

Strategic plan to be announced at IVCDO meeting

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IVN Contributing Writer

The public is invited to attend the annual general membership meeting for the Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (IVCDO) April 21 at the RCC / Kerby Belt Building, 24353 Redwood Hwy. The free event will include several special presentations this year, including review of the first draft of the community strategic plan, titled "Illinois Valley 20/20 Vision."

The evening will start with socializing and voting members' sign-up at 5:30 p.m. IVCDO membership is free and available to all I.V. residents and business owners and on-site registration will be available. The program is slated to begin at 6 p.m. Guests are asked to RSVP at 541-956-7400 so adequate refreshments and other arrangements can be obtained.

In addition to the annual recognition of community volunteers and business leadership,

the event will include voting for the slate of volunteer board members. Special recognition of volunteer efforts to address the Valley's public safety crisis will also take place.

The lack of adequate funding for the Josephine County Sheriff's Office is the result of the loss of federal payments through the Secure Rural Schools Act and multiple public levy defeats, including four such losses over the past four years.

New this year, the IVCDO will also acknowledge various county, state and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations which have contributed to IVCDO's success at creating opportunities for individual Valley residents and an enhanced quality of life for all.

IVCDO Partnership Awards will go to representatives of the Josephine County Board of Commissioners for helping to fund the I.V. Micro-loan program and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for allowing the Forks State Park to remain open through various

initiatives and the Adopt a Park partnership with IVCDO.

Federal agency recognition will go to USDA Rural Development for helping fund the current strategic planning process and home ownership programs and the Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve (ORCA) for working with IVCDO to help keep the Oregon Caves Chateau open and attracting millions of tourism dollars into the local economy. The IVCDO is the only nonprofit National Park Service Concessioner in the country.

For the past two years, the Oregon Community Foundation's innovative Studio to School program has funded arts education at Evergreen Elementary's afterschool EverStars program and Lorna Byrne Middle School's ArtNovas project; both theater and dance programs.

The Ford Family Foundation Leadership Institute Program's (FFFLIP) ongoing investment in the Illinois Valley has resulted

in many Valley residents being trained in important self-assessment and collaborative skills as well as community building projects including the Jubilee Park playground, the bioswale installation in front of Evergreen Elementary and the disc golf course at Forks State Park. The fourth and final cohort is currently organizing a special series of events around public safety awareness for the months ahead. The foundation has also helped fund the strategic planning process.

Rural Development Initiatives (RDI) has been a longtime partner with FFFLIP, delivering the training programs on behalf of the public benefit foundation and coordinating the companion I.V. Networking project, now in its fifth year. RDI has also led the strategic planning process with public workshops and focus groups.

In addition, to the awards presentations, the first draft of the strategic plan will be evaluated by the public and comments and suggestions will be solicited.

Can you see underwater? NASA can!

By Michael Gregory
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

If you could, what would you want to look at? Maybe to find out if a crab is about to nibble on your toe? Well, if you were really lucky, you might just see a beautiful coral reef.

What is a reef? It's basically a big collection of rocks sitting on the floor of the ocean. Coral reefs are living reefs covered by tiny animals called corals. They make their skeletons on the outside of their bodies, like a shell, and glue it to a rock—they stay in one place for their whole life!

After corals die, their hard outer shells stay attached to the reef. After years and years of corals leaving their little skeletons behind, a reef gets bigger and bigger. A reef in Australia is so gigantic you can see it from space!

We have learned that coral reefs are very sensitive to changes in temperature and light. They don't like it when they can't get enough clean water because the ocean has pollution in it. And sometimes the water they are living in gets too hot for them to survive.

In 2016, NASA invented a way to study coral reefs from airplanes. Because reefs are underwater, it's not very easy to see

them clearly. That's why NASA is going to use a special instrument (called an imaging spectrometer) to see how the reefs are doing.

Coral reefs are usually really pretty. Some animals that live on reefs are fish, crabs, eels, sharks, sea turtles, and starfish. A lot of the fish living on coral reefs are very brightly colored, which makes people want to go and look at them. Just be sure to bring a mask and snorkel so you can see and breathe underwater! And visit the Space Place web site to learn more about Earth (<http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/all-about-earth/>).



Image credit: Jim Maragos/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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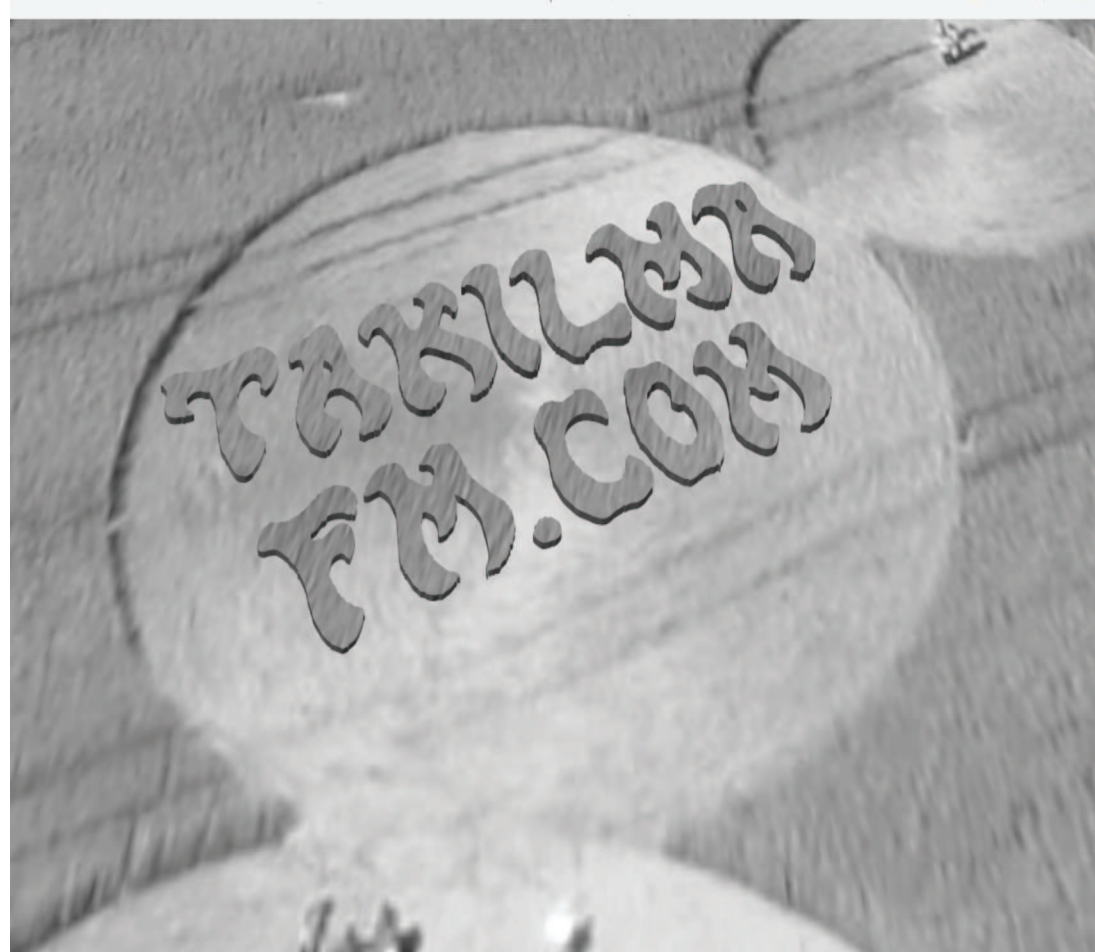
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