



Life in the Valley of Riches

By DAN MANCUSO,
Publisher

Last Wednesday I was on my paper route and when I got back into my car, the radio DJ was talking about yet another school shooting. I patiently waited to hear where the shooting was at, because I have a daughter who is a speech pathologist

at a school near Denver and two of our boys are in high schools in Grants Pass and Batavia, Illinois. I knew Jaxon was OK as I was in GP and things seemed normal. But I had no idea if Abby and John were safe.

It seemed to go on forever without mentioning where, I was beginning to panic and then I got word and was relieved all of mine were safe. But are they ever safe in this crazy world? The next time, and there will be a next time, and time after that, am I going to be lucky again?

This is no way for anyone to go through life. How can children focus on getting an education while processing the events of Feb. 14? My seven-year-old nephew who goes to school on an Army base in Georgia came home from school and announced that he shouldn't wear shoes that "light up" as a shooter could spot the light and shoot him. Seven-year-olds should not have to worry about these types of things. Seven-year-olds should not have to have active shooter drills. Seven-year-olds should be able to wear shoes that light up when they run because they should spend their days being a child. High

school students should worry about the game Friday night and if the parental units will let them use the car to take that cute girl on a date. Teachers should focus on educating our country's future leaders.

I don't have the answer to this disease our country suffers from, but I don't think teachers carrying guns is the answer. While I don't know how to solve the issue, I do have an idea of the cause of the issue. If you look at all of modern day ills, in the end, it all falls down to mental illness and the need for immediate gratification. None of you need a "back when I was a kid" sermon, but back when I was a kid we had a funded mental health system and the state of the nuclear family was strong. We have little of either today, and that makes me sad.

Our Lady Cougars basketball team is in the playoffs again. They are heading up to Clatskanie High School for a playoff game Feb. 23 at 7 p.m. Go COUGS!

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.)

A TALE OF TWO COUNTIES

This letter to the editor was inspired by a recent literary piece by the Editor published in the Feb. 14, 2018 edition of the I.V. News. I want to thank Laura Mancuso for her compassionate viewpoint regarding the homeless/addiction/mental illness crisis that this rich valley has been and is currently experiencing. A grass roots effort does appear to be the only likely solution to every problem that this valley faces, although it would provide a bit of solace knowing that our county government had a fraction of Laura's concern

for the greater whole.

Every county in Oregon receives economic development money from the state lottery fund based on population. Between 2015 and 2017, Josephine County has received \$1.14 million from the fund. During the time period, Jackson County received \$2.58 million from the fund. During this same time period, Josephine County spent \$58,000 on "administration" while Jackson County spent \$53,897. This information can be verified on the website for Oregon.gov under the heading "2017 - 2015 Oregon County Expenditures of State Lottery Funds Report".

Josephine County commissioners will tell you that there are only certain things that the lottery money can be spent on and public safety, drug addiction and mental health programs are not on the list. However, if you look at the details on the website you will find that Jackson County has in fact dedicated ALL of their Oregon lottery economic development funds "to help strengthen economic development by 1) providing a safe environment for businesses to operate in. 2) Helping inmates overcome obstacles to employment with programs that address addiction problems, mental health issues and education (GED)." The state of Oregon

lottery fund has given no objection to this allotment of state economic development funds by Jackson county for three years straight.

At the Feb. 14, 2018 Weekly Business Session at Anne Basker Auditorium, Airports Director Larry Graves and Community Development Director Julie Schmelzer requested an economic development "grant" from the above mentioned lottery fund to "cover the cost of a round-trip flight from Grants Pass to Aurora State Airport on September 11th, 2017" The purpose of the trip was to "facilitate the development of the Southern Oregon Air Academy (SOAA) Board Charter and Articles of Incorporation". The agenda for the weekly business session goes on to say the flight "...was conducted for the purpose of transporting Commissioner Lily Morgan, Airports Director Larry Graves, RCC Dean of Science and Technology Steve Shilling, Southern Oregon Education Services Division Director Daniella Bivens and Southern Oregon Air Academy Board Chair Caleb LePlant". The total cost of the flight was billed by PacJet Inc. to the tune of \$3,259. The Commissioners gave the "grant" to Graves and Schmelzer, with Morgan and DeYoung voting yes and Simon Hare abstaining.

So here we live in a county that will cough up \$3,259 from the lottery fund for a private jet transport for a short escapade by two county officials and three other free loaders to create an opportunity for a few dozen privileged youngsters to get them excited to fly airplanes while hundreds of children in the county don't have regular meals or a safe place to sleep. The cherry on top for me is the fact that the trip was chartered 5 months prior to the request, and then to request reimbursement under the guise of a "grant"? Anyone who has ever written for a "grant" knows that you must wait for grant approval before you have the privilege to go forward in spending the grant money.

Maybe folks don't feel like \$3,259 is a big deal in the grand scheme of things. I see it as the tip of the iceberg, an indicator that there is a much larger issue just under the surface that is at the root of the troubles of this county. We don't lack adequate funding, we lack compassionate leadership making wise use of the county funds, working for the greater good of all the people of Josephine County. Shame on Larry Graves and Julie Schmelzer for manufacturing such a frivolous need for funding and shame on all three commissioners for their participation in the

fraudulence.

Sunrise Ocean Cave Junction

Dear Editor:

How do you reform a gun? The answer is, of course, you can't! A gun is an inanimate object. A hammer, an ax, a tire iron, a golf club or a big rock can all be used as tools, but as we all know, when they are misused, they can kill. So when you hear gun reform, they really mean "people reform."

