

Illinois Valley News

Wednesday, August 8, 2018, 1 Section, Volume LXXXI No. 31

Published weekly for the residents of the Illinois Valley

Stretching again!



(Photo by IVFD Media Dept)

Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) volunteer fireman Tom McCalley works to knock down a fire in the 2000 block of Laurel Rd. Monday, Aug. 6. IVFD was assisted by the Oregon Department of Forestry and Rural Metro. No injuries were reported.

Wildfires and wildlife coexist naturally

Christy Solo
IVN Contributing Writer

If you ever find sick or injured animal - do not touch it. Call either Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODF): 541-826-8774; or Wildlife Images Rehabilitation Center 541-476-0222. They will instruct you on how to proceed.

With wildfires burning throughout southwestern Oregon, many questions and concerns are popping up on social media, and in person, about how these fires affect our wildlife. First off, forget those “Bambi” images; most of the wildlife will be fine. Lots of wildlife even thrives as a result of wildfires, and some species even depend on it.

Just like you know how to evacuate your home and neighborhood in case of emergency, animals know-how and when to get away from wildfire. Some animals, such as amphibians and reptiles, don’t flee at all, but burrow underground or hide out in wet areas until the fire has passed. Some animals will die - those that are already sick or injured generally - but wildfires don’t wipe out entire populations.

Predatory animals also know how to take advantage of the mass exodus. Animals like bears and raccoons will actively hunt right next to a fire line for snakes, rodents, etc. as they flee. Birds will go back to a burned-out area right away to grab insects. Bobcats too have been seen going immediately back

into burned areas once the flames pass.

Some insect species like fire beetles (Genus *Melanophila*) can smell smoke from miles away and fly immediately to the burning area where they meet and greet then get to mating with females laying eggs into smoldering trees. These beetles depend on wildfires as their larvae can’t get past the defenses of living, healthy trees.

While most wildlife is temporarily displaced, most go back fairly quickly. The landscape will be different after a fire, but it will present new opportunities for wildlife. Biodiversity will increase and the health of the area will be stronger via the attraction of a variety of fire-seeking insects and predators. The burned and unburned landscapes’ new plant growth also helps returning wildlife. By exposing reliable sources of prey and creating new nesting areas, fire benefits and helps sustain wildlife.

If you live close to one of our area wildfires, you may see some of the temporarily displaced wildlife in your yard, on the streets or while doing outdoor activities.

Do NOT put out food for displaced wildlife (Note: you can continue to feed birds). Do NOT approach displaced wildlife. The less contact wildlife has with people, the better. You can put out extra dishes of water, which may or may not be of use to displaced animals. Be sure to put sticks/branches in so smaller critters don’t get stuck.



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

A wet rabbit during the Aug. 9, 2017 fire on Hwy. 199 and Airport Rd.

See what’s crawling around in Christy’s head this week. Crawlies with Cri on A-12

CJ smoking ban kicks in

By Dan Mancuso
IVN Staff

Cave Junction’s smoking ordinance No. 569 kicked in this week which placed a smoking ban in parks and extended ORS 433.835-870, better known as the Indoor Clean Air Act restriction of no smoking from within 10 feet of any public building doorway, to a 20 feet restriction.

According to Josephine County Tobacco Prevention Coordinator Heather Ackerman, the signage implementation for Ordinance No. 569 was to happen Aug. 5, with help from the Focus Teen Council and other teen volunteers of Josephine County.

The ordinance was passed by the council Feb. 26, of this year and it prohibits smoking and vaping in city parks in addition to downtown businesses entrances.

“All across Oregon, communities are mobilizing to become tobacco-free. Congratulations to Cave Junction for their new smoke-free parks and downtown,” said Ackerman. She also praised the council for recognizing that youth exposed to a smoking or vaping culture may make them more likely to smoke or vape and that tobacco use can impact health negatively.

The only problem with this ordinance is enforcement; Mayor Daniel Dalegowski said that this type of ordinance is a self-enforcing one. “Typically this type of ordinance is not enforced by law enforcement officers, and I believe it would be a waste of precious resources for them to do so. Generally it is the proprietor of a business that reminds smokers to not smoke near the business entrance. The ordinance gives that person something to easily reference.”

Ackerman shared the mayor’s sentiment, “State and local clean indoor air laws and expansion of those laws are self-enforcing. This means that signage, media publicity and clear information promote healthy spaces and healthy behaviors.”

Other local second hand smoke ordinances in the area have shown to be effective in the fight against youth picking up the habit. Tobacco-free places protect youth and adults from secondhand smoke exposure. “Youth are especially susceptible to tobacco marketing messages and modeled behavior. Other local towns have enacted similar ordinances to promote healthy spaces for everyone and decrease the exposure to toxic secondhand smoke,” said Ackerman.

Central Point, Eagle Point and Roseburg all have similar ordinances and the success has been attributed to media coverage, implementation of signage and self-enforcement.

Ackerman cited some statistics about smoking in Josephine County: In 2014, \$56.9 million was spent on medical costs and \$45.6 million was spent on productivity losses from tobacco related health concerns. In 2014, there were 14,700 adults who regularly smoke cigarettes, 5,580 have a serious illness caused by tobacco, and 286 tobacco-related deaths occurred.

For more information about tobacco prevention and the work being doing in Josephine County, visit <http://smokefreeoregon.com/what-you-can-do/josephine-county-2/>, or reach out to the tobacco prevention coordinator Heather Ackerman at 541-474-5234.

Triple-digit heat to make life tough for fire crews

MEDFORD, Ore. (AP) — Triple-digit heat returns to southern Oregon this week, making life difficult for crews battling several major wildfires.

The *Statesman Journal* reports milder temperatures in recent days allowed firefighters to make progress on a blaze west of Grants Pass that has burned more than 62 square miles (160 square kilometers).

That fire — the largest in southern Oregon — is about 40 percent contained. Teams have largely secured the fire’s eastern flank near the most populated areas.

Meanwhile, the state Department of Forestry says the Garner complex of wildfires is now more than 80 percent contained.

Crews using infrared scanners to detect pockets of heat near containment lines are finding fewer hot spots, and the fires are expected to be fully contained by week’s end.

The lightning-sparked Garner blazes have cost more than \$40 million to fight.