

Illinois Valley News

Wednesday, April 2, 2014, 1 Section, 12 Pages, Volume 77 No. 4 Published Weekly Cave Junction, Oregon 97523

illinois-valley-news.com

Savannah Bassett Memorial Citizen of the Year Award

Do you know an Illinois Valley High School senior who is caring, has a commitment to school and community, and should be recognized as Citizen of the Year?

The Savannah Bassett Memorial Good Citizen Award is an annual monetary award, and will be given to an Illinois Valley High School Senior who has been nominated by his/her peers and/or teachers. The recipient will have demonstrated a commitment to the community, whether that be to his/her school, community, outside volunteer activities, or a combination of both.

Savannah Bassett was a student who knew how to give back to her school and community. She was a Varsity Cheerleader for three years before joining the Competition Cheer team in her senior year. She was in the Swing Choir all four years, a member of Awanas for six years, a teen mentor for the Kindergarten class and she regularly volunteered for various community activities. Savannah believed in giving back to her community and she was well known for her outgoing personality and sharp sense of humor. She was voted Most Inspirational Team Member by her Cheer Squad, and an all-around good citizen.

If you would like to nominate an IVHS senior that you feel is a good citizen, please pick up a nomination form in the IVHS front office, or email Patrice.tucker@threerivers.k12.or.us. Nomination forms need to be returned by April 28, 2014.



(Photo by Dale Sandberg, IVFD Media Dept)

IVFD personnel work to extricate a driver from a vehicle March 19, on Holland Loop. Two people were injured in the incident and were transported to Three Rivers Hospital with non life threatening injuries by AMR. No further information is available at this time.

Citizens' levy seeks to boost public safety services

By
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IVN Contributing Writer

A citizen driven public safety levy on the ballot in May would double the beds available at the Josephine County Jail and fund juvenile justice for five years. Designed to cover crucial services that benefit all county residents, the levy would fill gaps in Josephine County's budget while permanent funding solutions are developed.

Levy supporters say the measure is needed to keep county residents safe and address increased lawlessness in the region since the O&C funds that financed key programs and services for decades have dwindled.

"By getting the jail and juvenile programs securely funded, critical budget dollars will become available to spend on rural patrols," said levy supporter Pat Fahey, a general manager at Southern Oregon Sanitation.

It is estimated the levy will raise approximate-

ly \$7.5 million in the 2014-15 fiscal year; and then slightly more each year, through 2018-19.

"Citizens throughout the county went out and asked their fellow citizens to say 'yes' to this levy and 2,500 people agreed and signed the petition," Fahey said. "Unfortunately there's also a lot of mistrust in county government, and that's just the way it is right now. Still, we hope voters understand how this proposal comes from friends and neighbors trying to provide a baseline of security for everyone."

See Levy on A-10

Oregonians get one month reprieve on ACA registration

By
Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

Oregonians have another month to enroll in health insurance plans, Gov. John Kitzhaber announced Wednesday.

The former deadline was set for March 31. According to Greg Walter, co-owner of Jefferson State Financial Group, "People have been scrambling to turn in their applications, as the federal Affordable Care Act threatened penalties for people who did not enroll in health insurance. So far, we've helped over 430 people sign up for insurance."

The new deadline, April 30, will give people another month to sign up.

"A lot of folks couldn't navigate the website, and we've been working with them using a combination of computer and paper applications," Walter explained.

Kitzhaber's announcement came following conversations with Health & Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, according to Salem's Statesman Journal. Oregon's extended application period is in response to technology issues that lengthened the time required to apply for and enroll in health insurance through Cover Oregon, the state's health insurance exchange.

In a press release, Kitzhaber stated: "I know that for too many Oregonians, the Cover Oregon website and its ongoing technical problems have created delays, confusion, and frustration. I worked with Secretary Sebelius to give Oregonians more opportunity to secure health care coverage and get the financial help they deserve."

Kitzhaber continued, "Cover

Oregon has successfully completed more than 175,000 enrollments for Oregonians across our state. I want to make sure that people know they can still apply. They have time to do so, for themselves and their families, and they should take advantage right away."

Under HHS guidelines, each state may have its own approach to managing extended application periods. Oregon's extended application period is targeted to people purchasing private health insurance coverage either through Cover Oregon or directly from an insurance carrier. People who purchase through Cover Oregon can access tax credits and other financial assistance. Oregonians who are eligible for the Oregon Health Plan or Healthy Kids can apply for coverage year round.

