

**ART'S RED GARTER**  
**THE ROCKETS**  
**FRI. & SAT.**  
**10/27 & 10/28**  
**SATURDAY HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST at midnight!**



(Photo by Laura Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

**Professional fiddler Kelly Thibodeaux (left) encourages fourth-grader River White with his guitar during the fourth grade recital at Evergreen Elementary School Friday, Oct. 20. Thibodeaux was at Evergreen Oct. 16 through Oct. 20 teaching the third and fourth-graders using his own collection of fiddles. He travels the state with his fiddles to teach at elementary schools as part of the Artists in Residence Program.**

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**Karen Bodeving's CPA firm needed to connect remote employees to her local business.**

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(Photo courtesy of Mark Flynn for the Illinois Valley News)

**Siskiyou Field Institute (SFI) board president Dr. Kathy Mechling (right) cuts the ribbon to celebrate the new solar panel system that will make SFI energy independent Oct. 23. Oregon Solarworks owner Kripal Khalsa and his daughter, Emma also participated.**

# NAPA ...

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“This was an historical event for the IVFD,” Latva said. “We were the only Josephine County resource to go and this was the first time Oregon deployed structural strike teams to California in an official capacity.

We worked with Medford District’s 3 and 5 and the Medford Fire Department.”

As the only volunteer firefighters included in the strike team, Latva is very proud of the IVFD’s performance.

“I give a lot of credit to our organization, that we’re trained up and able to perform to the same level and standard as the other much larger organizations,” Latva said. “Those crews from Medford are top-notch professionals and it’s pretty cool that volunteer firefighters from such a small town like ours are competitive. This is really great for our reputation outside the district, for others to see that we brought our type-one fire engine and we fit right in.”

The Jackson/JoCo Strike Team spent about a week in California and worked 24 hour shifts - primarily in the Lake Berryessa area - before rotating back to the Napa County Fairgrounds to recover for 24 hours. “We did a lot of structural protection and attacked some hot spots,” said Latva, who has served with the IVFD for four years.

“It was a very interesting event,” he added. “This was the first time we got to work with Cal Fire and that’s a very big organization with a lot of resources. Also, being part of a strike team, you get to see how these big teams of paid professionals approach situations and you build some friendships. And being part of a team with very competent people that are easy to get along with - they help us grow considerably, and that’s pretty cool too.”

Latva also said the fire “was a very different type of fire” than what the IVFD is used to confronting, because it was so fast moving.

“My heart goes out to these people, they got hit really hard and it will take years to get back to normal,” he said. “But they’re really resilient down there. In some of the rural areas, they had their own bulldozers out there cutting their own fire lines. They were very pro-active. They weren’t going to just sit and wait.”

The IVFD deployed three times this year as part of a strike team or a task force, also sending resources to fight the Chetco Bar Fire and the Cascade Locks Fire near Portland.

“This is all new, being part of these strike forces. But I anticipate we may see more of this in the future,” Latva said. “And we showed that we can deploy on short notice - we were on the road about 14 hours after the initial request.”

In addition to the strike teams from JoCo, Jackson and Marion counties, Oregon county fire defense board chiefs activated eight additional strike teams from Multnomah County, Washington County, Lane County, Clatsop County, Yamhill County, Umatilla/ Union counties, Linn/Benton counties and Klamath/ Deschutes counties.

“Oregon fire agencies have stepped up to the plate to help our neighbors to the south,” Ruiz-Temple said. “California helped us with the fires in Southern Oregon this year and I am proud that we can return the favor in their time of need.”



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