

Illinois Valley News

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Smokey Bear awaits movie release

The anticipation is mounting as movie-goers await the newest Disney adventure, "Planes: Fire and Rescue." The animated feature, which will hit theatres July 18, captures the essence of wildland firefighting and will remind all audiences of the devastation fire brings. Smokey Bear, the Ad Council and the National Association of State Foresters have teamed up with Disney to raise fire prevention awareness encouraging folks to take the proper steps when putting their campfire out.

Check out the fire prevention message at: [www.psacentral.org/campaign/Wildfire_Prevention/asset/Smokey_Bear\\$Planes_-_Wingman/189280004](http://www.psacentral.org/campaign/Wildfire_Prevention/asset/Smokey_Bear$Planes_-_Wingman/189280004).

The 2014 fire season is already proving to be a challenge. Drought conditions persist throughout the region and fire danger has already begun reaching record highs during these early summer months. Fire officials throughout Oregon and Washington are reminding everyone to be extra vigilant throughout the remainder of the summer. By practicing simple fire prevention measures, human-caused fires can be prevented.

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INSIDE



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Control your animal



(Courtesy photo for The Illinois Valley News)

Members of the IV Working Dogs class in Downtown CJ are training in areas with distractions to help pooches hone their skills.

Local trainer takes dog walking to a new level

By

Annette McGee Rasch

IVN Senior Contributing Writer

Driving through Cave Junction in the mornings, many people often slow down, curious about the sight of a large group of people walking their dogs together. Three times a week, members of the Illinois Valley Working Dogs take "working walks" to improve their dogs' general obedience, manners and overall social skills.

Led by dog trainer Theresa Dugas, participants get great exercise and have a blast while creating canine companions that are a pleasure to live

with.

"The working walks are the key to my business," Dugas said. "We take many different routes and meet and greet with the public. We also interact with other dogs, bicycles, kids, police, and we ask joggers to run and weave through our dog and handler teams. Then we take our dogs into the banks for a drink of water. Everyone likes to be involved and the dogs love it."

Residents along the routes whose own dogs are racing along their fence lines in excitement appreciate it when the I.V. Working Dogs pass by. The group will often pause and go through their moves, helping dogs fenced in their yards to learn to calm down.

See Dogs on A-10

Cave Junction gets a new deputy, again

By

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Once again, Cave Junction has a new contract deputy. Deputy Jim Geiger, a 17-year veteran with the Josephine County Sheriff's Office, has taken over the post.

Sheriff Gil Gilbertson explained that positions in his office are based on seniority. Geiger was on temporary leave due to an injury when Deputy Travis Snyder was assigned to Cave Junction; but when Geiger recovered, he was appointed to the position and Snyder was transferred back to the county jail.

Geiger has spent most of career as a patrol officer, has worked extensively throughout the entire county and is very familiar with the Illinois Valley.

"It is a unique area out here," Geiger said. "This is beautiful country, and a pretty diverse group of people, and that makes the job interesting, challenging and rewarding. I'm looking forward to getting to know the community again and trying to understand what their needs are."

"I handle all calls coming into the city," Geiger said. "Whether it is a burglary in progress or dealing with transients sleeping on the sidewalk."

While Geiger's role is to serve the city, if a situation outside city limits is life-threatening, or if another officer requires back-up nearby, he'll respond to these calls.

The homeless people in the area are a perennial issue and Geiger noted that he's aware how a lot of people want to help ease the situation, but says supporting homeless peoples' way of life is not helping them, or the city.

"In the past few weeks I have been issuing a lot of citations to people allowing their dogs off leash and drinking alcohol at Jubilee Park," Geiger said. "And now, with the new skatepark, there are a lot more kids down there, so there's more potential for conflict."

Geiger has been discussing issues with city officials regarding homeless people trespassing in the park, but acknowledges that the situation is frustrating, and there is no resolution.

"The way things are right now, we can tell people to leave the park, that if they come back they'll be arrested," Geiger said.

