

# Levy failures lead to Valley crime watches in 2013

By **Annette McGee Rasch**  
*IVN Contributing Writer*

It's been a rough year for Josephine County, which is still grappling with budget challenges after failing to find other funding sources to replace dwindling federal timber subsidies. While Oregon's legislators are working on permanent solutions, there's no quick fix, so county residents came together and formed the non-profit Securing Our Safety (SOS) organization to pursue strategies to bring money into county coffers.

SOS proposed a permanent Law Enforcement Tax District to pay for essential services after a 2012 county property tax levy failed, but after that plan didn't gain enough traction, another property tax levy appeared on the May 2013 ballot. That levy also failed, though by a narrow margin. This left the county broke and the sheriff's office shrunken to a skeleton crew, often unable to respond to calls.

Crime levels rose and Valley residents, tired of the trend, began forming neighborhood watches in earnest, with many of these new groups loosely modeling their efforts after the O'Brien Citizen's Against Crime patrol, organized by Sam Nichols. CAC has been effective in cutting crime substantially, and the other watches, which also utilize the local "To Catch a Thief" website, have made strides in taking back their neighborhoods from criminal elements.

The economic landscape in the Val-

ley experienced some major shifts in 2013; including the closure of the Rough & Ready Lumber Mill in April, after 90 years of operation. Numerous mill employees are taking advantage of severance packages that made it possible for them to go back to school to gain new job skills, though some of these folks will inevitably move out of the Valley to find good jobs.

Taylor's Sausage, now the Valley's largest employer, was finally successful in their bid for an additional meat inspector. That extra inspector enabled the business to add a second shift at their meat plant and create 30 new jobs, bringing their total to about 130 employees.

With the summer came increasing numbers of small farmers developing profitable operations and making affordable organically grown produce and products available at the Valley's two farmer's markets; helping further diversify the local economy.

Governor Kitzhaber signed a medical marijuana bill legalizing pot dispensaries, potentially moving the state one step closer to legalized marijuana, which many believe will also impact on the local economy, as many marijuana grows exist in Josephine County.

Other legislative developments included both Congressman DeFazio and Senator Wyden unveiling bills designed to resolve the gridlock and debate surrounding potential logging on Oregon's O&C lands. It remains to be seen whether either of these efforts will result in new legislation aimed to open more lands to

logging while protecting some conservation values.

2013's wildfire season was one for the record books across southwest Oregon. Some 330 wildfires cost about \$100 million in fire suppression efforts, with more than 6,000 firefighters on the job at one point. The worst of these fires got their start from a dry lightning storm on July 26, and more than 43,000 acres of forestland burned within the SW Oregon district, much of it in the Big Windy and Douglas complexes in northern Josephine County.

The Labrador Fire, which burned about 2,000 acres 13 miles northwest of Cave Junction, on the edge of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness, had the makings of a dangerous wildfire, but favorable weather conditions kept the uncontained blaze from getting out of hand.

About 200 human-caused wildfires in SW Oregon burned about 800 acres according to the Oregon Department of Forestry. The August 30 arson-caused Four Corners wildfire that burned 15 acres of grass, brush and forestland and threatened homes in the area remains unsolved. This fire cost \$14,572 to extinguish and the Oregon Department of Forestry and the Oregon chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators are offering a reward of up to \$5,000 for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the person, or people, who started the blaze. Anyone who has information about this fire is encouraged to call (800) 452-7888. Information is confidential.



(Photo by IVFD Media Dept)

**IVFD assessing the situation on a barn fire in Takilma Friday, Dec. 27.**

## Dutch Bros' aid Boys and Girls Clubs

MEDFORD, Ore. (Dec. 24, 2013) — Rogue Valley Dutch Bros. Coffee locations and community members raised \$31,155 on Friday, Dec. 6, for local Boys & Girls Clubs.

To raise funds, all 30 locations in Jackson and Josephine Counties donated proceeds as part of Dutch Bros. Coffee's annual Buck for Kids Day.

"We're really fortunate we get to use Dutch Bros. as a force for good," said President and Co-Founder Travis Boersma. "We try to do all we can to help kids live better lives."

Locations in Jackson County, locally owned by Ty Sullivan, donated to Boys & Girls Club of Jackson County.

Locations in Josephine County, locally owned by Boersma, donated to Boys & Girls Club of Josephine County.

Buck for Kids Day is an annual event in which all 213 Dutch Bros. locations in seven states donate drink proceeds to youth programs selected by local owner-operators.

This year, Buck for Kids Day raised \$176,922 company-wide, \$37,922 more than last year's total and \$13,268 more locally.

Company-wide, Dutch Bros. Coffee donates over \$1 million every year to nonprofit organizations and causes, in an effort to achieve its goal of, "Making a difference, one cup at a time."

About Dutch Bros. Coffee:

Dutch Bros. Coffee is the country's largest privately held, drive-through coffee company, with over 200 locations and over 2,000 employees in seven states.

Serving specialty coffee drinks, smoothies, freezes, teas and a private-label Dutch Bros. Blue Rebel™ energy drink, Dutch Bros. is known for a special focus on its communities and customers.

The company was ranked by J.D. Power and Associates as highest in customer satisfaction compared to other coffee companies in its 2012 and 2013 Specialty Coffee Retailer Satisfaction Reports.

Dutch Bros. Coffee is headquartered in Grants Pass, Ore., and was founded in 1992 by dairy farmer brothers of Dutch descent. To learn more about Dutch Bros., visit [www.dutchbros.com](http://www.dutchbros.com).

## CJ ... Continued from A-1

Other changes to the Cave Junction cityscape included the further development of Siskiyou Community Health Center. The complex is in the process of doubling in size over the next few months. Also, a new room addition and façade for Wild Rivers Brewing & Pizza Company is currently in the works.

Finally, many residents recall a film crew working in Cave

Junction on October 26, 2012. "Redwood Highway" an independent film starring Shirley Knight and Tom Skerrit was co-written and produced by Ashland author James Twyman. The film was recently picked up by a distributor and will be released in April 2014, according to a Facebook announcement.

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