

Illinois Valley News

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(Courtesy photos for the Illinois Valley News)

Joshua Beach (right) teaches Ana Machado the proper technique of glass blowing. A glass squid created by Beach. Blowing glass is not just for smoking; glass blowers are rapidly gaining recognition for their art.

I.V. is earning a reputation for growing more than grass

“I would rather put money in younger people’s pockets that are having a hard time making a living,”

Bill “Wild Bill” Byrd

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

The Illinois Valley is host to talented artists of nearly every variety but according to Sue Byrd, wife of Wild Bill Byrd and co-owner of Wild Bill’s Head Shop, the area is particularly known for its glass blowers. In addition to mentioning three world-class artists who got their start in the Illinois Valley: Mike Luna, Darby Holm and Eusheen Goines, she recommended that those looking for exceptional glass should investigate the works of Steven McClanahan, a talented local artist who lives in Cave Junction.

Wild Bill Byrd originally opened his shop 18 years ago in Crescent City, California and although he is a glass blower himself, with 15 years of experience, he has mostly retired from the occupation since the store opened. The location in Cave Junction is approaching its third year of operation. Recently, the store in Crescent City was closed down because Byrd was tired of making the long commute almost every

day and wanted to focus his efforts closer to home.

“I would rather put money in younger people’s pockets that are having a hard time making a living,” Byrd said, explaining why he doesn’t blow glass as often as he used to.

His shop represents about 15 different artists, five of which are local to the Cave Junction area and the rest are scattered throughout Southern Oregon and Eugene. Although Byrd has an ample roster, he said that he’s always looking to buy more glass from local artists. “We always give everybody a chance,” Byrd said.

Josh Beach, an up and coming artist working out of Selma, started blowing glass about three years ago and has been peddling his wares locally with the hopes of becoming a noteworthy community artist. “I donate a lot of my work to the community and I want to be somebody that people come to when they want something nice. I just want to keep it here.”

When Beach started his businesshe decided to market his

products independently through personal contact, Facebook and events such as the Barter Faire to make his profit more worthwhile. Unfortunately, both Beach and Byrd noted that the glass industry is getting harder and harder to compete in over recent years because China and India are driving down prices by importing mass manufactured, hand-blown glass.

The occupation is becoming full-time for him and he’s currently churning out around 75 pieces a month. Although he does make pipes and other smoking paraphernalia his primary interest is in creating jewelry such as earrings and pendants because the market for smoking accessories is highly saturated and therefore a difficult sale. Recently, he has begun trapping gold and silver inside of glass to increase his selection of jewelry and to appeal to new audiences. He has also started branching out into creating sculptures, most specifically of aquatic scenes.

Beach’s wares can be found on Facebook by searching for the name of his business, Seamless Glass.

May 2017 election I.V. breakdown

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

The vote is cast and, for better or for worse, the people of Josephine County will soon be paying more taxes. But this article isn’t about that; it’s about numbers. Let’s see how the Illinois Valley, defined by the six precincts that could vote for the I.V. Fire Department levy, sized up when compared.

In total, the I.V. makes up 12.5 percent of the 60,640 registered voters in Josephine County. The Bridgeview precinct makes up 46.6 percent of that number. Cave Junction and Selma, when added together, hold a further 35.6 percent. Only 46.61 percent of voters in Josephine County cast their ballots. 47 percent of registered voters cast their ballots in the I.V.

Five out of the six precincts that comprise the Illinois Valley voted against the jail levy with Cave Junction being the only one that approved of it at 58.9 percent. The rest of Josephine County had 23 precincts vote yes for the jail levy and 18 against. The lowest approval rating for the jail levy within the I.V. was found in Selma, at an even 35 percent. In total, the average approval rating found throughout the rest of the county was 53.6 percent whereas the average for the I.V. was 45.4.

SEE VOTE ON A-9

Booze ban now in season 2

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

The Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest’s (RRSNF) ban last year regarding the consumption of alcohol in select recreational areas of the Illinois Valley River will remain in effect through Sept. 30, 2017 at which point it will either be renewed or discontinued following an investigation. According to Chamise Kramer, Acting Public Affairs Officer, the ban appears to be a resounding success. “Based on the results from last year it seems like the implementation of it alone has really diminished usage [of alcohol],” Kramer said.

However, she could not say beyond a shadow of a doubt whether or not it will be renewed because it has yet to be formally addressed. She added that there hasn’t been very many citations since the ban took effect and that there has only been one complaint filed. It was submitted by an individual that doesn’t live in the area.

Conversely, Kramer said that she’s gotten a lot of positive feedback from community members who feel like they can safely bring their families to the river again.

There’s no current plans to make the ban permanent because it’s a significantly more difficult process than simply renewing it every year.

SEE BOOZE ON A-9

Fire season is here, are you ready?

Judy Hoyle
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It’s time for Illinois Valley residents and businesses to make evacuation plans before a wildfire or other potential emergency should hit their neighborhood according to Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) coordinator Sue Williams.

“Chief Hoke is concerned that we could have a dangerous wild fire season,” Williams said. “We need people to know evacuation roadways out of their neighborhoods, and to have a plan where to meet their families if they get separated.”

The “fire danger” signs scattered around the valley are currently pegged at “high” but as the 90 degree days continue over the next few weeks, grass and other fuels will quickly dry to the “extreme” point and families need to be prepared to leave at a moment’s notice.

Heavy rain throughout the winter didn’t reduce summer fire danger, but actually made the potential worse by producing taller grass and more leaves.

SEE CERT ON A-9

Beavercreek lawsuit claims marijuana growers are guilty of RICO charges:

Two Beavercreek property owners are relying on a federal law usually reserved to fight organized crime to sue their neighbors, contending the people next door are engaged in racketeering by producing and selling marijuana. A-5