

March surprise!



(Photo by Laura Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Caves Hwy. early Friday, March 2. Snowy roads caused delays and cancellations in the region.

Neglect and violence at home create difficult learning environment

“I love my job. These kids just thrill me. Every one of them brings something to the table that challenges me.”

Lynn Schiermeyer, special ed teacher

Anita R. Savio
IVN Contributing Writer

Dedication to the kids and love of their jobs are what come through from the Illinois Valley’s special ed teachers. Three teachers shared their experiences with the *Illinois Valley News*. Adele King and Aimee Keil both teach special ed at Evergreen Elementary. King is the Education Resource Center (ERC) teacher, while Keil teaches Life Skills. ERC students are generally 100 percent in their grade-level classroom, but get some additional services to help them out. Life Skills may have multiple disabilities, and spend much more time outside of the general ed classroom.

King is in her 11th year as ERC teacher at the elementary level, although she has been in some form of education for 30-plus years. Keil is in her third year as a life skills teacher. Both have master’s degrees from Southern Oregon University, but their course offerings differed according to the needs of Oregon’s schools in the year they were enrolled, for instance whether the need was for ERC or life skills teachers or teachers at the elementary school or high school level.

“But the sky is the limit,” said King, “because there’s such a shortage of special ed teachers in the whole country.”

King said that not only does she love the teaching, but she also loves the paperwork.

“There must be something wrong with me!” she cried out, laughing. “When I’m doing the paperwork,” she

explained, “I’m studying the child. Every time you work on an Individual Education Plan or an eligibility, there’s an awful lot of investigation and research. Sometimes you get a disability you’re not familiar with. So you’re always learning and learning and learning.”

King added a plug for the teaching climate at Evergreen, which she described as rewarding and positive.

Life skills teacher Keil noted that there is quite a bit of overlap between life skills and ERC programs and general ed.

“My students typically need a higher level of adult support. But they may move to ERC or even general ed as they acquire and develop functional skills, like going to the bathroom, riding the bus, sitting in a seat and being quiet and listening, standing in line at lunch.”

Both Keil and King identified their biggest challenge as student behavior: impulsivity, inattention and hyperactivity. Because of this they may give their students extra recesses, a special swing, break times or opportunities to earn a reward.

Keil brought up one all-too-common issue: “Given our area --and it’s the district, not just the Illinois Valley -- we’re seeing a higher number of kids coming in with post traumatic stress, neglect, violence in the home, things that impact their ability to self regulate, to cope with challenges, to learn. Because of all those things, that’s when we see behavior happening.”

SEE SPECIAL ON A-8

Legislature opens wallet for illegal marijuana enforcement

In a press release from the office of Oregon State Representative Carl Wilson who represents District 3, announced the Oregon Legislature voted to create a grant program to provide local law enforcement needed resources to help address a sizable and demonstrable problem with the overproduction and diversion of cannabis from the state.

Senate Bill 1544 -- which passed the Oregon legislature March 2, establishes the Illegal Marijuana Market Enforcement Grant Program within the Criminal Justice Commission. The grant program will assist local governments with costs incurred by local law enforcement agencies in addressing unlawful marijuana cultivation and distribution.

“Voters made cannabis legal in the state, and cannabis is a state-regulated program. It’s important to me that the state pick up the tab to fully enforce marijuana laws, especially where the illegal production damages our communities,” Rep. Carl Wilson (R-Grants Pass) said. “The Illegal Marijuana Market Enforcement Grant Program will help law enforcement in Southern Oregon combat unlawful cultivation and out-of-state diversion to the open market.”

The grant program will provide \$1.5 million per year (for six years) to help local law enforcement address illegal marijuana activity. This comes on the heels of changes to the federal stance on states’ marijuana programs. In 2017, U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions rescinded the Cole Memo – a U.S. Dept. of Justice memo prioritizing how resources should be allocated in prosecuting federal marijuana cases. This January, Oregon’s USAG, Billy Williams, convened an “Oregon marijuana Summit” to discuss what he called an “identifiable and formidable overproduction and diversion problem.”

SEE ILLEGAL ON A-10

City expands no smoking zones

Derek Prall
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The Cave Junction City Council met Monday, Feb. 26, to discuss matters relating to living in vehicles during construction, marijuana business issues, and reducing the public’s exposure to tobacco products.

The meeting began with a moment of silence to honor former Councilmember and Mayor of Cave Junction, Carl Jacobson Jr. who died Sunday, Feb 25. Jacobson, a veteran, was described as a dedicated public servant and was elected mayor in 2011 and served for six years. Several council members shared fond memories of Jacobson and recalled his unique personality and passion for his community. He was 74.

After discussing and unanimously approving the details of the application for residents to raise chickens, the council then heard the first reading and opened a public hearing of an ordinance to amend Chapter 17 of the municipal code to allow the occupancy of recreational vehicles or trailers during residential construction. This modification of the land use code allows families to live in a trailer or recreational vehicle on their property during construction or remodeling of their home after obtaining the proper permits from the city. A permit will allow occupancy of such vehicles for six months at a time with a limit of one year. The council heard public comments on the resolution, and considered changes to its language.

Next, the council voted on a resolution to remove its “unnecessary and arbitrary authority” to revoke the licenses for marijuana related businesses. “If all criteria has been met and state licenses have been obtained, [for cannabis-related businesses], staff would issue the business license instead of it going to the council,” Mayor Daniel Dalegowski said. “This avoids a tricky situation where we might approve some and not others not based on any part of the municipal code but based on some personal opinion that we might have. If we do that, it is likely we would get sued for doing so, and it’s likely we would lose.” The motion passed unanimously.

The council then voted on a measure to limit public exposure to tobacco smoke. The ordinance would ban the use of tobacco products, including vaporizers, in public parks, outdoor seating areas and within 20 feet of the entryways to businesses. After brief discussion from the council on the rights of smokers versus the rights of individuals to not be exposed to tobacco smoke, the council voted unanimously to pass the ordinance.

The meeting closed with staff member Travis Robbins being appointed to the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council and discussion on the formation of a parks and recreation commission, as well as the usual comments from the public as well as comments from the council and mayor.

IVHS track team gears up for the 2018 season.

Read about it on A-3