

## Municipal Minions



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Rebecca Patton (left), Lisa Richardson, Vampire Minion and Deanna Rodriguez made Halloween a little more playful at Cave Junction City Hall Tuesday, Oct. 31.

## 2017 grape harvest had its challenges

Jason McMillen  
IVN Contributing Writer

The grape harvest has drawn to a close with both Bridgeview and Foris vineyards reporting that fruit quality, which is essentially based on the ratio of sugars to acids, and total tonnage were satisfactory. Rene Eichmann, owner of Bridgeview Vineyards, reported that they scored a silver medal on both their regular and sweet rieslings in San Francisco and that the wine will soon make its way to the market. Unfortunately, Foris Vineyard's Owner Ted Gerber said that he can't yet release details regarding their awards until December because of a non-disclosure agreement.

Bridgeview faced extreme erosion damage from Sucker Creek during last winter's torrential downpour and, in total, set them back an estimated \$100,000 in grape vines and infrastructure. The estimate doesn't include the value of the land that was washed away—about an acre. Although temporary measures were taken under the Emergency

Authority Program to curb the stream's appetite in April it wasn't until August that a permanent and ecologically friendly solution was installed by the Illinois Valley Soil and Water Conservation District.

Another problem Bridgeview faced this year, Eichmann said, was that their harvest machine broke down. Its lengthy repair time made them fall precariously behind schedule. "It's an older machine," Eichmann said, "I don't know if we're going to invest a whole lot of money into the old dinosaur anymore." A new machine, if bought outright, is about a quarter of a million dollars, according to Eichmann.

Gerber said that the most chronic and costly problem his vineyards face, varmints, was less of an issue than in years past because of the lack of a rainstorm up north. Usually, Gerber held, a rainstorm tends to drive grape eating animals like bear, deer, foxes and birds, down into Southern Oregon. "Even if you have a fence they'll find a way to bust in," Gerber said.

Foris harvested a total of

around 700 tons of grapes from the sum of their locations. About half of that number was pinot noir because it grows well in the Illinois Valley's climate. Foris also focuses on pinot gris, pinot blanc, riesling, gewürztraminer and muscat. "Those are the varieties we feel do best over here," Gerber concluded.

Grapes that are known to not grow satisfactorily in the Illinois Valley are sourced from Applegate. In total, Foris bought 75 tons of grapes to complete their selection of wines.

Although Foris used to buy a considerable amount of grapes from local vineyards to keep up with demand, Gerber reported that they've been stepping away from the practice by expanding their total acreage. Last year, Foris planted an additional seven acres and this year they planted yet another seven. "That's probably our last planting," Gerber said, "We're just about there."

Not one to leave their former suppliers out in the cold, Gerber said that Foris is always sure to find them another buyer before backing away from the deal.

## Pot farm rules take effect

Jason McMillen  
IVN Contributing Writer

Ordinance No. 2017-001, which aims to eliminate unsightly, disruptive or potentially dangerous practices regarding fencing, lighting, buildings and erosion, went into effect Oct. 30. The ordinance has been in the works since October 2016 and was approved by the commissioners Aug. 2 of this year.

Letters will be sent out this week to all known growers, regardless of zone, informing them that they have 30 days to comply. Should growers fail to comply, the county will take legal action against them.

Sight obscuring fences henceforth cannot be constructed out of temporary or unorthodox materials including, but not limited to, root balls, hay bales, junk, appliances, inoperable vehicles or equipment, plastic sheeting or tarps. Vegetative screens may be an option for some growers, provided that such a screen meets all state and county requirements. The screen may take no longer than three years from the day it's planted to properly conceal a cannabis production site.

Shade cloth used to shade plants cannot be used for a period longer than three consecutive months and must be removed at the end of the growing season.

Indoor lighting used for an indoor cannabis growing area, or indoor cannabis processing facility, can no longer be visible from dwellings or adjacent properties and cannot cast light upward into the night sky between dusk and dawn. Exterior lighting needs to be shielded so that the light they emit is cast downwards. This is to ensure, like the new indoor lighting rules, that no light is cast onto adjacent properties or into the night sky.

Furthermore, Rural Residential properties which have less than 2.5 acres of land cannot exceed 50 percent of the property's total area with the footprint of buildings.

No. 2017-001 requires any location where fill is brought to or stockpiled in quantity's greater than 10 cubic yards to take measures toward controlling runoff. The ordinance simply asks that these sites use "best management practices" but also suggests that straw bales or erosion control fabric are good options.

Grading slopes in excess of 15 percent now requires a Storm Water Management Plan signed by a registered engineer. Such a plan outlines the measures taken to prevent or mitigate runoff onto adjacent properties.

Finally, berms must now be set back from property lines at a minimum distance equal to or greater than the required setback for a structure. Berms made out of earth need to be stabilized with ground cover.

## Calling all veterans, Kerbyville wants your military photos

Judy Hoyle  
IVN Contributing Writer

Veterans Day marks the beginning of a new display project at Kerbyville Museum and History Center.

A "Wall of Honor" exhibit is planned for the 2018 tourism season, and the museum board is inviting the community to participate by submitting photocopies of their family members in uniform.

"It's something we've thought about doing for a long time," said Linda Butler, board president, "We just decided to proceed with the project because we're losing our older veterans and we want to honor all those who have served or are currently serving."

Butler stated that a special space in the museum's Military Room has been selected for the exhibit. She hopes to expand the display over time, possibly including

emergency first responders in future years.

In addition, museum curator Dennis Strayer stated that the project is open to all current or previous residents of the Illinois Valley.

"Photocopies, 4 inches by 6 inches, with the individual in uniform are preferred," Strayer said. "We don't want original photos, since we won't be returning them. We're asking that the full name, rank, branch of service and dates of service also be included with the photocopy, along with their original hometown."

Photos should be sent to the museum at P.O. Box 3003, Kerby, Oregon, 97631. The deadline to submit photos is Dec. 15.

For further information, participants are asked to call the museum at 541-592-5252 and leave their name, phone number and question on the answer machine.

SEE WALL ON A-10

Learn about what our neighbors over the hill in Happy Camp are up to.

Read about it on A-8