

Illinois Valley News

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Lawyer for CJ in 'Pot' suit lands in hot water

IVN Staff

An attorney working for the city of Cave Junction, J Ryan Kirchoff, 37, was arrested at St. Anne Catholic Church in Grants Pass, during a charity event March 6 and charged with criminal trespass in the second degree.

According to Jackson County Assistant District Attorney Lucy Durst, the incident involved Kirchoff having some kind of problem with other church members. He was asked to leave the premises. Then 30 minutes later a Grants Pass Public Safety officer did a perimeter check on the church property, and Kirchoff, who was intoxicated, was found and taken into custody.

Because Kirchoff's ex-wife has occupation involvement with Josephine County, to avoid any potential conflict of interest, the case was handled by Jackson County. The two counties have an arrangement of reciprocity to handle these types of scenarios.

Durst said a deal for a dismissal of charges against Kirchoff, based on a civil compromise has been reached, and the charges against Kirchoff were dismissed last April 5.

"The victim in this case, the church, no longer desires to pursue charges," Durst said. "Kirchoff met with the priest at the church to discuss the incident, how alcohol played a role in the incident and how to prevent other incidents from occurring in the future. The defendant (Kirchoff) has completed 20 hours of community service work and provided proof of those hours to the DA's office."

"I am sorry too that an attorney who represented Cave Junction should be involved with such an unfortunate incident," said City Councilman John Gardiner. "It's a fact of life that those who are active in public life are often held to a higher standard of personal behavior. If he hadn't represented our city, I doubt whether this would be a story of public interest."

Kirchoff declined to make comment to the *Illinois Valley News*.

Through the eyes of a child



(Photo by Laura Mancuso, *Illinois Valley News*)

Sunday, April 17, some young cast members of "Cavetown" presented by the RiverStars Performing Arts Program expressing their views about life in the Valley at the Lorna Byrne Middle School Cafeteria.

City debates sheriff contract renewal

Caroline Griffith
IVN Contributing Writer

The Cave Junction City Council met Monday, April 11, 2016, to discuss, among other items, whether or not to renew the contract with the Josephine County Sheriff's Department to provide patrol services to the city of Cave Junction.

The current contract deputy

agreement, which is set to expire June 30, 2016, stipulates that the sheriff's department provide 40 hours per week of patrol coverage in the Cave Junction area, and one dedicated bed in the county jail, for a yearly fee of \$156,512.00. Included in the contract is the provision that the deputy must submit a monthly performance report and accounting of hours to the city council at their monthly meeting.

Before Sheriff Dave Daniel took the podium to answer questions about the proposed contract, Deputy Lehman reported the patrol numbers for the month of March, noting that property crimes had spiked during that period. The silver lining of the rash of burglaries, according to the deputy, is that citizens are coming together and working to protect their community.

SEE CITY ON A-10

Typo causes panic with JoCo growers

Annette McGee Rasch
IVN Senior Contributing Writer

Many involved in Josephine County's cannabis trade were sent into upheaval Tuesday after the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) mistakenly added Josephine County to a list of 100 cities, towns and counties prohibiting recreational marijuana activities. OLCC had intended to include the town of Joseph (located in eastern Oregon), but instead listed Josephine County. The list, sent out statewide, went to countless JoCo residents signed up for email updates from OLCC; and from there, the false news spread like wildfire on social media.

"The OLCC should be nominated for the typo of the year award, and I can guarantee that they'll be proof reading in the future," said Peter Gendron, a cannabis industry consultant who was selected by the governor's office to help draft Oregon's marijuana laws. He also works as an adviser to the state Legislature on the implementation of the new laws.

Representative Carl Wilson's chief of staff Michelle Binker quickly intervened. "A cannabis advocate alerted me to Josephine County's inclusion on OLCC's 'Record of Cities/Counties Prohibiting Recreational Marijuana Facilities' list," she said. "I was surprised, to say the least, but suspected it was an error. I contacted Rane Niedermeier at OLCC, and told her we needed to stem a rising tide of panic in JoCo. I understand that county legal counsel's phone also was blowing up that morning." Binker also expressed gratitude to OLCC staff for "responding rapidly to correct the error once pointed out to them."

The 100 municipalities in Oregon opting out of the cannabis industry have banned

licensed recreational marijuana facilities, production of more than four marijuana plants on any single property, and processing, which includes harvesting plants and making cannabis products like tinctures, lozenges, candies, cookies, etc. Wholesale activities, which mean buying products from producers and delivering to processors and retailers, are also banned in those locations.

After Oregon voters legalized recreational marijuana with the passage of Measure 91 in 2014, additional legislation HB 3400 adopted in 2015, allowed counties where 55 percent or more of voters opposed Measure 91 to ban marijuana sales. A total of 15 counties - all east of the Cascade Range - had rejected Measure 91 initiative by that margin. Additionally, in locations where 51 and 55 percent of voters had rejected the measure, then ordinances could be passed rejecting all things marijuana — except for possession; and the Grants Pass City Council voted to go that route. That council continues to take actions to reaffirm the city's stance against marijuana, both medical and recreational.

"In general Josephine County has accepted the reality that this is a legal product and we are now trying to make it as easy as possible and welcoming as possible for those who are serious about complying with the rules and regulations for the cannabis industry," said JoCo Commissioner Keith Heck. "The county's planning department is all prepared for this process and all people need to do is to call the department and they'll guide you through the process." About the typo that caused so much confusion, Heck said: "I am glad it was the OLCC and not Josephine County who made this mistake."

SEE TYPO ON A-10

Oregon says no to criminal liability for banks and credit unions

The national market for legal cannabis sales in the U.S. could go as high as \$10.8 billion by 2018 according to projections by ArcView Market Research (AMR) printed in the Feb. 1, 2016 issue of "Fortune Magazine."

As voters in more states embrace legalized marijuana sales, the burgeoning cannabis industry has gone from a curiosity to a booming market.

Just how big is the market for legal pot? A new report by AMR, a leading marijuana industry investment and research firm, found legal cannabis sales jumped 17 percent, to \$5.4 billion, in 2015 and predict they will grow by a whopping 25 percent this year to reach \$6.7 billion in total U.S. sales.

The numbers are staggering, considered the first recreational dispensaries opened for business in Colorado only two years ago.

AMR released its fourth edition of "The State of Legal Marijuana Markets" report in February, and it included the prediction that the legal cannabis market will see a whopping \$21.8 billion in total annual sales by 2020.

"Fortune" pointed out that in comparison; the National Football League saw roughly \$12 billion of revenue in 2015, with projections of \$25 billion by 2027.

AMR expects the legal pot market to show a compound annual growth rate of nearly 30 percent over the next few years.

SEE BANK ON A-5

**COUNTY COMMISSIONER
CANDIDATE FORUM**

**APRIL 21, 6:30 P.M.
COMMISSIONER POSITION 2**

**APRIL 22, 6:30 P.M.
COMMISSIONER POSITION 3**

**JOSEPHINE COUNTY BUILDING
102 S. REDWOOD HWY. CJ**

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