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Joint police saturation was no joke

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It was no joke when 10 people were arrested within three hours on April Fools' Day and the early hours of April 2. A small army of law enforcement officers from several jurisdictions conducted a saturation patrol in the Illinois Valley Friday night.

"We planned this ahead of time and had targets we were looking for, and also, made random contact with persons of interest," said Josephine County Sheriff Dave Daniel. "The I.V. has been hit hard and we fully realize it. I coordinated this response with Oregon State Police (OSP); U.S. Marshalls Service; the Bureau of Land Management; and our county deputies and reserve deputies. We're going to do whatever we can, within the confines of our resources. When there's a problem, we're going to get involved."

Some onlookers cheered the police, the shady characters scattered, and members of the "CJ Patrols" neighborhood watch group expressed gratitude. CJ Patrols coordinator Jimmy Evans said, "Heading home that night, this place was like a ghost town as far as the criminal element goes. It was an absolute relief. We strongly support Sheriff Daniel and the help from other law enforcement agencies is fantastic. We hope the 'Big Boys' come to town as often as possible."

Daniel said the arrests included a man in violation of a \$1 million bail for assault with a deadly weapon out of Los Angeles. An individual from Tennessee on a motorcycle involved in black market marijuana sales was chased down and arrested. Plus, a vehicle was stopped for violations and the driver was then charged and arrested for DUI - alcohol.

According to Guenter Ambron, a rural neighborhood watch coordinator volunteering with CJ Patrols that night, "A fight broke out and four arrests happened behind the Red Garter, and also, two other arrests, two high-speed chases, a fire behind one of the businesses, criminal activity at another church, and there was a lot of other street action, traffic stops and citations. It was just a real beehive."

Ironically, during the middle of all this, around 10 p.m. on Old Stage Road, near Laurel drive, a man and a woman jumped, beat and robbed a 62-year-old woman as she walked home from town.

Later, at 1:20 a.m., a speeding maroon Chevy driven by Brett Wagner Oliver, 30, from Selma, passed OSP Officer Jim Geiger on Highway 199 near Deer Creek Road. Geiger pursued the Chevy, clocking speeds of 120 miles per hour. The vehicle was successfully "spiked" by another officer in Kerby, but continued to drive on rims until it hit a curb in Cave Junction. Oliver attempted to flee on foot but was captured and charged with multiple offenses including: attempt to elude, DUI-alcohol, reckless driving, reckless endangerment and interference with a peace officer.

Ambron says increasing numbers of younger people are being "recruited by the older thugs. The testimonials grow. There are assaults, abuses, robberies and theft, intimidation, black mail and more. The criminals get bolder every day. Younger people are being recruited by the older thugs. Heroin and meth are tools they push and use, and they foster mental health illness and bullying. They know the justice system isn't working."

SEE CROOKS ON A-10

Fugitive wanted in Oregon killing arrested in Texas

GRANTS PASS, Ore. (AP) — Oregon State Police says a 24-year-old man wanted in connection with the October killing of a Southern Oregon man has been arrested in Texas.

Authorities say Marshall McKenna, of Ponder, Texas, was taken into custody Saturday by the U.S. Marshals Service and the Denton County Sheriff's Office, ending a five-month manhunt.

McKenna was lodged in the Webb County Jail in Laredo, Texas. He's the third man arrested in the case.

Authorities have been searching for McKenna

since 43-year-old Roger Huntington, of Crescent City, California, was found dead in his SUV near the Lake Selmac boat ramp in Josephine County in October.

Two days later, Oregon State Police arrested 22-year-old Carroll "B.J." Ballard and 20-year-old Blake Sibley on charges of murder and robbery. Both are from Texas.

Court papers show the three robbed Huntington at gunpoint, and McKenna is accused of pulling the trigger.

Thrill of impulsion



(Courtesy photo by Lena DiMatteo for The Illinois Valley News)

Zac Parker, riding Cha-Ching, heading into a barrel racing completion during an early season meet. Read the full story on the I.V. equestrian team on A-3.

