



Life in the Valley of Riches

By DAN MANCUSO,
Publisher

My daughter Abby begged me for years to have a cell phone. After she turned 16, I broke down and purchased her first cell phone. She had started to drive so I felt it was important she have a phone in case she broke down.

She promised not to text or talk while driving. My heart told me not to trust her, my head said I had to cut the cord and like her, prove she could be responsible.

She had her phone less than a week before hitting a garbage dumpster with her car while on her phone. Last week the *Corvallis*

Gazette-Times, ran an editorial about Oregon's new distracted-driving law, I am going to share it with you.

"Nationally, the number of fatal car wrecks is on the rise, and that trend also is true in Oregon. No one knows for sure the reasons for the increase, but everyone has a pretty good guess: It's because we're distracted as never before when we buckle ourselves into the driver's seat.

So the timing seems just right for Oregon's new distracted-driving law, which went into effect on Sunday. (Oct. 1)

Under the new law, it's illegal to hold phones or other electronic devices while driving. That means no texting and no phone calls unless your vehicle has a hands-free system in place.

The new law, House Bill 2597, also closes loopholes in the current law by addressing all types of electronic devices, not just cellular phones.

Rep. Andy Olson of Albany was the chief sponsor of the legislation. Olson, a former Oregon State Police officer, knows firsthand about the damage caused by distracted drivers — damage that simply doesn't have to happen if drivers stay focused on their first responsibility.

"Nationally, one in four vehicle accidents involve distracted driving," Olson said last week in a news story about the new law. "It's a major concern."

"The law doesn't say you can't use them, you just can't have them in your hand," Olson said. "You can still swipe something on or off. We just don't want you holding the

device. That's the key."

So, for example, you can still use your smartphone as a navigation device, but be sure to type in the address before you start your vehicle. While you're on the road, it's strictly hands-off.

It has been illegal to text or use a cellphone without a hands-free device while driving in Oregon since 2009. (Drivers under the age of 18 cannot use any cellular device while driving, even if it is hands-free.) The new law adds some teeth to all that.

Which is why area law-enforcement officers say they aren't interested in giving drivers the benefit of a grace period in enforcing the law: They're ready to write tickets when they catch that tell-tale glow emanating from inside your vehicle.

Linn County Sheriff Bruce Riley likely was speaking for many mid-valley law officers when he said: "We are done warning folks. Done educating folks about this. We are going to enforce this law."

First-time offenders are looking at a fine of \$160. Why, that might cover a month or two of data charges on your smartphone, and that's the point: The fine is designed to catch your attention and to leave a bit of a mark on your pocketbook.

A third offense committed within a 10-year span could end up costing you \$2,500 and could include up to six months in jail.

The idea is to make people think twice about driving with one eye on the road and one eye on their smartphones. That driving technique is a recipe for disaster. It's best just to set the device aside while you're driving; in fact, some phones now have "do not disturb while driving" features that drivers may want to consider activating.

Just a second or two of inattentive driving can be enough to trigger a wreck: Lt. Brad Liles of the Albany Police Department said distracted driving is a common culprit in rear-end accidents.

"It's especially noticeable at stoplights, when they don't see brake lights for a second or two," he said.

It's not as if we don't have enough distractions while driving even without our devices: Just last week, for example, news stories reported about new electronic billboards that will be able to send personalized messages as vehicles approach them. We are not convinced that this constitutes a major advance for civilization.

But may we suggest a message for those new billboards? How about this: "Eyes on the road, partner. Hands on the wheel."

The Illinois Valley has more than its share of auto collisions. With the onset of winter we are going to have less light and rain soaked roads.

We all need to be conscious about distracted driving, that includes me too.

Thank you for picking up this week's paper, enjoy! ~ djm

Letters to the editor

Illinois Valley News welcomes letters to the editor. Please e-mail them to dan@illinois-valley-news.com

POLICY ON LETTERS:

'Illinois Valley News' encourages letters to the editor provided they are legible and not libelous or scurrilous. All letters must be signed, including name, address and telephone number. The latter need not be published, but will be used to verify authenticity. The "News" reserves the right to edit letters. Letters are used at the discretion of the publisher.

