

Illinois Valley News

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Fire's frontline



(Courtesy photo for the Illinois Valley News)

Kaden Green of the Pacific Oasis fire crew gets a photo-op while fighting the Taylor Creek Fire Saturday, July 28.

City approves tax on weed, gas and restaurant tax go up in smoke

By Dan Mancuso
IVN Staff

On July 23, the Cave Junction City Council voted 5-0 to send a 3 percent recreational marijuana tax to the voters to fund law enforcement, but no motion passed regarding sending a gas and restaurant tax to the voters.

During the meeting, the local gas station owners were against the proposed fuel tax. "I pay 34 cents on every gallon of fuel sold," Caves Chevron owner Jeff Stiles said. While the consumer would actually pay the taxes, Stiles would still take a hit from the credit card company's transaction fees. Stiles cited that much of the transactions at the station are either on a debit card or credit card.

Scott Taylor of Taylor's Sausage Company lamented on the expense of reprogramming cash registers. Both business owners also questioned the math the city used to come up with the projected income from the taxes. Stiles believed the city was expecting double of what they would get and Taylor stated that using Ashland as a comparison was not a good way to base projected revenue figures.

Monique Allen from TC Computers also spoke out against the taxes and offered cameras to the city at no cost that people could view from home. Allen said CJ Patrol could use that as a way to "be in more places at the same time."

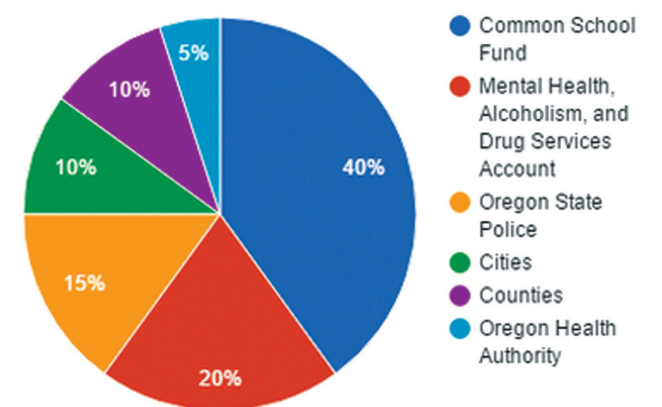
Councilor Jean Ann Miles, who completed a ride along with CJ Patrol two days prior, was on the fence after seeing how alive the streets were. "We chased off a crowd of people in front of a store only to find out an hour or two later it was broken into." Miles was leaning toward letting the people choose but after discussion between the council they came to the unanimous conclusion that they needed to do much more work.

Unlike the marijuana tax that has to be on a statewide ballot, the other two tax proposals do not and can be placed on any ballot. The council decided to take a step back and work on both the revenue numbers and the actual amount needed for the tax to have the desired effect of providing nighttime patrols for the city.

In other city business, water bills were discussed. Most city residents had received their water bills with the new pricing structure and fees. City recorder Rebecca Patton said that while it seemed she was bombarded with calls over the increase, she realized that only 4 percent of city water customers called to inquire about the change.

While the council discussed holding a workshop to dig deeper into the law enforcement funding issue, no meeting was scheduled.

Oregon Recreational Marijuana Tax Revenue Distribution



A chart showing where the current 17 percent state marijuana sales tax goes.

Dealing with wildfire smoke

Iris Chinook
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If you work outdoors, are under the age 18 or over age 65, have asthma, COPD, other lung diseases, chronic heart disease or diabetes, you need to take special precautions to protect yourself from the effects of wildfire smoke inhalation. According to the American Lung Association, the best thing you can do if you're confronted by smoke from wildfires is to remain inside. Staying indoors with the doors and windows closed goes a long way toward minimizing our exposure to the harmful effects of particulate-laden smoke from wildfires.

What else can you do to minimize the risks? Staying inside is the best thing but it isn't always possible. If you have to go outside to work, get groceries or go to the doctor, do so as little as possible and make sure your car vents and windows are closed. Air conditioners should only be operated in the "recirculate" setting.

Should you wear a respirator if you have to go out? If you have lung/heart disease or diabetes, check with your

doctor before wearing a respirator. They can be hard to fit to your face properly and if there is air leakage around the seal between your face and the mask the respirator isn't doing any good. But it can be beneficial to wear a mask if you get one that is designed to filter out the finer particulates in smoke.

Ordinary dust masks are designed to filter large particles such as sawdust and do nothing to ward off the ill effects of wildfire smoke. Likewise, wet bandanas and scarves held across the mouth and nose offer no filtration of the finer, more dangerous particles.

The most common disposable respirator that filters the finer particulates is the N95 respirator, named so because it filters at least 95 percent of airborne particles. You should only use an N95 mask that is certified by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Look for the NIOSH logo and the test and certification (TC) approval number on the mask or packaging.

SEE AIR ON A-8

Commissioners vote to prevent enforcement of state gun laws

IVN Staff

At their July 25 business meeting, County Commissioners Dan DeYoung and Simon Hare voted to approve a Josephine County firearms ordinance that will support gun rights, potentially in violation of state law. Commissioner Lily Morgan was not in attendance, and reportedly had already planned to recuse herself due to a conflict of interest.

At the first reading of the ordinance July 3, several residents spoke against it, and a petition with 158 signatures in opposition to the ordinance was entered into the public record. However, at the second reading July 25, 35 to 40 residents spoke in favor of the ordinance, according to Board of Commissioners

Administrator Wendy Watkins.

Essentially, the ordinance will prevent the sheriff or any county official from "investigating, detecting, apprehending or incarcerating" persons whose only violation of law relates to firearm possession, transference of ownership or failure to properly secure, register or report the theft of a firearm.

The exact language of the ordinance is available from the office of the Board of Commissioners.

The ordinance will have Josephine County join the "gun sanctuary" movement that swept through a number of rural counties in the state of Illinois and is now receiving attention nationwide. In Oregon, the movement began to gather steam in response to proposed

Oregon Initiative Petition 43 (IP43), which would have regulated possession of certain semi-automatic weapons and magazines over 10 rounds. Gun sanctuary proponents in five Oregon counties (Deschutes, Klamath, Baker, Douglas and Columbia) have succeeded in placing so-called Second Amendment protection initiatives on their local ballots, while citizens in a sixth county (Umatilla) are still in the process of collecting signatures. If the initiatives win voter approval, these counties will join at least four others in Oregon (Coos, Curry, Wallowa and Wheeler) that had already approved similar ordinances in 2013 through 2016.

SEE GUN ON A-8

Kerbyville Museum has some new gems, find out what they are on A-10.

OSP responds to report of traffic crash, find two dead from gunshot wounds

According to a press release from the Oregon State Police (OSP), July 26, 2018 at approximately 12:30 a.m., OSP troopers out of the Grants Pass office responded to Highway 199 near Reeves Creek Road to the report of two deceased males. Initially it was thought to be related to a traffic crash, but as Troopers arrived it was evident the two males had been shot. Shortly thereafter, the person that allegedly shot the two men arrived on scene and was detained. The Oregon State Police Criminal Investigations Detectives responded and are lead on the investigation.

The names of the deceased are 28-year-old Matthew J. Cortez from Cave Junction and 28-year-old Jesse Swift, also from Cave Junction.

The investigation is ongoing and there is no danger to the public. As of July 31, there have been no arrests made regarding the incident and the detectives are working with the Josephine County District Attorney's Office.