

Lack of deputies cause delay in medical care

By Dan Mancuso
IVN Staff

Cave Junction is set to lose its contract with Josephine County for law enforcement (LE) services May 31. The loss of rural patrols means there could be tragic consequences due to the impact on the response from fire and emergency personnel.

The Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) will not approach any scene that includes shootings, accidental or not, drug overdoses, domestic situations “basically anything violent,” said IVFD Chief Dennis Hoke.

“Without LE on scene we cannot approach. Meaning critical minutes will pass that possibly have a negative impact on the outcome of the medical care,” Hoke continued.

Hoke along with American Medical Response (AMR) does not have the ability to protect their paid and volunteer responders. “We won’t go into a scene where our people could get assaulted,” said Hoke.

Hoke went on to describe two deaths that could have been avoided. “We have two documented situations where people have died because of the delay in law enforcement, chances are they could have been treated properly in an operating room.”

As for drug overdoses, Hoke explained that sometimes people that have overdosed get angry “when they come out of a high because we treated them; they paid for a high and we brought them back.”

According to a press release from the Josephine County Sheriff’s Office, employee layoff notifications were being sent out by the county’s human resource department with an effective date of May 31, 2017.

Cave Junction Mayor Daniel Dalegowski is concerned about the layoffs’ impact on the city “Yea, we won’t have any [law enforcement]. The city will be in the position where we have some type of security that is less effective than what you would want to have.”

According to Dalegowski the city has been working on this since the possibility of this came up at the end of last year. Dalegowski said that talks with Grants Pass Dept. of Public Safety were moving slow.

SEE LEVY ON A-8

Soil and Water has full plate of projects slated

Jason McMillen
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The Illinois Valley Soil and Water Conservation District (IVSWCD) and the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have found and determined that four local projects are eligible for emergency watershed protection (EWP) funding from the federal government. Two of the projects involve drive-over bridges in Selma while another project involves a vineyard in Cave Junction whose stream is threatening irrigation equipment as well as utilities because of erosion. One of the bridges has already collapsed as a result of its stream undercutting the bank and the other, which hasn’t failed yet, needs assistance as soon as possible so that it too doesn’t collapse. Both bridges will eventually need to be replaced or repaired. The fourth project involves a road in Cave Junction that is being undercut by a stream and is also threatening to collapse.

Unfortunately, EWP funding can only be used for preventative maintenance so the IVSWCD will do their best to make sure that erosion will not be the fate of any replaced or repaired infrastructure twice.

“The NRCS is going to put the budget together and figure out how much each project is going to cost based on the photos they took,” Tracey Brandt, conservation technician, said. Brandt continued by explaining that the NRCS is responsible for giving the green light as to whether a project is eligible or not. “They’re going to submit that by the end of next week,” and Brandt added, “Then it’s the waiting game to hear if it gets approved or not by Congress.” Brandt estimated that it will take between one and three months to hear back from Congress whether or not the funding has been granted.

SEE SOIL ON A-10

Fiddling around



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Evergreen Elementary second-graders learn to fiddle with the help of Kelly Thibodeaux Monday, April 3. The week of training will culminate with a concert Friday, April 7, at the school.

I.V. Emergency Prepare Fair planning for your safety

By Laura Mancuso
IVN Staff

“The best time to prepare for an emergency is when there isn’t one. And remember, survival favors the prepared!” replied Sue Williams, coordinator of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) when asked why residents should attend the Illinois Valley Emergency Prepare Fair that will be held Saturday, April 15 from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Illinois Valley High School (IVHS).

This special event is sponsored by the Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (IVcanDo), Illinois Valley Fire Department (IVFD), CERT and the city of Cave Junction.

“With our recent ‘snow-mageddon’ event fresh in everyone’s minds, I would encourage anyone who experienced any kind of disruption to their comfort zone stop by this fair to learn about what they can do to be better prepared the next time our valley gets hit,” said Williams.

The Prepare Fair will be free admission and a host to

a variety of booths, presentations and kids’ activities including the IVFD Engine and Safety House and CERT’s “Ready-Set-Go” evacuation system. Participants will be able to take away free emergency supplies and planning tools.

Tanner Smith, principal at IVHS has been instrumental in planning for the Prepare Fair. “I jumped on board and offered the High School as a meeting place and then a venue to host the actual fair. This is a great platform to help our community prepare for emergency situations and hardships like the massive snowfall we had this winter.”

When asked what the layout will look like, Smith said, “The exhibits will be arranged in the commons area with tables around the outside of the room and the presentations will take place in classrooms. We will have concessions serving food and drinks as well.”

The event coordinator, Cave Junction City Councilor Jean Ann Miles is encouraging families to participate in this event so that “it will bring them together for a discussion about what to do as a family during an emergency. It is important to have a plan in place.”

SEE FAIR ON A-10

Mental health to combat rising suicide rate

Jason McMillen
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According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study entitled, “Suicide rates for Females and Males by Race and Ethnicity” the age-adjusted suicide rate in the United States stood 24 percent higher in 2014 than in 1999 with no signs of letting up in subsequent years. In addition, the CDC has also published in the “FastStats” section of their website that suicide has recently become the second leading cause of death in people aged 15-19.

In the face of statistics like these, the nonprofit corporation called Options for Southern Oregon is hosting a Youth Mental First Aid event in Grants Pass April 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The event will cost \$25, as cash or check only that will include a lunch.

Registration may be submitted

via email attamaral@optionsonline.org or by calling 541-244-3138. Although attendee’s can register at any time it is highly encouraged to RSVP beforehand because they need to know how much food to make.

Options for Southern Oregon has been based in Grants Pass since 1981 and serves as the Community Mental Health Program for Josephine County while also providing additional services such as the Integrated Primary Medical Care program to people of all ages.

“The idea is to train people in the community to be able to respond to somebody who is having some sort of mental health challenge until someone more professional gets there,” Tina Amaral, therapist, summarized. As part of a nationwide outreach agenda Mental Health First Aid wishes to spread awareness about mental health conditions. According to Amaral, even Michelle Obama had at one time participated in the growth of the program.

“A big piece is being able to assess

for safety,” Amaral concluded. “It’s mostly about listening and trying to get the person who’s having some struggles to be able to be either safe where they are or help them get to some place that can help them be safe.” The organization has coined the acronym ALGEE (Assess for risk of suicide or harm, Listen nonjudgmentally, Give reassurance and information, Encourage appropriate professional help, Encourage self-help and other support) to help people memorize the key points of mental first aid.

Amaral and Angela Watton, the suicide prevention coordinator at Options for Southern Oregon, will be teaming up to teach the class.

Although this event focuses on youth mental first aid there is also a separate class for administering mental health first aid to adults.

Scholarships are available for those who are in need of education but cannot afford the program. Call Amaral at 541-244-3138 to inquire about eligibility.