(Editor's Note: Views and commentary, including statements made as fact are strictly those of the letter writers.)

Greetings to all our neighbors and neighboring communities,

It is of special concern to me and others who have joined the Neighborhood Watch effort to expand upon the subject of crime watch and Public Safety throughout all of our neighborhoods and community in the Illinois Valley.

We continue to experience the real solutions that come when neighbors pull together, get to know each other and creatively address their problems. Each of us with our skill sets and abilities have been able to contribute 'what we are able' to make our neighborhoods a more crime free place. And these benefits have spilled over into helping each other in so many other ways. I could fill a book of my own, just in the last 4 years, with tales leading to connectedness and personal enrichment.

The August 2015 Krauss Fire incident affecting over 120 residences south of Cave

Junction in the Ken Rose area is one case in point. We utilized our emergency phone tree and the street captains deployed personal fire fighting resources to the approaching fire. Also, we assisted each other with evacuation.

I used to give praise and admire my friends who were firefighting volunteers, and now I am a member of the I.V. Fire District C.E.R.T. team.

Chief Dennis Hoke carried the watch work to his neighborhood by utilizing the "Watch Packet" and now the neighborhoods, adjacently located, Idlewild and Ken Rose, have collaborated most effectively for mutual support. We now have good watch leadership, meetings, an emergency phone tree, cameras, two way radios, an immediate alert notification system and citizen's patrols.

I wish to extend a special

thanks here to Chief Hoke for his consistent leadership support, to our CERT members, and to Jimmy Evans with CJ Patrol.

We have now spanned two sheriff's administrations. In 2014 Sheriff Gilbertson helped to launch a Josephine County wide program called "Community Watch." This pilot program was to organize a cadre of professional first responder, law enforcement, fire and emergency preparedness "personnel" to assist training local leadership, build Neighborhood Watch Groups, and network them. The citation list of supporters was long. This was then conveyed to Sheriff Dave Daniel's administration in 2015. This is the plan we adopted for the Illinois Valley and now we have created a service committee to carry out the work. This plan also includes the business commu-

nity, churches and fellowships. It is unfolding. Thanks to those who have joined.

On Oct. 25 at I.V. Fire Station 1, 681 Cave Hwy. from 6 to 8 p.m. we will convene a Town Hall to show case our work and to help our community organize for their safety. We have scheduled Sheriff Dave Daniel and Chief Dennis Hoke to give us an update report on their department's upgrades from the Levy Funds they are receiving. Our newly formed I.V. Community Watch Service Committee, 10 members in all, will host the Town Hall along with participation from local Neighborhood Watch Groups and CJ Patrol. Thanks to our CJ City Council and IVCDO for their follow along with our Community Watch efforts, including: John Gardiner, Jean Ann Miles, Mayor Dalegowski, and many others.

A bright spot light of

conscientious cannabis growing businesses are organizing themselves and have joined our Service Committee looking to support Neighborhood Watch and community generated solutions.

"Know thy Neighbor", and "When anyone reaches out for help I want the hand of our community to be there, and for that I Am Responsible" are our two mottos. Thanks again to our wonderful service community, our dedicated people in the private and public sector, putting the welfare of others first. You, the reader, are ever so welcome to meet with us and join our productive forums and effort as we travel the road to a happy destiny, together. It takes a community, UNITED.

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Cave Junction

ILLINOIS VALLEY FUNERAL DIRECTORS

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Save the date

Oct. 11

IVHS boys' varsity soccer game at home vs. Cascade Christian at 6 p.m.

Oct. 12

IVHS girls' JV volleyball game at St. Mary's High School at 5 p.m.
IVHS girls' varsity volleyball game at St. Mary's High School at 6:15 p.m.

Oct. 13

IVHS boys' varsity football game at home for Homecoming Week vs. St. Mary's at 7 p.m.

Oct. 14

IVHS boys' varsity soccer game at home vs. Rogue River at 10 a.m.

