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Marijuana tax vote scheduled

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At its meeting Monday, July 11, the Cave Junction City Council set a date for the first of two mandatory public hearings on proposed fuel and cannabis sales taxes. Both issues were on the agenda for Monday night's meeting, but acting city recorder Becky Patton informed the council that legally they are required to perform two public readings of the proposed ordinances before they can vote whether or not to refer them to voters. The first of those readings will be at the July 25 council meeting and the second will be at the August 8 meeting. The proposed ordinances, which have been available for perusal at multiple council meetings, will be read in their entirety and the public will have an opportunity to comment.

Also on the agenda were an easement request from Cameron Camp of I.V. Data Center, and a discussion of a potential lease agreement between the city and KXCJ, a low-power FM radio station that is looking to be on the air by the end of the year. The city approved Camp's request, which he says will help facilitate "some expansion of our business and, potentially, other community uses." When asked by Councilor John Gardiner about potential collaboration with the radio station, Camp said he "certainly would support" putting the KXCJ antenna on his tower.

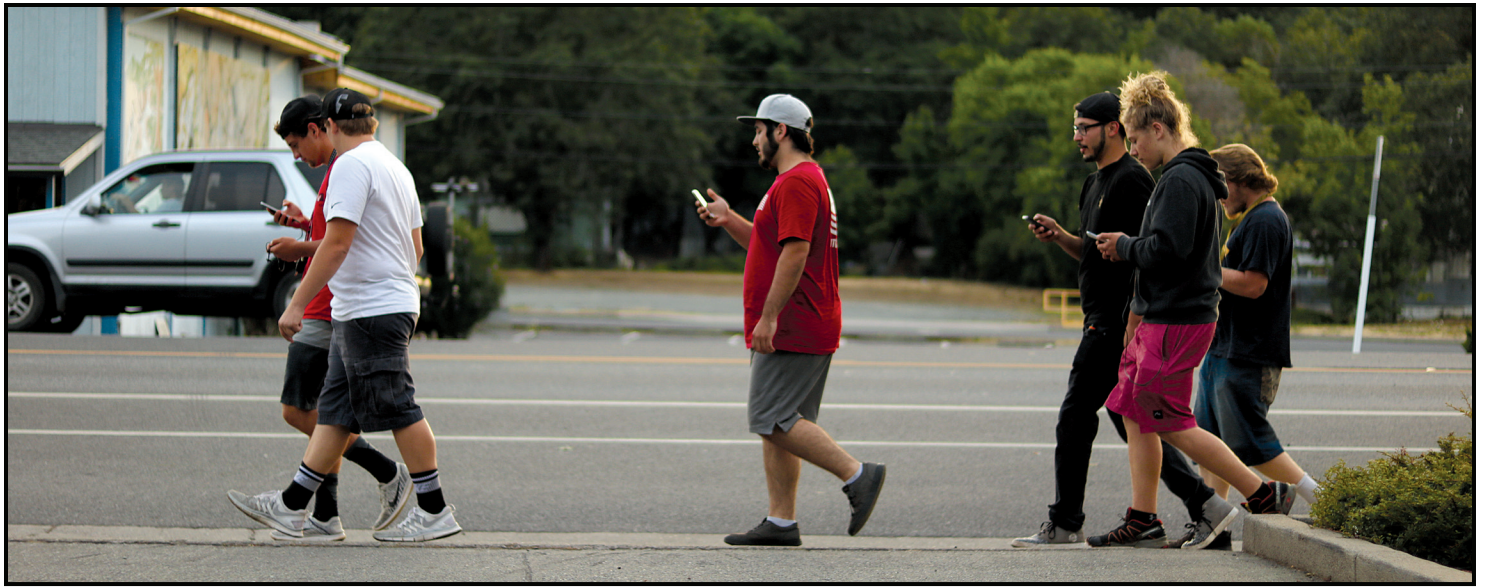
The council was also generally supportive of entering into an agreement with the radio station to lease an antenna site and requested a more detailed description of KXCJ's request. The topic is likely to come up at future council meetings.

Though the regular business session of the meeting concluded rather early, the public comments lasted for over an hour.

Multiple residents of Old Stage Road addressed the council about concerns regarding an industrial property in their residentially zoned neighborhood. According to these residents, the business operating on this property produces industrial noise all hours of the day, heavy truck traffic and offensive smells. One neighbor said, "It's been god-awful. It just doesn't end." Another neighbor, whose property has been in his family for three generations, stated, "I'm ready to move. It's horrible." This same man described walking his toddler in a stroller down Old Stage Road, which has neither sidewalks nor shoulder, and fearing that they would be run down by dump trucks. The mayor informed him that although all of the surrounding properties are within Cave Junction city limits, that particular property is not. Since it is considered part of the county, not the city, there is nothing that the city can do to help the situation. The entire council expressed their sympathy for the neighbors.

Rural Cave Junction resident Nina Horsely then asked the council to join her in opposing the East West Junction Timber Project. According to Horsely, the Bureau of Land Management and Perpetua Forests Company are planning to log a patchwork of properties around the Illinois Valley, many of which are in the Illinois River watershed. Waterways that would be affected by this project include Sucker Creek, Greyback Creek, Chapman Creek, Logan Cut Creek, Canyon Creek, Simmons Cut Creek and the East and West Forks of the Illinois River. "I am asking you, as a municipality, to stand up for our water supply," said Horsely. "To protect our water supply, we need to stop this timber sale immediately."

SEE TAX ON A-6



(Photo by Dan Klapheke, Illinois Valley News)

A group of youth meet up for a walk around town to catch Pokémon on the Pokémon Go App Monday, July 11.

