

Year in Review: July

•The Illinois Valley Ford Institute hosted a candlelight walk from 6:30-10 p.m. in Jubilee Park. The event followed a concert in the park with Kelly Thibodeaux and Etouffee with candles, S'mores, drinks from Dutch Bros. and community conversation. Jean Ann Miles, one of the planners of the walk, a part of the Ford Institute cohort, said the event was inspired by a concern in the Valley for public safety.

•Troops of smartphone-wielding people of all ages were roaming the streets of Cave Junction this past week, and they were 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 uses GPS tracking to interlace the game in the real world, and lets you catch wild Pokémon and collect items as you travel.

•The head chef at the Oregon Caves Chateau was creating a buzz with both guests at the lodge and Valley residents who had already eaten there this year. Those who have taken the opportunity to sample B.J. Hyatt's cuisine say they are impressed with the food presentation and quality, and that the service seems to have gone up a notch at the already renowned restaurant. Hyatt attributes her success to teamwork. "We're all a team. We work together and get it done. I couldn't do it all myself," she said.

•A major remodeling project that began in mid-May has given Cave Junction's Shop Smart a whole new look. The new flooring, updated coolers, exterior and interior painting,

new displays and overall reorganization have brought the Valley's largest grocery store into the 21st century.

•The National Forest Service implemented a temporary ban on alcohol on the Illinois River last month, and since then law enforcement had been ticketing and delivering citations at popular spots along the river.

•Three Rivers School District and Evergreen Elementary have granted the I.V. Boys and Girls Club access to two modular classrooms that are located behind the school. These were fixed up, repainted, and one of them was set to become a dedicated area for teen club members. According to Diane Gilbertson, executive director of the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Rogue Valley, the new teen center would be available for middle school and high school students.

•The Illinois Valley Junior Little League softball all-star team was crowned District 8 champions for the second year in a row, beating out rival Grants Pass. The win took the girls back to the state tournament in Tulelake, California July 7-11, where they finished fifth out of eight teams.

•The annual IVHS Alumni Reunion weekend was another grand success with reunion events taking place for members of the Classes of 1951, '56, '61, '66, '71, '76, '86, '91, '96, 2001 and 2006. The weekend culminated in a warm, family celebration Sunday morning with alumni, their spouses, children and grandchildren at Jubilee Park Pavilion.

•Oregon State Police (OSP) arrested two suspects in connection to the murder of a Cave Junction man Saturday, July 30. Renee Edrington, 39, and Kyle Forester, 29, both of Cave Junction were arrested for the murder of William A. Roberts, 39. Roberts was found dead in his truck along Redwood Highway after what appeared to be a single-vehicle wreck the morning of Wednesday, July 27.

The owner of the property the vehicle was found on said he thought he heard the wreck at 1:45 a.m. but checked and saw nothing, and OSP responded to the scene at 6:30 a.m. However, it was discovered upon arrival what appeared to be a gunshot wound to the back of Roberts' head, and his wallet and cellphone were missing. OSP took the wreckage in for forensics and an investigation began.



(File photo, Illinois Valley News)

Valley residents showing support for public safety during the Ford Institute's candlelight walk, Wednesday, July 27.

Year in Review: August

•In tandem with the Longest Yard Sale in Oregon, the Illinois Valley's annual "It's The Berries" event took place in Kerby. Vendors and organizations had booths set up both along Redwood Hwy.

•A new Subway store is slated to open this fall, in the building that formerly housed Evergreen Bank. Mama DeLuca's Pizza will also be offered in the same building. Similar to the Subway operation, the pizzas are made-to-order in front of customers, utilizing a speed oven. Customers will also have a "take or bake" option. Mama DeLuca's Pizza was developed by the Subway Corporation as a co-location for Subway Restaurants.

•The National Park Service (NPS) made plans 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.

•After an intense, well-attended public hearing, the Cave Junction City Council opted Aug. 15, to not continue with the process of pursuing a fuel tax or a marijuana tax. This was the second of two required public hearings on the issues, both of which have been discussed by the council at multiple meetings since being proposed at the end of May.

•Jeffrey Hunsaker of O'Brien, was indicted on two counts of felon in possession

of a firearm after a shootout with Warren Batie in April of 2015, as well as three counts of felon in possession of a firearm, manufacturing of marijuana and possession of marijuana from an incident on the same property in October 2014. Hunsaker was treated for a gunshot wound at Three Rivers Hospital after the April 2015 incident, and Batie, also of O'Brien, was fatally shot. The charges from October 2014 came after a search warrant was executed on the property.

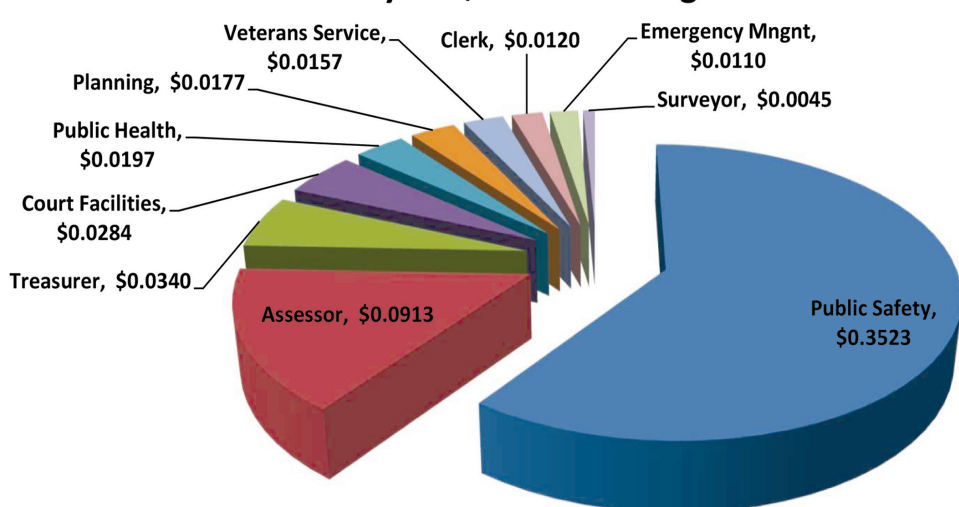
•Visitors to Lake Selmac noticed

an increase in tickets and enforcement of the park's \$5 day use fee, but it's not due to a new law or measure; it's been that way. Sarah Wright, director of Josephine County Parks, said the perceived increased enforcement comes from a parks effort to have more visitors comply with the rules. "We've had day fees since 2006," Wright said. "The difference is we are trying to

get more people to comply with them."

•Dennis Strayer was named the Grand Marshal for the 2016 Illinois Valley Lions' Labor Day Parade. Strayer is well-known in the Illinois Valley as the longtime curator of the Kerbyville Museum and History Center. He is the last of the original board members of the museum.

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