

Checking up on the County Health Department

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

Diane Hoover, the Josephine County Public Health Department director, oversees the WIC (women, infant and children food voucher) program, restaurant inspections, immunization and family planning clinics, along with vital records and the animal shelter. She has been working there since 2011.

One issue which has arisen in the recent past and continues to be a problem is opiate addiction which she labeled as being “epidemic” and somewhat more concentrated in Josephine County than elsewhere in the nation. When asked what they are doing about the epidemic she provided the following information: “We don’t provide treatment personally but we do have a medically assisted treatment

facility opening up in Grants Pass fairly soon and that will mean that the 150 people or so that have to go to Medford every day for treatment can receive treatment here locally.”

In other events the public health department is also getting ready to host periodic clinics at the county building once or twice a month to offer family planning services to I.V. residents.

In the meantime, Hoover encourages people to come and use their services at existing locations for family planning and immunizations whenever they feel it necessary.

A new Oregon House bill, entitled 3100, is supposed to modernize critical public health services and will be, in the future, a cause of contention because it is essentially an unfunded mandate; otherwise known as legislation that passed without having a

way of funding it. On the topic, Hoover stated, “Public health modernization, which was approved two years ago, may affect us in the future but right now in the public health department we’re doing fine.

“Our program is doing well and we continue to have a balanced budget so I don’t expect any layoffs or reduction in services for county employees,” she said, and also added that during her time at the Josephine County Health Department their budget has been considerably streamlined in that they do not have to ask the commissioners for more money. This was a common occurrence before.

On the subject of new employees Hoover stated, “We just put two community health workers out in the field. One is working with the school districts to get services to students for whatever



Diane Hoover

ZONE . . .

Continued from A-1

Of that list, only fences are regulated by the county, although Smelzer said the county forwards other complaints on to the appropriate state departments.

With regard to fences, Schmelzer noted that many growers are unaware that, while the state requires 8-foot high fencing around a grow site, state law also requires a county permit for any fence over 7 feet. In essence, all growers must apply for a permit for their fencing.

Another fencing issue is the materials used. Schmelzer said the county has seen cars piled on top of each other, appliances piled on top of each other, and so on.

Schmelzer noted that while agriculture is allowed in all Rural Residential zones, the great majority of marijuana grows in the county are in the RR5 zone.

“So we know that RR5 is trending for marijuana and one that we probably should not restrict to heavily for recreational marijuana.”

Some highlights of Schmelzer’s proposals are as follows. However there are a number of proposed waivers and exceptions to these amendments.

- In RR1, RR2.5 and RR5 zones of under 2.5 acres, the only permitted use will be marijuana grows for personal and medical use.
- In the above zones, there must already be a dwelling on the property prior to planting of the grow.
- Recreational marijuana grows will be allowed in RR5 zones of at least 2.5 acres.
- Fences: In all zones, fences must be of permanent, solid material and a muted color. No tarps.
- Plant setbacks: In residential zones, no plants within 100 feet of the road right of way. In non-residential zones, same as for an agricultural building, usually 30 to 35 feet.
- Plant setbacks in farm and forest zones

and RR5 of at least 2.5 acres: The canopy of a mature marijuana plant must be greater than 35 feet from the property line. The canopy of new medical and personal use grows –grandfathered plants excepted – must be 10 feet from the property side and 25 feet from the property rear.

- Odor: Indoor grows must have odor mitigating measures. Odor of outdoor grows cannot realistically be regulated.

The question of camping turned into “an interesting one,” according to Smelzer.

“We’ve had a lot of problems on grow sites. Camps have turned into compounds. There have been complaints of gun shooting and dogs. Complaints about the sewage.”

Current county code allows camping in farm and forest zones for up to four months in a twelve month period, regardless of the zone. Schmelzer initially proposed that camping permits be extended to nine months. But when she sent the draft zoning proposals to the state Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) for review, she was

told that not only would the state not allow the extension, but that current county code is in error: state law allows camping for no more than 30 days in a consecutive six month period. No exceptions.

Schmelzer has sent a letter to DLCD requesting a waiver. The waiver, if granted, will allow one camp for a maximum of four months in farm and forest zones, with certain conditions.

But pending granting of this waiver by the state, her proposed amendment to the county camping code was modified to reflect the stricter state rules.

A number of other proposed amendments relating to marijuana land use will be considered by the Board of County Commissioners. The complete document can be accessed on the Josephine County website. Navigate to Planning Department > Public Notices > Hearings > Planning Committee Hearing. Or you can call Julie Schmelzer at 541-474-5428.



