in his office at Crossroads Animal Hospital the morning of Tuesday, July 30.

The mood was somber at the

emergency city council session that evening which was called to elect a new Council President in order to avoid disrupting Cave Junction business. City Councilor Daniel Dalegowski was elected to the position by unanimous vote.

On August 1, City Recorder Ryan Nolan sent the following notification to city councilors and committee members, the Josephine County Board of Commissioners, Sheriff Gil Gilbertson and the press:

"With sympathy for Dan's family I am forwarding this information to you ... It has been determined

that Dan passed away from an Aortic Aneurysm. The medical examiner told the family he felt no pain and did not suffer. The family will honor his wishes of burying him in a plain pine box in a tee shirt, shorts and flip flops.

"The viewing will be August 8th from 3 to 6 p.m. at the I.V. Funeral Home. The memorial service will be August 9th at 11 a.m. at the Mormon Church in Grants Pass (Williams Hwy. and Harbeck). Sue and the children and his family are doing as well as can be expected and are not in need of anything at this time. She

thanks everyone for their concern and is simply asking that their friends keep them in your prayers. Cards may be sent to the family at PO Box 1351, Cave Junction, OR 97523."

Fiske was born April 17, 1963, in Whittier, Calif., to Ronald and Myrna Fiske. He began working in an animal hospital while still in high school and earned a degree in veterinary medicine from the University of California at Davis. Fiske and his childhood friend and business partner Allen Cress opened Crossroads Animal Hospital in 1997.

Cress has announced plans to

keep Crossroads open and will be hiring a veterinarian of the same high caliber.

"I knew and trusted Dan," Cress said. "I know he practiced the highest standards of medicine, and that's the sort of person I'll be looking for."

Fiske served on the Cave Junction City Council for nearly 14 years. Mayor Carl Jacobson, Jr. stated, "He was a valued city councilor. He was very quiet, but when he gave his advice it was well considered and he will be sorely missed."

See Fiske on A-8

ArtWalk to end season with special activities

Second Friday ArtWalk celebrates the summer season from 5 to 8 p.m. this Friday, August 9, with two farmers markets, special activities and events in Cave Junction.

ArtWalk Featured Artist Gwen Childs will present a special Clayfolk preview titled "Practical to Playful" at Petals 'N Thyme / Outdoor Sport 'N Feed / Eyecatcher Signs & Banners. The Grants Pass ceramic artist's wheel-thrown, as well as sculptural pottery pieces are enhanced with surface carving and special glazes. She believes that clay art begs to be touched and her whimsical clay creatures suggest personalities ranging from pensive to playful. Child's beautiful work is available in several galleries in Oregon and Virginia and reflects her lifelong involvement with studying, teaching and promoting artworks of clay.

Also, featured at this three-stores-in-one mini-mall will be Cere Lyda's intricate wire-wrapped jewelry and stained glass lamps; as well as Billie Coakley's annual "Art of Summer Cuisine" presentation offering local foods

and free recipe handouts. Guests are welcome to enjoy a "Taste of Cabin Chemistry" at Cave Junction's newest venue at the corner of Watkins and Redwood Highway.

Across the street, ArtWalk welcomes the Illinois Valley News. Patrons are invited to sample Deer Creek Vineyards wine while viewing Faith Peabody's imaginative abstract acrylic paintings. An ArtWalk-only special offer will devote \$5 from every new subscription to IVHS football uniforms.

A few steps away, Cave Junction Farmers Market by Caves Chevron offers fresh local produce, flowers and products; while the Farmers' Friday Market behind the DMV also includes baked goods, crafts and OSU Master Gardener and Master Food Preparer presentations. Both markets accept SNAP and WIC and invite patrons to enjoy live music as well as social time with family and friends.

At the corner of River and Redwood Highway, Soul Shine Studio will display 3-D collage art boxes created by First Thursday Art

Club as well as the opportunity to help decorate a community collage piece. Owner Ashly Wissler invites the public to "Get Your Art On" while viewing her colorful acrylic paintings and new logo T-shirts.

One block away, Patsy Heller's watercolors and acrylics will be on display in the computer room at Josephine Community Library.

Further south, Jennifer Folkerts, L.A.C., will offer a free community session during ArtWalk at Cave Junction Acupuncture. Guests are invited to view Linda Stevenson's impressionist landscapes and florals. Next door, Get-Somes/Your Tie-Dye Shop will offer a choice of two tie-dyed garments for \$15; with every purchaser receiving a china hutch raffle ticket good for a September drawing.

At Ravenswood Gallery, new crystals and unusual stones are in stock and local artists' wood and crystal pieces will be on display while the Sam Soul Trio featuring Motel Jones will play out front.

Diggin' Livin' Farm Store features fresh

organic produce, soaps and farm feed as well as bee products and supplies. L.I.V.E. will offer a new Silent Auction event in front of Commune I Tea and an Adopt-A-Rock fund-raiser to benefit a bio-swale project in front of Evergreen Elementary.

Next door, B. Wishes will offer her unique blend of original songs at Taylor's Country Store while Hazel Randall's mixed media pieces will grace the Art Wall. Dinner specials include halibut with shrimp hollandaise, prime rib and regular menu items.

On Caves Highway, The Eye Care Group, Optometric Physicians, will feature Robin Marquez' unique works of recycled art and jewelry during regular business hours.

Second Friday ArtWalk is sponsored by Illinois River Valley Arts Council, a registered 501c3 non-profit organization, with support from Jefferson State Financial Group and Bruce Stone. Visit www.irvac.com or call 541-592-4444 during regular business hours.