

# Love hurts when doing methamphetamine

Judy Hoyle

IVN Contributing Writer

Walter Love was a building contractor in Jackson County for 22 years, but when he got in trouble for methamphetamine possession, it cost him everything he had.

Love had already been arrested twice for meth when he was stopped at a roadblock about 18 months ago.

Two men had flipped their truck while trying to elude police and had escaped on foot. Love happened to be driving down the same mountain road near Rogue River and his vehicle was searched for the fugitives.

"When the cops stopped me, they ran my license and came up with a warrant for a previous arrest," Love related. "They searched me, found some meth and I was arrested again."

When Love went to court on the combined charges, he was told that if he could graduate from Drug Court, all the charges would be dismissed.

"If it weren't for drug court, I'd probably be dead by now," Love said. "It saved my life and it's the best thing that ever happened to me."

According to www.AllRise.org, there are over 2,700 drug courts in the U.S. from which over a million people have graduated.

Seventy-five percent who complete drug court never offend again, which has saved U.S. taxpayers billions in prison, court and hospitalization costs.

Josephine County Drug Court coordinator Amy Wels explained in an email, "Our drug court has been in existence since 1996, and we have had a total of 355 graduates, including Walter and five others who graduated Sept. 16. We've also had 30 drug free babies born over the years."

"The program takes an average of 15 months to complete and we typically have between 38 and 50 active participants at any given time," she said.

Love was able to complete the course in less time, "One year, one month and three weeks," he said proudly.

"It takes some people three years, but I did it in 461 days. Graduating was a great experience and an honor being recognized for something I did in my life. I worked hard and it's great to be recognized for it."

A self-described "wild child" Love first encountered meth when he was attending

Southern Oregon State College (now Southern Oregon University).

"Meth has been around since World War II," he said. "Adolf Hitler used it on his troops. I liked it because it kept me alert."

Love quit drinking alcohol in 1987 after racking up three "driving under the influence of intoxicants" (DUI) citations, but he kept on using meth.

Once he began drug court, he was encouraged to drop his drug-using friends and to stop going to places that for him could trigger drug abuse.

The system takes participants through four phases of recovery. Phase 1 includes assessment, stabilization and developing a treatment plan with an assigned counselor.

"The counselor helped us talk about it, and helped us figure out how to stay straight when we graduate," Love said.

Phase 1 is the most rigorous, with attendance required five days a week at group counseling, plus random drug testing and community support meetings (Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous) three days a week.

Phase 2 includes vocational or educational counseling and may include mental

health or residential treatment.

Phase 3 is maintenance and transition and Phase 4 includes aftercare and reintegration into society.

Wels said, "We save the community quite a bit of money diverting people who would otherwise face prison sentences and providing them with treatment and services tailored to their individual needs. Each participant has a unique offer from the district attorney as far as what will happen when they complete our program. Some have their charges dismissed, some simply have their probation terminated, but the charges remain on their record, some simply remove the automatic prison sentence hanging over them and continue on probation."

Love said, "Not a lot of people make it through. When I started out there was a lot of people and I didn't see any of them when I graduated. You've got to be committed to one thing and that's quitting drugs."

"I know I won't be doing it anymore, I'm happy with my new life, it's a great achievement," he said. "I'm honored to graduate drug court. I would have gone to prison. I didn't have a family back then, but I do now. I've pretty much grown up."

## The Archive Zone: by Hillary Mohr from the Illinois Valley News archives

This week we take a hop, skip and a jump back to Sept. 22, 1977. Summer had come to an end, the kids were well into their first month back to school and the Frontier Drive-In was still open for business. Take a seat and rest a spell with us here in the Archive Zone.

**Carlton: CJ has crime problem.** "You do have a problem," said Jim Carlton, referring to the crime rate in Cave Junction. Criminal justice planner for Rogue Valley Council on Governments, Carlton, addressing members of the I.V. Chamber of Commerce Tuesday morning, read Oregon crime statistics which showed Cave Junction's present crime rate is inordinately high. In 1974, for comparison purposes, the state average for burglaries was 1,814 per 100,000 people, while Cave Junction's rate was only 1,147 per 100,000 people. Larcenies reported in 1974 showed the state rate at 3,603 and Cave Junction's rate well below average at 2,439. In 1976, a year when the crime rate was lowered all over the nation, Carlton said, the state average for burglaries per 100,000 people was 1,684. In Cave Junction the rate of burglaries was at 2,582 per 100,000. The larceny rate for the state average 3,775; Cave Junction's rate

was 5,595 per 100,000 people, or translated to Cave Junction population of 700 people, approximately 39 larcenies were reported as compared to an average of 27 for a city of this size. It is estimated only 50 percent of crimes committed are reported to the police, Carlton said, so statistics are based on a 50 percent crime figure, the other 50 percent not considered. A member of the audience said he no longer reports crimes committed at his place of business because the district attorney's office was uncooperative. "What does a citizen do when a criminal is caught, jailed, and released? How does a citizen find out what has happened?" he asked. Carlton reminded chamber members that the district attorney's office is an elected one and if an elected official is unresponsive to the citizen's needs, he could be replaced in the next election.

**CJPD investigates assault.** Cave Junction police are investigating the beating or hit and run of a transient found in a ditch behind the House Haywood Tuesday afternoon. According to officer Art Edwards, the man was either Eric or Jim Brown, of either Crescent City or Coos Bay. He first said he had been struck by a truck, later said he didn't want

to press charges. He was covered by two or three blankets when found, Edwards said, and had suffered a heavy blow to the head from a large rock. He was taken to Josephine General Hospital by Action Ambulance, sewn up and released. Deputy sheriffs said the 20-year-old Brown was very uncooperative, a statement verified by Cave Junction police. The case remains an assault by person or persons unknown.

**Guns for a flagpole.** Organizations working to obtain a flagpole for the I.V. High School report that two guns have been selected by the committee as the focus of flagpole donations. A 12 gauge pump shotgun retailing at \$125 will be on display at Western Auto and a 30-06 670 Winchester with scope, retailing at \$229.95, will be on display at F&W Clothing and Sporting Goods Store. Suggested donations are \$1 each ticket or \$5 for seven tickets. They are available at A&B Sporting Goods, Herb's Mobile Homes, Western Auto, and F&W Clothing and Sporting Goods Store. Sponsors of the flagpole money-raising event are the Kiwanis, the I.V. Lions, I.V. Chamber of Commerce, and Glenn Morrison Post 70, The American Legion.

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