We have been told many times "If you see something, say something." Recently, at least two or three times, people have said something to the FBI and they did nothing. What used to be the premier investigative agency of the world, were not there when they were needed.

Could it be that when the upper echelon of the FBI got so distracted by their foray into presidential politics they not only overlooked the many laws their candidate broke while Secretary of State, their ineptness trickled down resulting in 17 deaths.

For eight years we had a president that politicized and weaponized key areas of our government including the IRS, EPA and the ATF to the entire State Department. Law and order has suffered while a president did his best to "fundamentally change" our country from the dynamic Republic our

founders envisioned to a cumbersome, lethargic socialized democracy we see in the declining countries in Europe.

For reasons I don't understand, the left, liberals and progressives have talked themselves into believing making school "gun free zones" should solve the problem. However what they really did was to invite shooters to ply their wares with kids! For some reason Democrats love lots of laws but only pay attention to those they like. Like having your own server when the U.S. government requires people like the Secretary of State to use much more safe and secure government servers.

The NRA can tell you how you can have a healthy respect for guns rather than fill you full of paralyzing fear. A shooter can only shoot one direction at a time. If several potential victims start throwing books, chairs, shoes, rocks or anything at him so he is being attacked, then a couple or three people can attack from his back and disarm him. Then others can pummel him until their hearts are content, or until the law arrives to save him.

No two situations are the same but being proactive can save yourself and others and beats waiting to be shot.

**Greg Anderson
Cave Junction**

Obituaries

Harvey "Dusty" Rhodes, 70, of Cave Junction, died Feb. 8, 2018 at Asante Rogue Regional Medical Center.

Dusty was born Nov. 24, 1947 in Baytown, Texas. Dusty was a business man, owning several businesses throughout the

span of his lifetime, most notable an air-conditioning business in Houston, Texas. Dusty was married and divorced in the 1970s and retired from business in 2008. In 2000 he moved with his family from Houston to Cave Junction.

Dusty was a Mason. His hobbies

included repairing pinball machines and playing video games.

Survivors include a daughter, Heather Rhodes of Phoenix, Ore. and two granddaughters, Misty Rhodes of Cave Junction, Oregon and Bonnie Farley of Houston, Texas.

He was preceded in death by his parents, William Henry Rhodes and Shirley Enderli.

Private interment will be at Laurel Cemetery in Cave Junction.

Illinois Valley Funeral Directors are in charge of arrangements.

ILLINOIS VALLEY FUNERAL DIRECTORS
WWW.SINCE1928HULL.COM 541-592-4110

Save the date

Feb. 21 - 24

Wednesday, Feb. 21, thru Saturday, Feb. 24, 11 a.m. Your public library has NEW HOURS! Starting Wednesday the 21 the I.V. Branch will be open 4 days a week at 11 a.m.

Wednesday 11-6, Thursday 11-5, Friday 11-5 & Saturday 11-5 For more information contact Roberta Lee at 541-592-4770. I.V. Branch, Josephine Community Libraries, 209 W Palmer St, CJ

Feb. 24

On Feb. 24 a Vision clinic is being held at I.V. High School 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. by Josephine County Foundation Vision Clinic. Josephine County Foundation (JCF) is a student led nonprofit that inspires, engages and strengthens the community through innovative leadership and service. JCF has a "clear vision" to help Josephine County afford care through their vision clinic. People will receive a full eye exam.

Feb. 28

Cave Junction Community Naloxone Meeting, Free naloxone available, Learn how to use naloxone and get it from you local pharmacy. Wednesday, Feb. 28 at 6:30 p.m. at Healthy U, 535 E. River Street, CJ

March 7, 14, 21 April 4 & 11

Seeds to Supper, Call to register OSU Extension 541-476-6613. A beginner's guide to low-cost vegetable gardening. The Josephine County Master Gardeners are presenting a FREE series of six gardening courses on how to raise your own vegetables. Learn how to garden on a budget. Participants receive a free gardening book and more.

Course topics: garden site & planning/soil development/planting/caring for the garden/harvesting and using garden bounty. Offered in partnership with Oregon Food Bank and Josephine County Master Gardeners

March 10

Senior Expo to be held Saturday, March 10 from 10 - 2 at the I.V. Senior Center. 520 E. Rier Street. Come hear presentations, visit booths, participate in health screenings/demos and have soup and dessert.

March 17

Clean in Green, CJ Quarterly Clean up day, Saturday, March 17, 12:45 - 3 p.m., meet at I.V. Family Resource Center, 535 E. River

St. Organized by Rotary Club of I.V. For more info call Nicole at 541-660-2419.

Continuing

*Evergreen Elementary school is looking for SMART (Start Making A Reader Today) volunteers. The program will run Tuesdays through Thursdays and volunteers are asked to come to Evergreen around 11:30 a.m. and will be out at 12:45 p.m. To learn more about the SMART program you can call 541-734-5628 or visit the website at www.getSMARToregon.org.

*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, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10 to 2. 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.

*Illinois Valley Indivisible, a grassroots community dedicated to the nonviolent defense of our democratic system and basic human rights, meets the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the IV Family Coalition, 535 E. River Street in Cave Junction.

*Mountain Wind Sangha. Every Tuesday morning from 9-10:30. New Wednesday time through Feb. 4 -5 p.m. Mindfulness meditation. Our community welcomes people from all backgrounds and at all stages of their spiritual journey. Meets above Bagel Junction,

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