Jefferson State Financial Group is the only healthcare insurance agency in the Illinois Valley. Oregonians can find an agent or community partner, such as UCAN in Grants Pass, who can help them enroll in one sitting by visiting CoverOregon.com. They can also go to CoverOregon.com to find resources to apply, including an online PDF application they can submit electronically.

Those who apply for coverage from a private plan through Cover Oregon before April 30 and then later enroll will not be subject to a potential federal tax penalty. People who apply and enroll in plans outside of Cover Oregon between April 1 and April 30 may have to pay a partial federal penalty. The Oregon Insurance Division will provide more information about how penalties may apply to individuals who do not apply for coverage through Cover Oregon.

The Governor also announced an agreement between Cover Oregon

and participating insurance companies that will help small businesses access federal tax credits. Qualified small businesses that purchase a Cover Oregon-certified plan after April 1 directly from an insurance company will be able to access tax credits for 2014. "This is an important step forward to support small businesses and get health insurance coverage for more people," said Governor Kitzhaber.

For the small business tax credit, Cover Oregon will provide an eligibility notice to Oregon employers that qualify to participate. Eligible businesses must have 50 or fewer full-time equivalent employees; purchase a "qualified health plan" certified by Cover Oregon; and contribute at least 50 percent of the premium cost for employee coverage. With confirmed eligibility, employers can apply for the Small Business Health Care Tax Credit when filing their 2014 taxes. The Internal Revenue Service, not Cover Oregon, determines eligibility for the tax credit.

Cover Oregon developed the new process for facilitating the employer tax credit in cooperation with Atrio, Health Republic, Kaiser Permanente, Moda, Oregon's Health Co-op, PacificSource, Providence, Trillium, Best Life, Dental Health Services, Guardian, and ODS. "Insurance companies have provided us a great deal of flexibility to serve Oregon small businesses," said the Governor.

Those with questions about how to apply can visit CoverOregon.com or call 1-855-CoverOR. The Cover Oregon service center is open Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday-Sunday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. To contact Jefferson State Financial Group, phone 541-592-6262.

IVCDO hands out awards

By
Judy Hoyle
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The outstanding efforts of Illinois Valley citizens were recognized on March 26, at the annual meeting of the Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (IVCDO). The annual membership meeting was open to the public and took place at the I.V. Business Entrepreneurial Center (BEC), located in the Kerby Belt Building. The BEC is one of the on-going IVCDO projects and it shares the space with the Southern Oregon Guild Gallery.

The Volunteer of the Year Award was bestowed upon the Illinois Valley Warming Center, located at Immanuel United Methodist Church on Watkins Avenue. The plaque was inscribed to both Pastor Charles Chase and volunteer Dan McLeod, who accepted the award. The ad hoc organization has been sheltering and feeding the homeless in Cave Junction for the past two winters.

The Organization of the Year Award went to "Healthy U" and was accepted by staff members Lindsey Gillette and Diane Chirrick. Healthy U associates write health related articles for the I.V. News and offer classes and free workshops at their location at the I.V. Family Coalition building. Healthy U will sponsor the annual Moon Tree Run on June 7 at the I.V. Airport.

The Business of the Year Award went to I.V. Data Center owners Jessica and Cameron Camp. The business was lauded for their innovative

development of Internet infrastructure to become a service provider for the community, including large data consumers such as valley schools. Only Jessica Camp was available to accept the award.

The IVCando Award was given to I.V. Forks State Park volunteer and S.M.A.R.T. volunteer coordinator Willa Gustavson. Ms. Gustavson's volunteer contributions have also included developing and leading the first Junior Ranger program at the Forks and serving as a Cave Junction City Councilor.

The theme for the meeting was "Tourism, Trails, Parks, Partnerships and Business Development." Executive director Menno Kraai acted as emcee for the informative presentations. IVCDO projects include a new community calendar: www.ivcalendar.org, designed to allow other non-profits to link with the site.

The BEC's economic development projects include the C.J. Farmers' Market, located behind Caves Chevron, which is slated to reopen on Friday, April 18. A long-standing project is the Revolving Loan Fund micro-loan program. The BEC offers business education classes and is in partnership with the Page Creek Community Forest Project.

As Oregon Caves Outfitters, IVCDO manages the I.V. Visitor Center and the Chateau at the Oregon Caves in the role of National Park Service concessioner. Oregon Caves National Monument Superintendent Vicki Snitzler described the bidding process for the next park concession period.

See Awards on A-3