"But this just means they'll get a written citation. We don't have room at the jail for them. And when we leave, they come right back. We have no teeth, no leverage right now."

Geiger said it comes down to resources.

"Throughout the sheriff's office we're all doing our jobs the best we can given our limitations, but we can't always do it adequately in this fiscal climate," Geiger said. "We don't have enough resources and that's very frustrating for everyone."

If people commit serious crimes, like homicide, rape or kidnapping, they'll face serious consequences. But people committing theft and assault related crimes likely won't end up in jail, they'll just get citations, which means going to court and potentially gaining a criminal record, but no jail time, according to Geiger.

"There's no serious deterrents or consequences to most criminal behavior," Geiger said. "And that's a real problem."

Some people want Cave Junction's contract deputy to work at night instead of daytime, but Geiger explained that due to budget cuts the sheriff's office only has two dispatchers and they both work during the day. Officers cannot work without dispatchers on duty.

"Those decisions are up to the sheriff," Geiger said. "And people will complain either way. We just don't have the manpower to cover all the shifts. But I want people to realize I'm busy all day long and a lot more calls for assistance come in during the day than at night, when more people are at home and can keep an eye on their properties."

Geiger said that the crime situation is the same countywide and that he's concerned more people may leave the area and that businesses are either going to leave or not locate here in the first place, damaging the communities for years to come.

"People thinking about relocating get on the internet and do research," Geiger said. "Then they find out our county does not have an adequate police presence. People here just don't want to pay more taxes or they think the county already has enough resources, but the reality is that we don't. The long term effect is not having a viable community."

"And no matter who becomes sheriff, it's the same nickel," Geiger added. "They will have the same issues and the same lack of resources to deal with them."

To make contact, email Geiger at jgeiger@co.jospehpne.or.us or call the Cave Junction substation at 541-592-5151.

Rusk Ranch to hold free event

By

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This weekend will bring a variety of free music and family-fun entertainment to the Rusk Ranch Nature Center.

Michelle LeComte and Tim Wallace, the beloved Oregon Little Big Band Duo will be the headliners on Saturday, July 19, when a Summer Gala is slated to take place in the lower meadow at the center. The free event will begin at 6 p.m. and feature a fantasy fashion show sneak preview, silent auction, raffle, dancing, food, a no-host bar and the very first "Illinois Valley Celebrity Toast." Although admission to the Summer Gala is free, reservations are requested by calling 541-287-2164.

Well-known Illinois Valley leader Roger Brandt will be honored for his many contributions to community development. Due largely to Brandt's efforts, the multi-year Ford Family Institute Leadership Program was brought to the Valley and he was also instrumental in helping to prevent the Siskiyou Smokejumper Base from getting torn down.

On July 20th, from 10 to 4 p.m. RRNC will present the second annual Nature & Art Festival free to the public with food vendors, an arts & crafts fair and lots of family fun activities. This year's

event features a water spray play area, wooden salmon painting, worm races, a Fantasy Recycled Fashion Show, a bee exhibit, and information tables by the I.V. Volunteer Firefighters, the Oregon Caves National Monument and others.

The live entertainment line-up for the day starts with Terry Davis, followed by Motel Jones and then duo Wild, Winsome Women at 11 a.m. At 11:15 Terry Davis will play again followed by a swing dance duet by Maelagh Baker and Christine Perala Gardiner.

At noon, there will be a Kung Fu demonstration by students at the Rising Dragon martial arts studio, followed by a poetry reading at 12:30 p.m. A kids' nature parade will take place at 12:45 p.m., followed by the popular Fantasy and Recycled Fashion Show at 1:30, and Guppy will end the day with a set beginning at 2:30 p.m.

The festival's goals are to offer fun outdoor nature experiences as well as build a venue to support local artists and crafts people.

Rusk Ranch Nature Center offers hands-on nature activities for kids, such as observing the life of native caterpillars & butterflies, frogs and pond creatures, viewing bugs & life under a teaching microscope, feeding butterflies & birds, using trails and a natural playground.

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