

Illinois Valley News

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City sets date for marijuana meeting

Caroline Griffith
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The Cave Junction City Council met Monday, Dec. 12 to discuss, among other things, a rezoning request for a proposed assisted living center, the approval of a library district and regulation of security patrols.

The well-attended and longer than usual meeting was dominated by the first of two required public hearings about the potential zoning change. Applicant David Shotwell is requesting that the city change the zoning of a property bordered by Watkins, Kerby and Shumacher streets from single family residential to general employment/light industrial. Shotwell plans to build an assisted living facility and explained why he is starting the project. “We are all getting older, and I’ve seen a lot of these facilities that I wouldn’t want to live in, so I am trying to make the sort of place that I’d like to end up in.”

SEE CITY ON A-9

‘Heart of Winter’



(Photo by Laura Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Maddie Jones (left), Andrea King, Maizi Giroux and Annie Hertler perform at Lorna Byrne Middle School Sunday, Dec. 11 for the RiverStars Performing Arts third annual holiday show called “The Heart of Winter” which was an adaptation of Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol.” This was a dance theatre performance written by and for the Illinois Valley community.

Public safety task force meeting touts success of CERT

Anita R. Savio
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Growing out of the recent 2020 Envisioning Project, the Illinois Valley Public Safety Task Force has taken on what may be the most intransigent issue facing local residents: public safety. Yet rather than an atmosphere of doom and gloom, task force members evinced an upbeat attitude.

“We are at an opportune time,” said Director Menno Kraai of the Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (IVCDO). So many outside agencies are involved in positive things here. We’re not by ourselves.”

“There are some successes, and if we could publicize the positive things that are happening, we are doing something to try and take back our community”, added Chief Dennis Hoke of the Illinois Valley Fire Department (IVFD).

The meeting then switched

to plans for educating the public about how to apply for the expected “Cascadia event,” a high magnitude earthquake along the Cascadia Subduction Zone that underlies southwest Oregon. Such an earthquake would likely isolate the Illinois Valley from outside assistance. Jean Ann Miles, of the local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), suggested a community preparedness fair on a Saturday in March or early April. It would be patterned after a “Prepare Out Loud” event that another locality carried out with great success.

Chief Hoke mentioned that we have the most robust CERT team in all of Southern Oregon.

The issue came up of telephone and internet service provider Frontier, whose frequent outages result in disruptions to service. Hoke explained that when a trunk line is cut, Frontier reroutes 911 calls to IVFD administrative offices, meaning that then his administrative personnel will have to answer 911 calls.

The topic then moved to policing.

“I can tell you that the Department of Justice database, commonly referred to as NIBRS, and where most people go for their information, only covers about 10 percent of the worst crimes,” said Brian Hawkins, a community volunteer with a background in crime analysis. “They don’t cover 90 percent of police services that affect our quality of life.”

“But,” Hawkins added, “the good news is that police staffing decisions don’t depend on those statistics; they depend on work load analysis.”

Hawkins explained that workload analysis starts with calls for service from patrol, and then builds upon those to determine support staff needs. But there is a whole science to analyzing patrol manpower needs, including the concept of saturation level. Once calls for service “saturate” the time of available patrol deputies,

then policing switches from proactive to reactive policing.

Hawkins also brought up zero based budgeting. “Zero based budgeting provides absolute transparency. Departments give back any remaining money at end of year, so they start from zero in budgeting for the next year.

“I think this would help gain credibility back in the community,” he said.

David Smith, a graduate student in clinical social work and community advocate, reported on a study he did where he applied the principles of social activism and advocacy to the public safety issue.

“I went out to talk to as many different people as possible. I asked what does public safety or law enforcement mean to you? What should we do? And then I just listened.”

Smith added that he did 45 interviews of one-and-a-half to two hours each.

“People often commented: ‘This is the first time someone from Grants Pass has come out and just listened to what I have to say.’”

Smith concluded that there were a lot of “stove pipes,” meaning community efforts that weren’t communicating among themselves. And many in the community were burnt out.

Priorities identified by those he interviewed included working with at-risk children and drug use. Property crime was also named as a serious issue.

Smith identified schools and the faith community as important resources. A discussion ensued about how to do a better job of involving the Illinois Valley’s disparate congregations in developing solutions.

“We have a public safety crisis that may be coming up,” said Smith. “We need to find ways to strengthen partnerships in the community.”

Government critic Dale Matthews dies

Annette McGee Rasch
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Dec. 6 the Grants Pass Police Department was notified that Dale Samuel Matthews, 62, died at his Grants Pass home from natural causes, according to Sandi Cassanelli, a friend who went to Matthew’s apartment just after she heard the news. “The apartment manager confirmed his death,” said Cassanelli, a former Josephine County Commissioner. Hull & Hull Funeral Directors was called in and is handling arrangements.

“Dale was an asset to Josephine County, with his political watchdogging,” Cassanelli said. “He was an excellent videographer and we were fortunate to have him for as long as we did, he really did notify the public about what was going on. He used to joke that he attended more meetings than the commissioners did, and he probably did.”

Matthews, a controversial government transparency advocate, ran unsuccessfully for a seat on the county board multiple times, most recently in the May 2016 primary election. And he kept busy between those campaigns

- making it his life’s work to keep track of county officials.

Until a few months ago, Matthews, along with colleague Mike Jones, delivered a nightly political commentary show “Inside News” on his website Badcounty.com. Jones estimates that “we did well over 500 shows in a little over a year and a half. The greatest level of transparency ever in local government existed because of Dale Matthews. Nobody wants to go to all those meetings and he went to every one and recorded them all.”

In Matthews’ own words, “We keep track of what our county government is up to and evaluate whether we approve of what they’re doing or not.”

“The passing of Dale Matthews is one of mixed feelings,” said *Illinois Valley News* publisher Dan Mancuso. “It’s well known that Dale and I shared an adversarial relationship at best. While I didn’t like his style, I did admire his tenacity of trying to disseminate information which he felt was important. I used Dale’s recordings for many a starting place for stories that appeared on the pages of the *Illinois Valley News*. Dale played an important

role in the political scene of Josephine County. His absence the past few months has been noticed, and will continue for years to come.”

Another frequent flyer on the ballot for County Commissioner, Selma resident Mark Seligman, said, “Dale Matthews was my friend. We spoke almost every day for years about life and how to fight a county government that did not represent the people’s wishes. The ever-present tax levy was always the main topic. Dale and I were always proud we never lost on that - defeating it every time. It saddens me that he died alone.”

A group of Matthews’ friends and political associates with the Conservative Action Forum met Saturday in Grants Pass to “remember and roast our dear friend, the ever-antagonistic Dale Matthews,” said Grants Pass resident Brian Pombo.

SEE MATTHEWS ON A-10

Shooting suspect in custody

According to a release from the Oregon State Police (OSP), Sebastian Cree Glenn was taken into custody Tuesday by OSP detectives from the Central Point Criminal Investigation Division.

Glenn is charged with assault II, unlawful use of a weapon, strangulation, menacing, criminal mischief I and reckless driving stemming from an incident where a young lady received a non lethal gunshot wound.

The release states that Dec. 9, around 11:45 p.m., OSP troopers were dispatched to a report of a shooting which occurred on Laurel Road in Cave Junction.

The 19-year-old female victim was transported to Three Rivers Medical Center with a wound to her arm. She was treated and released for a minor injury.

A person of interest was identified as Glenn, who had fled the scene driving a white full-sized pickup with utility boxes.

More information will be released as it becomes appropriate as this is an ongoing investigation.

Glenn is currently being detained at the Josephine County Jail.