

IVHS track about to cross finish line

By
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IVN Contributing Writer

Following four years of efforts by the Illinois Valley Booster Club, the funding phase for an all-weather track at Illinois Valley High School is very close to completion.

According to interim track coach Ray Yarbrough, IVHS is the only school in the State of Oregon 3A Division that does not have an all-weather track that meets specifications for hosting competitions. This creates a disadvantage for IVHS students, who currently have to travel to all their meets. It's also a disadvantage when it comes to training in wet weather. Finally, IVHS's inability to host meets is an economic disadvantage for Cave Junction businesses. Families who would be spending money here go elsewhere for these competitions.

"Studies show that kids who are involved in athletics are better students as well, they can take pride in their achievements and that pride gets passed on," Yarbrough states. "We use the track for physical education, but bad weather often keeps the kids stuck in the building. Between high school and middle school use, there's close to 500 kids who use it for different sports."

The four Josephine County Rotary Clubs committed to helping Illinois Valley Booster Club with this project four years ago. Last year was slated to be the final year funds from Rotary Duck Derby would go toward the track, but Rotary decision makers have included the track for one more year since the project is so close to its goal.

Last summer, the first phase of the project was completed — laying out and paving the track and event surfaces. The second phase of the project will be to install the all-weather covering. The cost to complete the track is just over \$180,000.

To date, \$118,893 has been raised according to Ryan Nolan, IV Rotary Club president and IV Booster Club member.

"This summer we will receive approximately \$25,000 from two pledged donors," Nolan states. "That means we are less than \$40,000 away from completing this track project."

In the past, the IV Booster Club has helped purchase band uniforms, bags for the golf team, and given the Equestrian team money to help with feeding and transporting their animals to competitions. Nolan adds, "We also installed a sound system in the school gym, built batting cages for the baseball and softball fields, helped with other baseball field improvements, refurbished the softball field, and built a press box for the football field. We

have accomplished all of this with help from this community."

Nolan goes on to point out, "So far, our community has supported walk-a-thons, golf tournaments, comedy nights, community track nights, biggest loser contests, individual donations, the Rotary Duck Derby, and numerous grants from foundations and corporations in order to make this track a reality for our kids and community. We just need a little more help to make the all-weather track a reality."

The Rotary Duck Derby will take place September 21 and duck sales are currently underway. The grand prize this year is \$15,000 credit toward purchase of a new car or truck from Roe, Jim Siegel, Lithia, Mock or Wheeler plus 0% financing. Over a dozen other prize packages include legal services, tires, health club memberships, vacation packages, jewelry, food and a \$1,000 gift card from Fred Meyer.

Ducks will be for sale at the Labor Day Festival, Fred Ball's Bi-Rite Auto Parts, Mary Reynolds' Jefferson State Financial Group across from the Senior Center, and First Community Credit Union among other adoption locations.

Nolan added, "Remember, for just a few dollars, this is one way to help support your local high school and give them an even playing field."

Exchange students need homes in the Valley

Just two weeks before school starts, Illinois Valley High School still has 2 slots available for exchange students. Exchange students provide a real world cultural experience for local teenagers while they experience the life of an American teen. That type of cultural exchange is invaluable for both the foreign student as well as the friends they make in their host community during their exchange year.

Exchange students live with volunteer host families who provide a room (can be shared with a teen in the host family of the same gender), food, and loving parental guidance during their exchange year. Their natural parents cover all other expenses and the students have medical insurance coverage.

I work with International Cultural Exchange Services (icesusa.org) - a nonprofit that matches exchange students with local host families throughout southern Oregon. We are working hard to place some of our exchange students at Illinois Valley High School.

Host families get to select their students and we still have several wonderful students waiting for sponsorship. Due to State Department regulations, we can only share photos of our current students with host families who have undergone background checks. Here are brief descriptions of some of the students who still need host families:

Sihao - 17 year old boy from China (English name "Fred") who enjoys basketball, boating, music, film, and guitar.

