

# 2014 Year in review ... Continued

## OCTOBER

• The Josephine County Jail receives an unscheduled inspection every year from a grand jury comprised of lay people appointed by the District Attorney's office.

The surprise inspection evaluates the conditions and management of the jail and Sheriff Gil Gilbertson was pleased to announce that, once again, the jail received top marks.

"The inspection went very well," he said. "We're inspected four to six times a year by various agencies and we consistently come out with 99 to 100 percent compliance with both state and federal jail standards. We're very proud of this."

• During its regularly scheduled Oct. 13 meeting, the Cave Junction City Council approved John Gardiner's proposal that the city send a letter to Senator Ron Wyden requesting that the O&C Act of 2014 include language to protect the city's watershed in the Illinois River basin.

This type of protection, called a Special Management Unit (SMU), has already been included in the current legislation for other potentially impacted municipalities, including Clackamas, Hillsboro, McKenzie and Springfield. Other organizations which had already sent letters in support of protecting the city's water resources include the I.V. Soil and Water Conservation District (IVSWCD) and I.V. Watershed Council (IVWC), the Kerby Water District (KWD), I.V. Community Development Organization (IVCDO) and the Rogue Basin Coordinating Council (RBCC).

## NOVEMBER

• Josephine County commissioners approved a proposed long-term lease with Manor Communities Development Corporation (MCDC), LLC, which has agreed to invest over \$20 million in Illinois Valley Airport infrastructure over the next 30 years.

The agreement, signed by commissioners Nov. 12, provides for yearly cash payments to the Airports Department and direct investment in a full-length parallel taxiway, connectors, ramps, aprons, water system, septic system, electrical system and the hangars and buildings needed to support a new Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Operations

and Technology Center.

• Library services will continue, as will private fundraising efforts, in the aftermath of voters rejecting Measure 17-62 to form the Josephine Community Library District.

The library district measure got 15,474 Yes votes (46.92 percent) to 17,509 No votes (53.08 percent).

Local voters also rejected a measure banning pesticide use in Josephine County and the labeling of genetically engineered food. State-wide, voters rejected recreational marijuana, but locally, voters were split on that issue.

The library measure would have supported Josephine Community Libraries, Inc. (JCLI), a nonprofit organization, formed in 2009 after the county system was shut down in 2007 due to lack of funds. JCLI currently operates the main library in Grants Pass and three branch libraries, including the Illinois Valley branch.

Perhaps the hottest of the hot button issues was statewide Measure 91, the legalization of recreational marijuana. Preliminary results showed it passed easily, by 55 percent to 45 percent.

## DECEMBER

• The Oregon Caves received a grand Christmas present when President Obama signed a bill Dec. 19 to expand the monument from 480 acres to over 4,000 acres, creating the Oregon Caves National Preserve. The bill was one of 20 park service improvement initiatives attached to the National Defense Authorization Act.

Supporters say the expansion will facilitate better protection and unified management of the entire watershed that feeds the cave and provides drinking water for visitors.

• Josephine County Commissioner Simon Hare has found himself in hot water for sending sexy text messages to two young women.

The Dec. 5 incident, which took place at the Cedarwood Saloon in Grants Pass, came to the public's attention after Doug Deakins, the father of one of the girls, spoke up at the county's Dec. 17 weekly business session.

"The more I thought about it and looked into the background on Simon, the more I felt compelled

to come forward," said Deakins, a helicopter pilot with Swanson Group Aviation, who was not acquainted with Hare before this incident.

Deakins and his wife, Stefani, were sitting at a table with some friends, including Jennifer Putnam, who was the treasurer of Hare's recent re-election campaign, when the incident occurred.

When Stefani Deakins left the table, Hare picked up her cell phone. Hare claims he thought the phone belonged to Putnam and he sent the messages to the last two contacts in the text message feed as a prank.

The first message: "Dude, you are so hot," went to Deakin's 18-year-old daughter. A second message: "God, I gotta get in your pants," was sent to Deakin's 23-year-old niece.

Both girls were stunned by these suggestive messages and texted

back to Deakin's wife, who told the girls that somebody had taken her phone and had sent the messages.

Determining that Hare was responsible, Deakins confronted him at the bar.

"Simon admitted he sent the messages, but became very defensive," said Deakins, adding that it nearly became a fistfight. "Simon said my wife shouldn't leave her phone lying on the table and that she should have had it locked. I told him he shouldn't be picking up stuff that wasn't his and the argument continued... Simon also said that I would 'lose every day of the week' if I did anything about this and then told my wife he knows a lot of attorneys and we don't wanna 'mess' with him."

• Cave Junction City Council members took public comment on, and then adopted by unanimous vote, a new Transportation System Plan at

a Dec. 10 meeting. Updating the previous plan, last revised in 2001, was a state requirement. The new plan was developed by the consulting firm David Evans and Associates, under a transportation and growth management grant. The process was overseen by Principal Land Use Planner Dick Converse of the Rogue Valley Council of Governments.

• The Southern Oregon Outreach Foundation's (SOOF) discount grocery store was burglarized overnight on Tuesday, Dec. 9. Thousands of dollars and various merchandise was stolen. The store was also badly vandalized, creating a huge headache for those dedicated to bringing affordable food to Illinois Valley residents.

Employees discovered the mess the next morning, but rolled up their sleeves and managed to open the store that same day.

## First Christmas



(Photo by Laura Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Ilah Camp with Santa and Mrs. Claus Dec. 24 at the Josephine County Building in C.J.

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