SEITZ RESTORATION & COLLISION

BLUE STAR GAS

RESTORATION - COLLISION - REFURBISHING
WORK WITH ALL INSURANCE OR SELF-PAY
I-CAR CERTIFIED - 44 YEARS EXPERIENCE

541-592-3990

PAINT SPECIAL!
Complete refinish
starting at \$1800

- Includes selected colors
- Single Stage Urethane Paint
- Jams and Body Work Extra

For Inquiries and Scheduling,
contact our office.

WHERE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IS PARAMOUNT.

220 Watkins St. Cave Junction

**ALL YOU CAN EAT BREAKFAST
OR ORDER OFF THE MENU
AT THE I.V. GRANGE**



FIRST THREE SUNDAYS OF THE MONTH FROM 8 A.M. TO 12 NOON.

**3763 Holland Loop
541-592-6045**

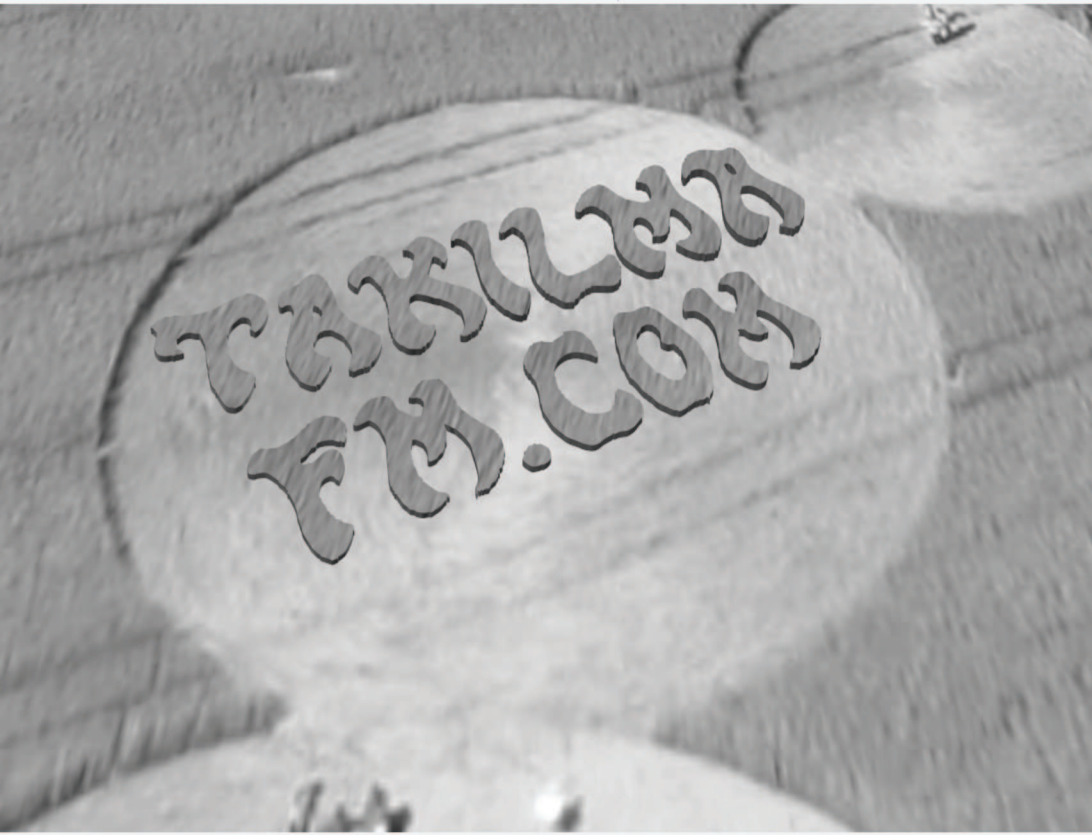
THE **G** SPOT

@ THE OLD STONEYFRONT
24099 REDWOOD HWY. - KERBY
541.592.5220/541.415.0451

FULL BAR ♥ GREAT FOOD ♥ LIVE MUSIC

TakilmaFM

STILL OUT THERE



**19 YEARS OF RADIO
WHO ARE YOU LISTENING TO?**

FREE MUSIC, FREE SPEECH, FRESH IDEAS
AT TAKILMAFM.COM. DONATIONS WELCOME!
PO BOX 185, CJ OR 97523; 541-592-4799.

**240 N REDWOOD HWY #226
CAVE JUNCTION, OR 97523
541-592-4367**

 FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PAPAS DISPENSARY-WE'RE BACK

- GLASS
- CLOTHING
- ECLECTIC GIFTS



PAPA llc

Providing All Patients Access

**LET US FILL
YOUR NEEDS
AND FIND YOUR
HAPPY PLACE
AT PAPA'S!**



**The Kerby
Transfer Station**

**is open to
help you...**

Hours: Mondays - Saturdays
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

For more
information
phone:
800-922-1025





**Southern Oregon
Sanitation Inc.**

0235