Wilson, Baertrschiger say no to 753

Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

Josephine County officials continue to try to find solutions to the thorny problem of how to fund public safety, following the defeat of four proposed levies over the past four years. When the federal Secure Rural Schools funding was cut in 2012, the juvenile shelter /detention center was closed and county jail operations were sharply scaled back.

On March 30 the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (LPSCC) held a special session at the county Community Corrections conference

room to appeal for help from the state, but the exchange seemed to end in a stalemate.

Informally called House Bill 3453, State Law 753 would allow Governor Kate Brown to declare a "state of fiscal emergency" in a county. Two weeks ago the advisory board agreed unanimously that a local public safety fiscal emergency exists, or is expected to occur June 30, 2017, when federal "county payments" end altogether.

State Senator Herman Baertrschiger Jr. (R-Grants Pass), State Rep. Carl Wilson (R-Grants Pass), and State Rep. Duane Stark (R-Grants Pass) heard

testimony from Sheriff Dave Daniel, Grants Pass Mayor Darin Fowler and other advisory board members of the dire situation they already face daily.

Each official was given a few minutes to give their perspective on why they consider the situation an emergency.

Grants Pass police Chief Bill Landis pointed out that Oregon State Police and Grants Pass Public Safety have been forced to pay for thousands of dollars worth of overtime and that lack of county funding is draining their resources.

SEE 753 ON A-10

Soup for the Souls event marks 10 years

Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

Cake from Kate Dwyer Catering will be featured at the 10th annual Soup for the Souls event slated for 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. April 9 at I.V. High School. The Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance fundraiser offers an unlimited soup and bread meal that includes a handcrafted or vintage bowl for guests to take home.

Alliance representative Susie Ellwood said, "This year we have something new and exciting! Kate Dwyer will be generously bringing her delicious cakes back to our event. So, come support a great cause with the Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance, and enjoy good food and good times."

A cake walk, silent auction, raffle, door prizes and live entertainment will also be featured.

April is National Sexual Assault Awareness Month. All proceeds from this fundraiser will go toward survivors of sexual violence.

Doors open at 5 p.m. with no early admittance allowed. Tickets are \$15

per person and are available at the Alliance, 103 South Kerby Ave., next to the DMV. Tickets will also be available at the door. The Alliance is not open Friday after noon. For further information call 541-592-2515.

The Alliance will also be participating in Sexual

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“Start by Believing Day’ is as simple as that. It is our commitment to “believe” when someone tells us they were raped or someone they love was raped.”

Marcy Sowa
IVSHA Volunteer Coordinator

Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) by observing “Start by Believing Day” April 6. SAAM is an annual campaign to raise public awareness about sexual assault and how it can be prevented. Nationwide, agencies and jurisdictions sponsor activities to highlight this public health, human rights and social justice issue.

According to IVSHA volunteer coordinator Marcy Sowa, women are often stigmatized or worse, not

believed, when they report a rape. “People are not made to feel shame if a loved one dies, or their car is stolen, or if you’re diagnosed with cancer. Friends and loved ones gather around you for support. It should be the same with sexual violence. But all too often, survivors who have

the courage to tell someone what happened are blamed for bringing it on themselves. This needs to change.”

Sowa said, “‘Start by Believing Day’ is as simple as that. It is our commitment to “believe” when someone tells us they were raped or someone they love was raped. If you want to join us, you can stop by our office and sign the pledge. We will give you a teal ribbon and pin so that you can show your support for survivors

throughout SAAM.

“The most important thing you can do for a survivor of sexual assault is ‘believe them,’ she said. “Disclosing abuse can be very difficult. Your supportive response can mark a golden opportunity for the survivor to begin the healing process. However, even the slightest hint of doubt or blame in your response can result in self-doubt and self-blame that can re-traumatize a survivor. It can be years before that survivor shares his or her experience with another person, prolonging the suffering and negative consequences that result from rape.”

The national SAAM campaign is coordinated by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center with assistance from organizations throughout the United States. As early as 1976, “Take Back the Night” marches protested rape and sexual assault.

SAAM was first observed nationally in April 2001; and in 2009, President Obama was the first U.S. president to proclaim April as SAAM.