

Illinois Valley News

Wednesday, January 7, 2015, 1 Section, 10 Pages, Volume 77 No. 44 Published Weekly Cave Junction, Oregon 97523

illinois-valley-news.com

IVFD Chief Hoke 2015 preview

By
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IV Fire District Chief Dennis Hoke is developing the district's first ever strategic plan based on input he's receiving from resident surveys.

What do you want to accomplish in 2015?

"A well thought out strategic plan for IVFD to create a road leading up to 2020. We're well on our way toward that goal. We've received about 500 surveys so far and we're hoping to get at least a thousand. The survey will help us develop goals to achieve between now and 2020 as the Valley population continues to grow."

What's your biggest challenge for 2015?

"Ensuring adequate staffing for the number of calls generated. Our call volume is up. We received 1,261 calls during 2014 alone. Most of these were medical. Sometimes we have to wait up to an hour and a half before AMR is able to send an ambulance."

What policy changes will you make?

"We're going to review our Policy Manual and make sure it reflects what we actually do. Our number one goal is safety of fire district members, both volunteer and staff. My job as Chief is to make sure we have the best trained and equipped personnel to answer the needs of our community."

What's new?

"We now have the ability to provide 24/7 firefighters and EMT's at Fire Station #1 and Fire Station #2 in Selma. I'm also excited about IVFD's upcoming Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) Jan. 30 through Feb. 1, at Station #1."

Those interested can access the community survey or the CERT training application online or pick up a print version at the district's administration office at Station #1, 681 Caves Highway, Monday through Thursday.

Stop illegal burning



(Photo by Dale Sandberg, IVFD Media Dept)

This fully engulfed fifth wheel was found when IVFD responded to a reported open burn of illegal materials, Jan. 1 on Dick George Rd. The cause of fire is under investigation.

Dave Daniel tackles the toughest job in county government

By
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Dave Daniel was sworn in as Josephine County's new sheriff Monday, and many say he's taking on the toughest job in Josephine County government.

"Funding, no question, is not only my biggest challenge, but Josephine County's biggest challenge," Daniel said. "If no source of revenue is supported, I'm looking at a budget somewhere around 1.6 to 1.7 million."

"I could go into what that means for the county but I won't. For too long, our citizens have been exposed to fear mongering when it comes to money measures, so I'll remain positive."

Though he added, if passed, May's ballot measure for public safety funding would "allow for an increased number of deputies in and around our schools and for emergency response,

and also, increase jail capacity so that criminals can be held both before prosecution and after sentencing. The aftereffect is that we'd begin to take our county back from what many say is lawlessness."

The proposed measure calls for the formation of a Josephine County Public Safety Advisory Committee.

"For the first time in history, the underbelly of the sheriff's office would be exposed," Daniel said. "It all boils down to trust. If our citizens know what the office is doing, and why, I believe they'll support it. It holds me accountable for my actions and decisions. This is an oversight never seen before."

Daniel intends to comb through and update the sheriff's policy manual in 2015.

"One main policy I'll work on is how to bring every arrestee to the jail," Daniel said.

Currently, whether or not a suspect goes to jail depends on "the matrix" of policy utilized by the law enforcement agency involved. (The

agencies are the county sheriff's office, Oregon State Police or the Grants Pass Department of Public Safety.)

"They may arrest someone, but it may be in the form of a citation. This is tragic. If probable cause exists that a crime has been committed, the individual should go to jail," Daniel said. "How long they stay is another question, but at least they should be booked in. This provides for increased communication and an increased database for the sheriff's office about what's going on in our county. However, this is dependent on funding and staffing levels in the jail."

"The Illinois Valley is a beautiful place. Unfortunately, over time, there has been a lessening of public safety service for a number of reasons. I understand - and it's a focus for me. That being said, I'm not going to be able to fix things immediately. The sheriff's office didn't get to where it is now in a day. Should funding appear, it will still take time to build it back

up. Until then I'll be working with other law enforcement organizations and our community watch groups to organize and communicate."



Sheriff Daniel

Keith Heck steps in as new county board chairman

By
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Josephine County commissioner Keith Heck will take over as chairman of the board in January - at a critical moment in county history.

"Unless the new public safety levy passes, or there's some unexpected influx of funds, we'll have only 2.6 million to run the county. Contrast that to 2008, when the budget was about 12 million," Heck said. "There's no government money slated to come. While there may be some sort of last minute bail out, it's not something we can budget on."

Heck said while fiscal stability is the "most noticeable issue" on the horizon that finding the best path forward will require a "lessening of the noise from opposition."

"Our ability to make progress has been hampered and this hurts us all. The lone voice that repeatedly howls over every item they don't agree with is always heard, and too many

people think because there's this howling that there's something of import there, but often, it's just a distraction and doesn't produce anything of benefit.

"Constructive disagreement has clear purpose and offers ways to achieve positive results. Everyone knows we're in very difficult times. The challenge is to bring people together, so we can realize our community connectedness. Whatever the answers are, we must work together to achieve these solutions," Heck said.

Heck intends to lobby for the formation of a new citizens advisory group to address economic development for the county and says there are already some hopeful plans for 2015.

"I'm really stoked about the potential for the Illinois Valley airport development. There's some skepticism, and while I appreciate peoples' concerns, the county won't lose a dime if the project goes belly up - so why not support the effort? Let's make it work. It could bring substantial amounts of jobs to the Valley - initially and conservatively, 125 jobs."

Bosch looks forward to challenges confronting Cave Junction Council

By
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Dan Bosch was elected to Cave Junction City Council Position #1 in November. A lifelong resident, Bosch's family has been here since 1912.

What's your biggest challenge for 2015?

"Getting up to speed with everything that's been going on in Cave Junction over the past year. On Feb. 3, I'll attend a workshop for newly elected city officials. The training is sponsored by the League of Oregon Cities."

What's new for 2015?

"I'm going to be more in the public spotlight. My life is different from before the election. For example, this is my second telephone interview! I'm starting to get used to people walking up to me and asking me questions, and people have been giving me their opinions."

What do you want to accomplish this year?

"Cave Junction used to have a lot

to offer. Thirty years ago, it was a bigger town. With the airport expansion, we're at a crossroad. I hope more people come to city council meetings. If we have more feedback, the better it will be for everyone so we can really figure out how we want things to go.

"At the last meeting on how to solve the highway problem, different ideas were brought forth. There are companies that could install cameras at the intersections and we could issue red



Councilman Bosch

light tickets and speeding tickets and have signs at both ends of town that if you don't drive safe, you're going to get a ticket. Then the town could get daily income and it wouldn't cost as much as all the reconstruction planned by ODOT."

What policy changes do you foresee?

"I'd like to see more code enforcement. At a recent meeting, somebody complained about a broken down van, so I went to take a look for myself. Then I noticed two other yards in town that had lots of old cars that had been there for years, so maybe we need a compliance officer."

"I just want to make sure people know I'll always try to do what's best for the whole community and not just push my personal agenda. That's the best way to thank the people who voted for me. There isn't much atmosphere to cultivate new ideas. It would be nice to have more of a public forum, but if you can't come to the meetings, come up to the mayor or the councilors and tell us what you want."