Pokémon on the 'Go' in the Valley

By Dan Klapheke
IVN Staff Writer

Troops of smartphone-wielding people of all ages have been roaming the streets of Cave Junction this past week, and they're all looking for the same thing: Pokémon.

Pokémon Go, the latest installment in Nintendo's Pokémon game series, released for free July 6, for Android and Apple devices. The game is the first in the series available beyond Nintendo handheld gaming systems, opening the series up to a wider audience and age range, and anyone with a smartphone.

Pokémon is a role-playing adventure and strategy game series where you catch monsters, or Pokémon, in the wild, train them and then battle them against other trainers in either the game or the real world. Battling levels up your Pokémon, and there are over 700 to catch, with a new "generation" of Pokémon releasing in the fall.

"Go" is a radical change for the series. It uses GPS tracking to interlace the game in the real world, and lets you catch wild Pokémon and collect items as you travel. For instance, there are three virtual gyms in Cave Junction--at Cave Junction Real Estate, Jubilee Park and the post office--where players can battle and defend against other players.

Josh Hart, 27, has played Pokémon since the first game released in 1996. He

said the new game is nostalgic for him, but is bringing out the community like he's never seen.

"To actually have where you can walk around in your hometown and have landmarks and stuff where you can get stuff makes it pretty fun," Hart said. "And it's the first time in Cave Junction I've seen this many people walking around a couple of days in a row, like together. I think it's a good thing. I enjoy it."

Otis Kitchens, 14, has played Pokémon since he was 8 years old. He said "Go" is more entertaining than other activity options, and it's more interactive than the traditional Nintendo handheld device entries.

"It's better than a FitBit," Kitchens said. "And I get exercise. You actually get to go outside and do stuff with Pokémon."

One effect the game has is groups meeting up around town to roam the streets together. Caleb Groves, 20, helped organized such cohorts three of the first four nights after the game released. He said the game lets him relive his childhood while getting everyone active.

"I've gotten into Call of Duty, sitting there every night all night," Groves said of other games he's heavily delved into. "Everybody's getting active and just walking around--it's pretty cool. You get to see the sunshine."

And the game has no age limit. As

Hart, Groves, Kitchens and other friends--all part of the game's team red--walked around town the evening of Monday, July 11, a man who looked to be in his 50s or 60s drove by and examined the cohort. He slowed down in front of them, and then raised his phone out the window, revealing that he was also playing Pokémon Go. The young group cheered and the older man drove off, zigzagging between parking lots in apparent search of Pokémon and items.

Later that evening, just before sundown, the team red troop met up with more friends traveling together as team yellow. Friendly banter was exchanged, and then the two teams formed a larger group and set off together. Two or three would occasionally split off to pursue Pokémon off the pack's path, but the group was about 10-strong until it disbanded at 10 p.m.

Older, non-Pokémon playing members of the community have also noticed the impact of the game. Jimmy Evans, one of the leaders of the local CJ Patrol neighborhood watch group, said the game is doing exactly what he wants to see in the community.

"I've been seeing dads with their kids out here, and that's what the town needs," Evans said. "I think it's a great thing for the community. I'm a little worried about the safety things I've been hearing, but I think we can get around that. It's exactly what you wanna see."

Bluegrass festival looks to draw out positivity

By Dan Klapheke
IVN Staff Writer

The Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce will host its 13th annual Siskiyou Folk and Bluegrass Festival Saturday, July 16, at the Lake Selmac Trout Pavilion.

City of Cave Junction recorder Ryan Nolan is at the helm of the festival and has been involved since the first event in 2003. He said this year's lineup stands out from years past.

"I think we've got really good bands, and we've got bands from out of the area," Nolan said. "Like there's a band from San Francisco, and there's a band from Washington."

The festival has been steadily growing

since its inception, and Nolan said he expects a larger turnout this year thanks in-part to not having to compete with Grants Pass' Back to the Fifties car show, as is usually the case. Attendance was over 500 last year, and the crowd is a mix of various types of music lovers, Nolan said.

"There's old people, there's young people--it's a good mix of that," Nolan said. "And it's kind of relaxed. Nobody's ever gotten out of hand."

Josephine County has helped fund promotion for the festival the past two years, Nolan said, and he hopes the event piques interest in the area and encourages visitors to explore more.

"We're really hopeful that two years

of extra promoting will kinda get it up to an attendance level that will really help it just keep going as a permanent nice thing for people in the community to do, and draw people in from outside to see that maybe they wanna come camp here, or move here," Nolan said.

He also said he thinks the festival helps draw out positivity in the community.

"Everybody focuses a lot on what's wrong, like there's no law enforcement. But if you only think about what's wrong, it just spirals," Nolan said. "So it's nice to just do something that adds to making it a good place to be."

This year's performers include B Wishes and The Honey Bee Choir, The Podunk Poets,

The Strillas, Acousta Noir, South Hills String Band, Moody Little Sister and Hollis Peach, in that order. There's a \$15 entry charge and parking is \$5, but ages 12 and under get in free. Advance tickets can be purchased online for \$12.50 at siskiyoubluegrassfestival.com. Food, beer and wine will be provided by Wild River and the Illinois Valley Rotary Club, and no outside alcohol is permitted.

Nolan said he thinks the festival's relaxed atmosphere makes for a continually pleased crowd.

"It's just an easy day, and I think everybody has a good time," Nolan said. "And every year I'm at the end of it thinking, 'A couple hundred people came and had a really good day today.' So that's nice."