Oct. 20 – 22

9th annual Valley Girls Quilt Show will be Oct. 20 – 21, Friday & Saturday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Sunday, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., I.V. Senior Center, 520 E. River St. Cave Junction, \$3 entrance fee, All proceeds donated to I.V. Baseball Team, Boys & Girls Club and Evergreen Elementary School Life Skills; 100 never shown before quilts on display, Country Store, games and door prizes, 2017 Opportunity Quilt "Mountain Valley

Vistas" & burgers and desserts too!

Oct. 25

Town Hall Meeting: 6 to 8 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 25, at the Senior Center - 520 E. River St. Dessert Potluck, free Coffee & Tea. Topic/presentations on: Current Crime, CJ Patrol, Public Safety, Neighborhood Watch, Emergency Preparedness, also includes Neighborhood Watch startup packets. Meet leaders of local Watch groups and I.V. Fire Community Emergency Response Team members as we organize and network for mutual support. To RSVP or get an Agenda Packet - email: ivwatch541@gmail.com or call 541-415-1929. For a Youtube intro and May 4 presentation by Chief Dennis Hoke, visit www.ivwatchsite.wordpress.com

Nov. 5

Democracy at Risk: A Nonpartisan Community Dialogue Sunday, November 5, 4 - 6 p.m. in the Illinois Valley High School Commons

Is America's Election System working as it should? Are our First Amendment freedoms at risk from abuses of power? Is political polarization tearing our democracy apart? What are some positive solutions that

we, as citizens, can propose to maintain our core democratic values?

The event is free and open to all concerned citizens, and will include music and light refreshments. Participants are encouraged to bring finger foods to share. We hope you will join in the discussion of these important issues and work with us to find common ground.

For more information call 541-727-8312 or email qlcoach2@yahoo.com.

Continuing

Your public library has activities happening every week! New Storytime reader, Melanie, has crafts and stories for kids of all ages Saturdays at 12 noon. Families at Play baby-parent group is for pre-walking babies Wednesdays from 1-2pm. Early literacy skills are taught within a thirty-minute storytime of songs, bounces, and reading, followed by a half-hour of play and chat time. For more information contact Roberta Lee at 541-592-4770. IV Branch, Josephine Community Libraries, 209 W Palmer St, CJ

*Illinois Valley Community Watch Meeting every Monday from 5 - 6 p.m. at Wild River Pizza, 249

Redwood Hwy. – Cave Junction. A Public Safety Outreach Campaign effort with all I.V. Neighborhood Watch Groups – representatives, including businesses and churches, and support for anyone wishing to start a neighborhood watch. Includes a 2-way hand held radio program briefing from 4:20 - 4:50 p.m. Contact Guenter - 541-415-1929 / ivwatch541@gmail.com.

*The I.V. Senior Thrift Store: Join the crew and make new friends. You don't need to be a senior citizen to volunteer at the store. Call us at 541-592-6630. Open Monday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

*The Sheriff's Office Substation in Cave Junction is now open on Mondays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.. Volunteers are still needed to staff additional days. Applications are available at the substation or on line at <http://www.co.josephine.or.us/Files/Volunteer%20Application.Mar%202014.pdf>.

*Cave Junction Patrol, LLC is looking for volunteers. CJ Patrol is a private citizen volunteer organization dedicated to effectively addressing heretofore-unchecked property

crime in our city and neighborhoods. The primary mission of CJ Patrol is to prevent, interrupt, report and decrease property crime in the city of Cave Junction. Call 541-592-9665 or visit cjp patrol.org.

*Committee Meeting STATE OF JEFFERSON Josephine County 1st Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. Black Forest Restaurant, Grants Pass and 3rd Thursday of each month at 6 p.m., Wild River Pizza in Cave Junction.

*Come join the Cave Junction Lions Club at River Valley Restaurant, at 6 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. We are a co-ed club and are always looking for community minded people that are dedicated, hard working, whether physically limited or not and most of all, like to have fun.

Come by and see what we do or give us a call, 541-592-9243 Nina Horsley, president.

*Second and fourth Mondays of the month, 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 222 W. Lister Street, Cave Junction, Oregon, the Common Council of the City of Cave Junction will meet in a regular session.

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