

Turkey ...

Continued from A-1

"We were already smoking one turkey, so no issue there - and the big turkey in the oven we transferred to the propane gas grill," said Michele Carlson Engel. "Everyone showed up around 2:30 and we just hung out and ate cheese and crackers and dips. It was one of the best Thanksgivings I've had in years."

"We were lucky," said Diane Patton. "The pies were baked the day before. We had the turkey in the smoker, so it wasn't a problem. And since we hadn't planned to eat until around five anyway, it didn't cause too much trouble for us."

"Turkeys were deep fried, side dishes were warmed on woodstove, and we used the propane stove for all other side meals," said Ron Chamness. "Warm friends with a warm house made a very wonderful turkey day!"

But for some, things got a little strange: "We did a Turkey Dance!" said Jimmy Evans. And indeed, a photo of his family cavorting with their raw bird became a big hit on community Facebook pages.

"The turkey had just been taken out of the oven and the Misses was preparing the kids to come to the table, when all of a sudden, the Bumpass dogs tore through the house devouring the turkey!" exclaimed Ryan Gaynor. "This was after I shot my eye out with the Red Rider BB gun." Honestly, it's what he said. And let's face it, this is the Illinois Valley, so who can tell.

Quite a few others reported dropping their turkey's into a myriad of backyard deep fryer configurations. Video on some of those scenes could provide some interesting viewing...

"I live off grid," said Bob Lynn, "I cooked dinner on the wood stove. Nothing new here."

Brian Paul said he "turned on his generator and watched football."

Elsewhere, Roxanne Sterling-Falkenstein blew off the holiday: "I just took a 3 hour nap. The stress of no power just broke me. We're all electric and are dead in the water when power goes out. We resolved to get a propane stove."

Others traveled the Turkey Trail:

"First, we called to see who of our guests had power, and Grandpa did in Kerby!" said Sue Kern. "The men ran to his house to start the 8 hour cook time for the ham. We called everyone to let them know we were going to eat later in the evening. Brought it [ham] back

when the power came on, but the sides needed the oven, so we kicked the ham out, finished it on the grill. Deep fried the turkey, and blam, we ate by 7 p.m.!"

"Well, we loaded our turkey up and took it to a friend who had power," said Sandy Currie. "The pies were already done. Luckily power came on before the predicted time, so we turned on potatoes, put rest in oven, and we just ate an hour later then we'd said we would."

And a small glitch like lack of power couldn't put a damper on the annual doings at Jubilee Park:

"I was serving Thanksgiving Dinner with other volunteers," said Carol Wild. "We had tons of food and a lot of people. We opened the back door of the kitchen to let in light. We had a great time."

Tim Leyba and Suzanne Vautier, with the Cultural & Ecological Enhancement Network, led the team of community volunteers who fed a few hundred people.

"Everything turned out really well," Vautier said. "A bunch of people cooked turkeys for us early in the day - so we were in good shape. People brought all the side dishes, pumpkins pies and all the trimmings."

"We sent out 18 birds and we got 24 back," Leyba added.

Three years ago Leyba and Vautier took the reins of this annual event after longtime organizer Lynn Johnson retired from the lead role.

"We also had the big heating trays from Lynn Johnson, and that really helped, along with our large free standing camp stove," Vautier said.

And making sure no one was left out, De Spellman used the veteran transport "Eagle" vans to bring plates of hot food to Valley residents who couldn't get out to the park.

"One volunteer said it was one of the best Thanksgivings that she ever had," Vautier said. "We always get a good mix of people, all the kids and everyone. We always have a lot of fun, it feels good to do this."

Fortunately the north end of Cave Junction kept power, and since the River Valley Restaurant served turkey dinner, Guenter Ambron and Gerrilinde Rorison met up with family there. The place was packed. "When we left there all the traffic lights were back on," Ambron said.

Shop Smart staff also did business as best they could. "I was working and we had



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Volunteers served community members Thanksgiving dinner in the dark. An area power outage created challenges to many dinners Thursday, Nov. 24.

to take one customer at a time and walk them through the store with a flashlight," said Jeffrey O'Brien. "And we only took cash only because the system was down, but we stayed open."

Liz McCloud summed things up: "Looks like the story here is that even during a blackout that could possibly ruin a Thanksgiving dinner, folks are resourceful and life goes on."

"We couldn't locate a cause for the power outage," said Drew Hanson, with Pacific Power. "It's like when a circuit breaker trips in your house - it occurs as a safety mechanism within the line to prevent further problems. But crews eventually restored power. They closed the breaker and were able to test it and it held."

Then, the Valley went dark again at 10:42 p.m. on Friday. This time over 50,000 people lost power along Highway 199, from Grants Pass to Crescent City, California.

"It happened at the Grants

Pass transmission station and affected a much larger line, also affecting 18 substations," Hanson said, adding that there is an ongoing investigation to determine cause of that "transmission interruption." Power was restored early Saturday morning around 3 a.m.

Overall, many without power reported that this was one of their best thanksgivings ever - wonder what that tells us?

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