

Evergreen Eagles take flight



(Photo courtesy of Christina Paul for the Illinois Valley News)

Evergreen Elementary honored the September Students of the Month, sponsored by the Rotary Club. In order of grade starting from kindergarten: Destiny Fariatz, Desiraeya Lenk, Wade White, Skilyen Deckert, Melea Ziegler, Grace White, Samantha Cox, Mya Hiler, Kira Maloney, Morgan Clark, Maliyah Meisenburg, Paige Paul, Alexi Henderson, Bram Ponder, Kiara Walker and Angelina Koger.

Cougars refine roughing it

“We’re not looking to become a large, high volume manufacturer. That’s not what we’re into. We build relatively low quantity, but high quality.”

Jon Christianson, Oregon Trail’ R

Jason McMillen

IVN Contributing Writer

Jon and Sawyer Christianson, two brothers who grew up in the Illinois Valley and graduated from Illinois Valley High School, started up their Eugene-based business Oregon Trail’R in 2011 and have met nothing but success.

The duo’s interest and inspiration for crafting semi-custom teardrop trailers stems primarily from childhood memories, because their family had owned and camped with teardrop-style trailers. Their parents, along with their youngest brother and old friends, still reside in the Illinois Valley. As such, the brothers frequently visit the area.

After they graduated from the University of Oregon, the brothers desperately wanted their own teardrop camping trailers but there were two problems: they didn’t like the designs out on the market and they didn’t have enough money to buy them anyway. The solution? They built their own with whatever spare time they had. After the projects were completed, the brothers found that their trailers were in stark contrast with one another. Jon’s was practical and durable while Sawyer’s was a functioning work of art.

“We accidentally created



(Courtesy photo for the Illinois Valley News)

IVHS alumni Jon (left) and Sawyer Christianson in their Eugene shop.

complimentary skills between the two of us that come together to work really well,” Jon Christianson said.

They soon found out on their many camping excursions that their trailers turned a lot of heads. Many people even approached them, asking where they could get one of their own. It didn’t take long for them to know they had a business proposition on their hands.

“We’re not looking to become a large, high volume, manufacturer,” Jon Christianson said, “That’s not what we’re into. We build relatively

low quantity, but high quality.” Using grade-A materials and exceedingly tight tolerances, the brothers’ goal is to make trailers of such durability and craftsmanship that they will become family heirlooms.

Customers have three basic models to choose from: Frontear, Terradrop and DoDrop, all of which have their own particular niche. Frontear is a mix between practicality and aesthetics, Terradrop is designed for maximum durability and off road capability, while the DoDrop is a basic, economical model. After selecting the model, customers can choose from a list of over 50 additional features like an integrated entertainment system, additional lighting or even a solar system.

“There’s a lot more labor that goes into our product than most of what’s available out there,” Jon Christianson said, differentiating Oregon Trail’R from the competition.

Having just taken on a new full-time employee who had been apprenticing with them, Jon Christianson expects to produce between 20-25 teardrop trailers over the coming year. Those who are interested in getting a trailer built for themselves can get a quote on their website at <http://www.oregontrailer.net>.

Homecoming week IVHS activities

Oct. 11 Senior Night boys’ soccer game 6 p.m. at the Football Stadium. Field Night following the completion of the soccer match. The community is encouraged to come and enjoy. Events include Pizza Eating Contest, Glow in the Dark Golf: \$1 a ball, a prize for the farthest hit ball, face painting, Powder Puff game and food from: Sunflower Thai, Bobbalou’s, Taylor’s Sausage, and CJ Coffee; stay and enjoy the bonfire. Oct 12 the annual parade starts at 12:45 p.m. at IVHS. The route heads down River St. to Kerby over to Lister up to Junction Ave. Oct. 13 the Homecoming game and Senior Night game against St. Mary’s starts at 7 p.m. Please come down and show your Cougar Pride!

Marijuana money to be released to municipalities

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On Oct. 6 the Oregon Department of Revenue’s public information officer Joy Krawczyk wrote in a press release that state level cannabis tax dollars will be distributed, for the first time, to cities (10 percent), counties (10 percent), the State School Fund (40 percent) the Mental Health, Alcoholism and Drug Services Account (20 percent), the Oregon State Police (15 percent) and the Oregon Health Authority (5 percent). All distributions, totaling nearly \$85 million, will be complete by Oct. 11 and will be regularly handed out on a quarterly basis thereafter.

However, a change in the distribution formula regarding municipalities as outlined in the release may be an interesting turn of events for a Josephine County fallen on hard times. Before the change, tax dollars allocated to counties were to be based solely on total population so Josephine County, along with many other growing counties, would have received very little because of their sparsely populated nature. Now, all tax dollars allocated to counties and collected after July 1, 2017, will be half based on the sum of wholesaler, processor and retailer licenses and half based on available grow canopy. (A grow canopy is the overall area of space taken up by plants, not including space between the plants.)

SEE DOLLARS ON A-10

SFI now harvests solar energy for education

On July 13 Siskiyou Field Institute (SFI) flipped its electric meter into generating mode thanks to a brand new solar energy system made possible by Pacific Power’s Blue Sky renewable energy customers.

The Selma-based environmental education nonprofit will officially cut the ribbon on the solar project Sunday, October 21 at 1 p.m. The public is invited to SFI’s Solar Celebration, which will include tours of the solar installation, fun activities revolving around the solar system, live musical entertainment and free treats plus local wine and beer.

SFI received a Blue Sky Grant of \$99,960 to complete installation of seven pole-mounted, 12-panel solar arrays on the north side of its Deer Creek Center facility. It was the largest Blue Sky grant awarded to a nonprofit in 2017. Oregon SolarWorks, based in Rogue River, completed the construction during a five-week process. The 25.2 kw grid-tied system will eventually generate about 55 percent of electricity needs for SFI’s educational and lodging facilities.

SEE SFI ON A-10

City close to removing Millie St. nuisance

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A burned down house on 223 Millie Street has been there for years and, despite efforts from the city of Cave Junction, it has yet to be cleaned up. The building was burned down, presumably by accident, by occupants several years ago, though city recorder Becky Patton and city attorney Pat Kelly could not say exactly when. According to Patton, it’s unclear whether or not these individuals were squatters because the owner, alive at the time, first said that they were unwelcome on her property then later redacted by saying that she knew them and that they were allowed to stay there.

The situation is fraught with legal hurdles to overcome because the property’s owner died without a will, nobody has attempted to claim ownership of it and the city can’t get a mortgage judgment against someone who’s deceased.

SEE MILLIE ON A-10