

Chateau chooses door number 2, gets new life

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IVN Contributing Writer

Following several delays, the National Park Service (NPS) is planning to renovate the Chateau at the Oregon Caves in 2018. The NPS plans to spend between \$8 million and \$10 million to upgrade the iconic 83 year old building.

An important part of the planning process is an Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA public comment period ended July 15.

The NPS developed three different courses of action or, "Alternatives" from which they asked the public, Oregon Caves National Monument and Preserve (ORCA) staff and Chateau concessioner, I.V. Community Development Organization (IVCDO) to review.

"Alternative 1" would close the Chateau, a National Historic Landmark. This would mean the permanent loss of 48 summer jobs in this economically depressed area. All concession employees are residents of the Illinois Valley according to the IVCDO.

"Alternative 2" involves a complete rehabilitation for life, health, safety and accessibility, including restoration of plumbing and electrical systems, installing an elevator and making other Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and NPS required accommodations and installing insulation so the Chateau could be open for more than 6 months a year.

"Alternative 3" would permanently close the hotel portion of the Chateau and turn it into a day use facility that would only offer meals, gift shop services and restrooms, but no overnight lodging.

In a telephone interview, ORCA Superintendent Vicki Snitzler said, "The NPS, including the park staff, has selected Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative. The hope is that we'll only be closed for one visitor season. There are a lot of factors that will influence when the work takes place, including when the contract will be awarded, and what type of winter weather we experience."

In a recent development, the 300 member nonprofit "Friends of the Oregon Caves and Chateau," (Friends OCAC) appealed to Oregon Senators Jeff Merkley (D), and Ron Wyden (D) to persuade the NPS to allocate about 50 percent more funds for the project to address historic components.

Friends OCAC has estimated the total project will cost between \$12 million and \$15 million and they contend insufficient funding might result in needing to keep the Chateau

closed through two summer seasons. In a letter to the NPS, Friends president Bernie Thurber pointed out that this could have direct economic effects for Chateau staff and possibly reduce ORCA visitation, which is currently about 80,000 visitors a year.

In response to this question, Snitzler said, "The NPS will have all the funding needed for the "life, health, safety and accessibility" improvements prior to awarding the contract for construction. If additional funding were to be needed during construction to address an unexpected occurrence there would be a contingency allowance to help cover that kind of event."

She went on to explain, "It's not feasible to say that we can definitely get all the work done in one year. It maybe some combination of one season closed and then opening the Chateau a little late in the second season."

Snitzler added, "I don't think it would be preferable to be a lodge guest while the renovation is taking place. For example, it will involve replacing wall and ceiling finishes. Doing this while the lodge is open could make the project take even longer and therefore cost even more. The design isn't finished yet. There's no conclusion as to how complicated this will be. It didn't seem fair and right to underestimate how long it will take. Renovations often involve delays. We felt it was more reasonable to be as upfront as possible."

When asked about the potential loss of jobs, Snitzler said, "Although hotel jobs will be suspended for the duration, it will be offset by building trade jobs. We've also discussed whether the IVCDO or another provider could offer yurts at Cave Creek Campground or operate limited food and beverage service, like a food cart or truck for our visitors."

Snitzler said, "Of course we're looking for support from our Congressional delegation for the overall project to be implemented as efficiently as possible."

In a December 2014 letter on behalf of the Friends OCAC to NPS Director John Jarvis, Senators Merkley and Wyden stated that breaking the project into phases would have detrimental effects on the local population and be fiscally inefficient. The letter also stated the Friends OCAC plan to raise \$1 million for specific aspects of the project.

Snitzler said, "The Friends are committed to fund-raising for interior furnishings, rehabilitation of the Monterrey furniture and other similar amenities."

2 youths ignite car

According to a release from the Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD), personnel responded to a vehicle fire Aug. 2 in Cave Junction. The vehicle was reported as stolen from a Josephine County location. The release stated that initial reports were unknown persons had set the vehicle on fire. Two juveniles claimed that arsonists pulled weapons on them and that shots were

fired. Upon further investigation by IVFD and Josephine County Sheriff's Office a confession was obtained from the juveniles that it was they who started the fire and gave a false report of weapons and other suspects. The case has been turned over to Oregon State Police (OSP) Arson Unit for further investigation and potential prosecution. Any additional information will be provided by OSP.



(Photo by IVFD Media Dept)

Nissan Sentra burns in the woods behind Stevenson St. Tuesday, Aug. 2.

Enter Creative Upcycle Furniture Contest for fun and to win cash

There are only six weeks left before the judging of the Creative Upcycle Furniture Contest – only six weeks to complete your winning entry!

Judging is Friday, Sept. 23, 4 p.m. at this year's final Cave Junction Farmers' Market at Jubilee Park. Prizes are \$500 for first place, \$300 for second place and \$200 for third place.

The contest is sponsored by the Southern Oregon Guild of Artists and Artisans and is intended to be a fun contest. You don't have to see yourself as an artist or craftsman to enter.

Contest sponsors

said, "Take a piece of junk furniture and make it special. Have fun. Think and do something "outside the box."

Entries will not be judged on fine workmanship. They will instead be judged on creativity. The only rules are that the piece must be sturdy and functional. If it's a table, you have to be able to put something on it. If it's a bench, you can sit on it.

Many people think of "artists" as only painters, potters, jewelry-makers, sculptors, glass blowers, et cetera. Many also assume that both creating art and purchasing art are expensive endeavors. However, on the fixer-upper TV shows,

Designers take junk from old houses and make it into something new and different.

The Guild wants people to take something old and worthless and make it into something useful and fun – something that makes you smile, something that makes you say "Wow!"

Bring that old piece of junk that you've creatively converted into something new and different to the CJ Farmers' Market located in Jubilee Park at 3:30 p.m. Sept. 23. Contest judging will start at 4 p.m. Judging will be based on creativity and functionality but not on fine craftsmanship. Winners will be announced as soon as judging is completed.

All entries may be offered for sale or not, based on the creator's wishes.

If you have questions, contact the Guild at 541-592-5019.

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Grill Menu Grilled Cheese Sandwich \$1.49 ea. Your choice of cheese. Reg. \$1.99

Salad Case Tuna Salad Tuna, onion, celery, dill relish, dill weed & veganaise. \$5.09 lb. Reg. \$5.49

Grab-N-Go Asstd. Wraps \$4.59 ea. With side salad & brownie. Reg. \$4.99

Breakfast Menu Breakfast Muffin \$2.19 ea. One egg, your choice of meat & cheese. Reg. \$2.69

Meat

Diestel Turkey Chunks..... \$7.99 lb. All 3 flavors, Smoked, Oven Roasted & Pastrami. Reg. \$9.99 lb.

Applegate Organic Turkey Dogs..... \$6.99 pkg. No antibiotics or hormones. An uncured dog. Reg. \$7.99 pkg.

Frozen

Table5 Asstd. Pizza..... \$5.69 ea. Reg. \$8.09 ea.

Daiya Asstd. Cheezcake..... \$6.29 ea. Reg. \$8.99 ea.

Produce

Yellow Potatoes..... 89¢ lb. Reg. \$1.09 lb.

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