

Illinois Valley News

Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 1 Section, 12 Pages, Volume 77 No. 14 Published Weekly Cave Junction, Oregon 97523

illinois-valley-news.com

Get ready to walk for art

By
Judy Hoyle

IVN Contributing Writer

The Illinois Valley News will host June's Featured Artist for Second Friday ArtWalk in Cave Junction. Susanne "Kindi" Fahrnkopf (Far-en-kopf) will sign her new book: *Takilma Tales: The Hippie History of Takilma, Oregon*, from 5 to 8 p.m. The reception will include refreshments by McGrew's and "Cheesecake by Ashley."

The I.V. News will also host Sarah Hessinger who will show her modern art and Kevin Gillette II, who will show his abstract and sports photography.

Oregon Mountain Real Estate will exhibit a selection of Bill Reid's beautifully restored vintage radios. The new ArtWalk Tent will debut in the parking lot for these two establishments, located at 221 S. Redwood Highway across from Subway.

In the tent at 6:30 p.m., Kaci Elder's Evergreen Elementary students will perform poetry selections by Shel Silverstein. The presentation is part of the Soaring Wings afterschool program sponsored by Illinois River Valley Arts Council (IRVAC) and funded by the federal 21st Century Learning Center program.

See Art on A-8



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, *Illinois Valley News*)

Megan Toney shows her glee after receiving her diploma from Illinois Valley High School Wednesday, June 4.

Meeting gives opportunity to comment on Transportation Plan

By
Annette McGee Rasch

IVN Senior Contributing Writer

Cave Junction is updating its Transportation System Plan and a public meeting at 6 p.m. on June 12 in the City Council Chambers will offer residents an opportunity to make recommendations. Full-size maps, government officials and transportation engineers will be on hand. Additionally, people can attend the Technical Advisory Committee meeting, held in the same location at 2 p.m. that day.

"The public meeting is designed to take information from both the advisory committee and to facilitate the community feedback process," said Dick Converse, Principle Land Use Planner with the Rogue Valley Council of Governments, which is a key player in the transportation plan updates that will affect both the proposed improvements in Cave Junction as well as larger road projects

along the Highway 199 corridor.

"The biggest issues we're addressing locally pertain to traffic and pedestrian safety," said Cave Junction City Recorder Ryan Nolan. "We've been gathering information and identifying problem spots to determine what road improvements are needed to improve safe access to schools, where sidewalks, bike lanes and smoother up-ramps for the handicapped should be located, and more."

Nolan said there has also been progress in identifying potential funding, which currently comes from ODOT gas taxes and city business license fees.

"There are federal and state grants out there, and we need a solid plan in place that has gone before the community to increase our chances of obtaining this key funding," Nolan said. "It seems like it's tough to get people engaged in these processes, but it's the residents who know best what the issues are in their neighborhoods and we'd really like to hear

from them. It's a great opportunity to voice your concerns in a forum that can actually get something done."

If Cave Junction officials can report high numbers of community participants attending the meetings and providing suggestions and feedback, chances to secure grant funding increases.

"Funding is becoming harder to come by," Converse said. "The best way for communities to get funding is to present project proposals that the residents are involved in. Community participation really is key."

Converse said the upcoming public meeting will cover critical foundation work to solidify the recommendations that will go before the Rogue Valley Council of Governments, and then, in August, there will be a public hearing before the new transportation plan is adopted.

The new plan will outline potential transportation projects for the next 20 years by anticipating future land uses and traffic volumes; and will also analyze the impacts on

transportation related issues in Cave Junction if these new projects don't happen.

With timing that compliments Cave Junction's transportation plan updates, the Oregon Department of Transportation is also moving ahead with a paving project on Highway 199, from Slate Creek (near the Applegate River bridge), all the way through to Rockydale, just south of Cave Junction.

To minimize safety hazards and accidents locally, ODOT's plans to slow down the traffic that currently moves too quickly through town on Highway 199. The current four lanes of traffic in Cave Junction will be eliminated, leaving only one north bound lane and one south bound lane, with a refuge lane in the middle for left turns.

