

Water ... Continued from A-1

As far as water quality in the area, the river (and creeks) are lower than usual due to lack of adequate rainfall last winter, and with the extreme heat, in wider and quieter sections of the river with less water flow, naturally occurring algae blooms are cropping up.

When weather, sunlight and nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorous) become optimal, algae can multiply and bloom in any standing body of water, according to Josephine County Environmental Health Specialist Brad Carlson. While many blooms are blue-green in color, some may be foamy, scummy, thick like paint, pea-green, blue-green or even brownish-red.

People are typically exposed to algae blooms through skin contact, inhalation, or ingestion, if water is swallowed. While some blue-green algae strains can produce toxins that may irritate the skin or get people sick, toxins are not always produced, or produced at high enough levels to cause rashes or illness. Still, health experts recommend that people avoid contact with all algae blooms — and to keep pets clear as well.

“People need to use common sense,” Carlson said. “If you see an algae bloom, don’t touch it and move away from it. Occasional exposure to most varieties of blue green algae are probably not a problem, but long-term exposure could cause trouble.”

Lake Selmac is another popular destination on these hot days and so far this year, water quality has been good, according to County Parks Ranger Josh

Sabota. Though during the Reeves Creek Fire, the lake was utilized for a water source, causing water levels to drop about a foot each day during the fire fight.

“Because of lower water levels people are swimming farther out,” Sabota said. “So they’re coming into contact with Hydrilla plants, and with the water warming, it’s growing pretty fast right now. But Hydrilla is not harmful to human health. We do try to keep it off the docks and boat ramps and out of the swimming areas, but it is really difficult to control.”

Hydrilla can form dense mats of vegetation that interfere with recreation and compromise fish and wildlife habitat, according to botanists.

“As of last week we’re also seeing Bryzoan, which looks like a large jellyish blob that’s brownish green on the outside,” Sabota said. “If you cut it open, it’s clear inside. The Bryzoan is usually attached to the Hydrilla or downed trees in the lake, but it is actually an algae-eating organism and indicates good water quality. Contact with them won’t hurt you either.”

Lake Selmac water quality is tested regularly for water borne organisms that could cause trouble for humans or animals. Sabota says to keep an eye on the triangular signs around the lake. The signs are green when it is safe to swim, but flip down to display a bright colored warning when there’s any danger in the water.

Disc ... Continued from A-1

Four work weekends are planned in October to install the facility. Additional fundraising plans include bagging groceries at Shop Smart, sending out requests for donations and in-kind pledges from the groups’ families and friends, and sponsoring a benefit event or two.

“Anyone wishing to contribute is asked to contact Deelia Warner at 541-592-6069,” Dickson concluded. “And if they have any questions about the project, they can contact me at 541-592-8521.”

In a recent parallel development, Illinois Valley Community Development Organization’s (IVCDO) President Roger Brandt wrote and won a grant for additional park improvements. The IVCDO has just entered into an Adopt-A-Park agreement with OPRD following the agency’s recent lease signing with the BLM, which owns the land. For the past 7 years, no lease existed between the two government agencies.

“We have a Title II grant for \$18,000 that is intended to be used for improving wheelchair accessibility at the park, Brandt explained. “This may not be enough to cover the cost of all improvements, but I am working on other grants to help cover the cost and will be depending on community contributions and volunteers to help get everything done.”

The projects include restoration of the wheelchair accessible loop trail, installation of concrete wheelchair accessible walkways, and the installation of a wheelchair ramp so people can get up the 15 inch-high curb surrounding the parking lot.

Brandt then read off his list of other improvements including the removal of old tables and replacing them with precast concrete tables; and installing benches, bicycle racks, and a concrete floor in the pavilion. The metal roof also is in need of dormers or vents to allow heat to escape.

Brandt is quick to point out the many enhancements the park has enjoyed over the past few years and express his confidence that the community’s relationship with both government agencies will continue to improve as communication pathways are strengthened.

Arrest ... Continued from A-1

According to OSP sergeant Jeff Fitzgerald, OSP detectives identified stranger Raymond Davis, age 28, as a person of interest in the August 2, 2014, shooting death of Michael Clyde McDonald, age 61, from Cave Junction. The ongoing investigation indicated Davis may have fled to the Paradise, Calif. area in Butte County. Working in conjunction with Paradise Police Department, their officers found Davis and arrested him on an unrelated warrant on August 6. A warrant was issued out of Josephine County for murder and Davis is now being held as a fugitive from justice pending extradition proceedings to return him to Oregon.

Previously released information indicated on August 2, 2014 at approximately 3:35 p.m., information was received by 9-1-1 and OSP Southern Command Center dispatch of a shooting in the 6000 block of Rockydale Road south of Cave Junction. OSP Troopers responded and found a deceased adult male on the property who had been shot at least one time.

OSP and members of the Grants Pass Dept. of Public Safety Major Crime Team were dispatched to investigate. The deceased male was identified as McDonald.

The lead investigator is OSP Detective Annie Harris.

The release also stated that no other information will be released unless authorized by the Josephine County District Attorney’s office.



**ArtWalk
Featured
Artist
Michael
Spring
read his
poetry to an
appreciative
crowd at
Josephine
Community
Library.**

(Photo by Judy Hoyle, Illinois Valley News)



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