

Lakeshore closure begins



(Photo by Laura Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

According to a press release from Josephine County Public Works, Lakeshore Drive will be closed to all traffic, including emergency vehicles, at Lake Selmac Spillway between Reeves Creek Road and the Resort beginning July 31, 2017. The closure is expected to last up to four months.

During this time MJ Hughes

Construction will be working in the right of way replacing a bridge at Lake Selmac spillway, located between the intersection of Lakeshore Drive and Reeves Creek Road and the Resort

Signage for a detour around the work zone will be posted. A detour map will be posted on Josephine County Public Works' webpage and

Facebook, as well as on Josephine County's webpage under Geographic Information System (GIS), scroll down to Public Works, County Road Conditions and Information map.

The public is asked to call Public Works at 541-474-5460 with any questions or concerns.

August Moon barn lost in fire

"... I'm so proud of the response by our marvelous community, we are indeed the 'Valley of Riches'..."

Renee' Herndon, Healing Hearts and Hooves

Annette McGee Rasch
IVN Senior Contributing Writer

Wednesday, July 29 as dusk fell, explosions rocked the quiet neighborhood around 4411 Holland Loop Road when the main barn at August Moon Farm erupted in flames.

"We heard this huge explosion and we saw this huge orange ball," said Shelley Herndon, who has lived on the property with her husband David and daughter Renee' for the past 21 years. "Then we heard another explosion and we ran out of the house. We called 911. I tried to get to the sprinklers and Renee' ran to the barn. She was actually going to try and go in, but the door was on fire. She knew she couldn't touch that door. We both knew we couldn't do anything."

It was "horrific" for the family, who knew their three pet cats were trapped inside. "If it had been two hours later, our older horses would have been in the barn as well," Herndon added. It was also a close call for the women, as they had recently been in the barn as well.

The barn was utterly destroyed and no one has a clue why. "A fire investigation will be happening and we're hoping they find the cause so that it can be prevented from ever happening again," Renee' Herndon said. "It was so scary to see how hot and how intense that fire was and it's just a miracle that nothing else caught on fire. We found embers near the house - about 400 feet away. Thankfully, the Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) arrived quickly and worked really hard to get the fire out."

IVFD Public Information Officer Jason Bayless said, "When we arrived on the scene the barn was fully engulfed in flames. Luckily there was no wind - so we stopped it from spreading to the adjacent buildings and onto the lands." He

also said the Oregon Department of Forestry was called in, ready to jump in if needed.

Bayless doesn't know what caused the explosions, but said, "It could've been smaller propane tanks or any number of things." He added how the fire was rough for the IVFD crew: "It's kind of different when it's one of your own." Renee' Herndon is a 911 dispatcher and thus part of the local emergency response family.

The fire likewise distressed many throughout the Illinois Valley and beyond, as the Herndon family is held in high regard, in part, for opening their lives and property to host Healing Hearts and Hooves (HHH), a therapeutic horse riding program which has operated from August Moon Farm since its founding in 2009. The Herndon's house six HHH horses and also bring their years of equestrian experience to that program. Additionally, many other horses depend on the Herndon's for their care.

"August Moon Farm tends to operate in a state of quiet anonymity and their continuing generosity in providing the facility, outbuildings, time and care of the horses for Healing Hearts and Hooves often goes unrecognized," said one of the HHH staff members Connie Hicks. "But now, the prompt donations and offers of help from friends and supporters throughout the region are pouring in - and also I'm so proud of the response by our marvelous community, we are indeed the 'Valley of Riches.' Donations of feed began arriving the day after the fire. And once the investigation is over, August Moon Farm will begin the grim task of cleaning up the mess. I know they would really appreciate some extra help then. It's going to be quite a job."

SEE FIRE ON A-12

Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest Fire Update: Urging public to be cautious as temperatures soar this week

In a press release from Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Supervisor's Office, fire season progresses in SW Oregon, fires in the area continue to be actively suppressed. The Forest continues to work with partners to ensure that safety of firefighters and public are the primary objective in responding to fires in the area.

Blanket Creek Fire: At last report, the fire is at 931 acres and is 3 percent contained. The Type 2 Team assumed command of the fire early Saturday morning, and continue to establish their phone lines at the Incident Command Post, located at Joseph Stewart State Park. Updates and contact information can be found at the Incident's Inciweb page, at <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5431/>. When landlines are established for public information, they will be posted on the Inciweb page and the RRSNF's Facebook page.

- There is an area closure in place, with details located on the Inciweb page.

Chetco Bar Fire: The NIMO Team continues to work on strategies for the 2,877-acre fire, believed to be started by lightning earlier in the month in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness. Updates and contact information can be found at the Incident's Inciweb page, at <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5385/>.

- There are closures in place, with details located on the Inciweb page.

The Spruce Lake Fire, detected on July 29 and burning in Crater Lake National Park, is approximately 95 acres, of which 10 acres have spread onto the RRSNF. Further information on this fire and management of it are forthcoming.

One new fire was reported this past Sunday, which was contained with no issue at ¼ acre in size.

Information is also being shared on the RRSNF's social media sites; the public are encouraged to follow the sites for up-to-date information as it becomes available.

Fire agencies in southwest Oregon are urging caution for all those participating in outdoor activities, particularly as temperatures soar into the triple digits and conditions dry further. The right conditions can mean that just one small spark from an unattended fire, muzzle of a gun, or the hot exhaust pipe on a vehicle can ignite fine fuels.

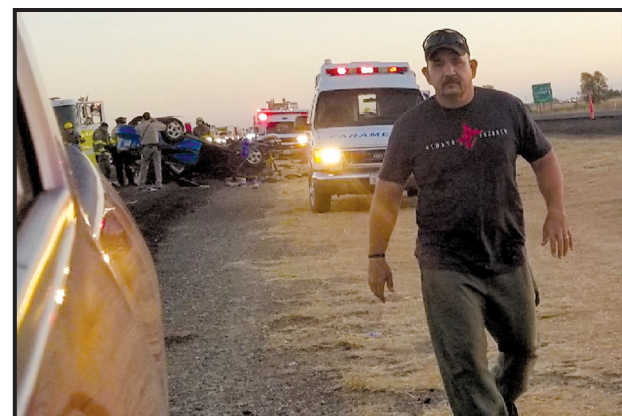
There are no days off for Division Chief Ismaili

Jason McMillen
IVN Contributing Writer

On July 13, 2017, while taking a vacation to attend his son's wedding down in Southern California, Illinois Valley Fire Department Division Chief Kamron Ismaili helped save a man's life from a vehicle wreck about an hour and a half outside of Redding. The incident involved three victims, two males and one female. The driver was still trapped inside and Ismaili estimated that he could not survive long enough for the local fire department to save him so he took immediate action.

Despite not having his gear and being far outside of his jurisdiction, Ismaili's emergency instincts kicked in right away and he, along with several civilians and a couple of fellow off-duty firefighters, went to work helping the two men. "We're never really off duty," Ismaili said, "It's embedded into our brains. I wasn't acting heroically; my nature just took over."

SEE OFF DUTY ON A-5



(Courtesy photo for the Illinois Valley News)

Kamron Ismaili heads back to his vehicle after saving the life of two travelers in Northern California, Thursday, July 13.

A funk marching band is coming to Takilma, it's time for the Turning Moon Fest.

Read about it on A-5