"We've had multiple reports that people are passing on the right at over 50 miles an hour," said ODOT District Traffic Operations Engineer Dan Dorrell. "Drivers don't need to be passing inside city limits and this

project will slow the traffic where a lot of the bikes and pedestrians are. People can pass just north and south of town."

"Also, these improvements will help local businesses, by allowing traffic to make left turns to gain easier access," Dorrell said. "This project also adds more parking spots and six-foot bicycle lanes on both sides of 199. No concrete medians are planned."

Highway 199 is classified as both a freight route and a state highway, and according to ODOT, about 10,000 vehicles drive through downtown Cave Junction daily. Recent studies explored improvements for vehicular and pedestrian traffic and produced planning goals that identify the best linkages between the community's neighborhoods, schools and businesses - to move people and goods safely throughout the 199 corridor, both now and in the future.

Work on these transportation projects is expected to begin in 2015.

Individuals, groups step up to save county fairgrounds

By
Annette McGee Rasch

IVN Senior Contributing Writer

Thanks to the generosity of the community, grant foundations, sound management practices and volunteer support, the Josephine County Fairgrounds are making a solid comeback.

"There's no talk at all about closing the fairgrounds down anymore," said Fairgrounds Manager Mary Groves. "We're going ahead with planning this year's fair."

Funds have come in steadily since the possibility of closing the venue down became widely known last year. By the end of April, though, the fairgrounds were "\$98,000 in the black," according to Groves. Groves says \$60,000 came from community donations, \$20,000 came from the Southern Oregon Horse Racing Association, and the rest was earned from fairground activities.

"The nest egg from the community helped make this possible," Groves said. "The whole

community effort has been awesome. People from multiple demographics saw the need to preserve our traditions and to keep the event center open and available."

Most recently, two grants awarded to the fairgrounds will support ongoing efforts to upgrade the buildings and grounds.

"We're very honored and pleased to announce the receipt of these grants from caring Oregon philanthropic organizations to help improve our facilities," Groves said.

The Medford-based Olsrud Family Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation granted \$5,000 to finance kitchen upgrades and restroom renovations to meet accessibility standards in the Arts and Crafts Building. And the Ford Family Foundation, located in Roseburg, Ore., which has a mission of promoting "successful citizens and vital rural communities," provided an emergency grant of \$5,895 to help replace plumbing that froze in many locations on the grounds during an extended cold period last December.

Since January, Bridgeview Winery has

made sizable monthly donations, at the rate of 25 cents from each bottle of wine sold in both Josephine and Jackson Counties.

Wheeler Toyota, the Shilo Inn, the Columbia Distributing Company, Cascade Metal Recycling, Southern Oregon Sanitation and Coca Cola have also been major sponsors.

"That list just goes on," Groves said. "And individual donations are still climbing. It's clear that the community values this event center and will do what it takes to keep it open as we move through these tough economic times. The fairgrounds are moving towards economic solvency, and in the end, will be a nice contributor to the local economy, which will benefit everyone. So this is a case of the people coming forward to protect their own future."

This year's fair will run August 13-16. The fair's premium book will be available soon at the fair office, the Grange Co-op, or the Farmer's Feed Supply.

"There will be four fantastic days of fair, with great music every night," Groves said. "And, we're returning to a more traditional ag-

ricultural focus."

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Josephine County Fair, and to celebrate that milestone, a historical display will provide an overview of fair activities over time. The presentation will also review, by decade, what was happening around Grants Pass and the county.

The Farmers & Artisans Community Market is held on the first Saturday of every month, from June through October. Indoor booth space costs \$35 while an outdoor spot costs \$25. Availability is on a "first come, first paid" basis.

Grants Pass Downs horse racing begins on June 14 at p.m. and runs each weekend through July 6.

To learn about other events and get more information about the fairgrounds, go to fairgrounds@co.josephine.or.us. The fairgrounds is launching a new website, at josephinecountyfairgrounds.com, which should be up and running soon. Once live, there will be a link to that new site from Josephine County's existing website.