"My parents have been telling me my whole life how amazing it was to be a part of a new culture as well as bring our culture to other people. They often tell me to be good to everybody, and so I do. I have a lot of friends in my life, and I cherish every one of them. I am expecting to make friends with people in the U.S."

Louis - 17 year old boy from Belgium who enjoys swimming, cycling, camping, and

scouting.

"I am a scout leader so every Saturday I go to the scout meeting and I organize games and activities for scouts who are between eight to twelve years old. One of my teachers is American. He is very different from all the other teachers. His way of teaching is much more active and entertaining. He always makes us participate. I feel like the American people have a different understanding on many issues. Besides this, I have a lot of interest for American sports like American football and baseball even though I never had the opportunity to practice one of these."

Tianxin - 17 year old girl from China (English name "Smiley"). Tianxin enjoys swimming, tennis, piano, and basketball. She loves to sing in the choir.

"It was always a great dream of mine to live and work in a foreign country and I am really excited that it will become a reality soon. I would like to go to America because I'm ea-

ger to know what real America is like. This is a great opportunity for me to gain new perspectives on life, be more mature and have another family on the other side of the world."

Paulo - 16 year old boy from Brazil. Paulo enjoys soccer, video games, music, and sports

"I am a good student and I have good grades. In my school I have English classes every week. I usually play soccer with my friends when we are not studying. I choose the United States because it is a place I like very much. I wish to learn a new culture. I think it will be a very good life experience and I am very excited to know my host family."

If anyone is interested more information can be provided by Tonya Graham, the Southern Oregon Area Coordinator for International Cultural Exchange Services at 541.778.0718 or tonya8971@yahoo.com.

City League Softball updates & schedules

All right all you city league softball fans. Here are the current final scores and standings so far. The league just finished up its fifth week and has six more weeks of fun to go.

Tuesday 6

Rita's Rebels v. Tree House, 16-21 Tree House
Balls Out v. Good Earth Organics, 3-20
Good Earth Organics
Rock-n-Soil v. Green Horns, 7-22 Rock-n-Soil

Thursday 8

Rock-n-Soil v. Rita's Rebels, 10-13 Rita's Rebels
Tree House v. Good Earth Organics, 17-23
Good Earth Organics
Green Horns v. Misfits, 11-13 Green Horns

Tuesday 13

Balls Out v. Tree House, 7-8 Balls Out

Rita's Rebels v. Misfits, 0-20 Rita's Rebels
Rock-n-Soil v. Good Earth Organics, 8-21
Good Earth Organics

Thursday 15

Misfits v. Good Earth Organics, 0-19 Good Earth Organics
Green Horns v. Balls Out, 0-18 Balls Out
Rock-n-Soil v. Tree House, 6-8 Rock-n-Soil
(Forfeit for Rock-n-Soil, Tree House won by default)

Standings for city league softball as of Thursday 15 are:

1. Good Earth Organics 7-1
2. Balls Out 6-1
3. Rita's Rebels 5-3
4. Tree House 5-4
5. Green Horns 2-5
6. Rock-n-Soil 1-7
7. Misfits 1-7

Sixth and seventh weeks of softball schedule, games are as follows:

Thursday 22

Rita's Rebels v. Balls Out @ 6:00pm
Good Earth Organics v. Green Horns @ 7:30pm
Misfits v. Rock-n-Soil @ 9:00pm

Tuesday 27

Good Earth Organics v. Rita's Rebels @ 6:00pm
Balls Out v. Misfits @ 7:30pm
Green Horns v. Tree House @ 9:00pm

Thursday 29

Green Horns v. Rock-n-Soil @ 6:00pm
Tree House v. Rita's Rebels @ 7:30pm
Good Earth Organics v. Balls Out @ 9:00pm



The Dome School

is now accepting registration fees for fall classes. Spaces limited.

For More Information Call
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Chateau at the Oregon Caves
Dave Angus Blues Piano Aug 23, 7 p.m.
View-Master Event Gretchen Gruber Aug 24, 11 a.m.
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Kate's Redwood Bar and Grill
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