

Merry Christmas!



(Photo by Laura Mancuso, for the Illinois Valley News)

Santa listens intently as a youngster makes her Christmas wish last year. Santa will be at Lorna Byrne Middle School Cafeteria Saturday, Dec. 22 from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. for Cookies and Cocoa with Santa. This annual event is sponsored by Rotary Club of the Illinois Valley.

City funds park property

By Tina Casey Jones
IVN Contributing Writer

The days leading up to the holidays make achieving a quorum a challenge, but Dec. 17 was the last meeting for Daniel Dalegowski as mayor, and everyone on the city council was present and accounted for.

Dan Bosch updated those present on his progress toward acquiring security cameras that will be installed along Hwy 199 within the city limits. Rodney Bell from Cave Junction asked if the city was planning to put any cameras at the

three local schools, though the council advised that the cameras (along with the security lighting and city beautification) were required to be installed/completed on the main street in CJ, per the scope of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU is derived from Cave Junction's share of the proceeds from the sale of the county building at the corner of Hwy 199 and Lister Street, and is specific in how the proceeds may be spent. Dedicated security cameras for other locations would have to be funded through other means. Councilor Jean Ann Miles suggested that Bell contact Kate

Dwyer, chairwoman of the school board, regarding camera coverage at the schools.

Remote controlled (RC) car enthusiasts will be happy to hear that Roger Brandt's request to move forward with the initial steps to install an RC car track at Jubilee Park was approved unanimously by the council members. The council requested that Brandt provide more detail before ground-breaking of this exciting new feature at the park.

SEE CITY ON A-5

License and tags are now online

Christy Solo
IVN Contributing Writer

Good news for Oregon anglers and hunters - getting your license and/or tags just got easier. You can now purchase these items online via Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) website.

How easy will it be? Here are the highlights via the department's website: "ODFW's new electronic licensing system (ELS) will allow customers to store their licenses, tags and validations online on their smartphone or tablet. Customers can also choose to carry paper documents, but will be able to purchase and print these documents from home using regular paper. The new system will also allow for electronic tagging of fish and game using an app that will work even when offline."

Before we give you the link, let's go over some FAQs about the new licensing system. This will save you an Excedrin strength headache and ensure this new easy process truly is easy.

Important: before

you purchase your new license, you need to verify your existing account in the system. You can verify your account online at MyODFW licensing page, at a license sales agent or an ODFW office that sells licenses.

If you are verifying online, use the "Look Up Account" button. DO NOT verify your account on the app, you need to verify through the MyODFW and licensing page before entering username and password on the app.

Headache avoided.

Who can verify? Hunters and anglers who have big game preference points or other certifications/statuses that remain in effect or have purchased an annual license within the last three years (2016-2018) need to verify their account as explained above.

If you haven't purchased an annual license in the past three years, you can create an account by clicking the "I am a new customer or have not purchased an annual license in the last 3 years" button. Again, go to the page before you go to the app.

Here's the

link: <https://odfw.huntfishoregon.com/login>.

More FAQs on the new system:

- You will need an email if you opt for electronic tags and/or purchasing online.
- You can still purchase your license at your favorite bait and tackle shop. Most current vendors have opted to continue to sell in-store licenses.
- You can purchase daily (or multi-day) licenses via the online system as well as annual.
- The cost for licenses and tags is not changing with the implementation of the new system.



(Photo by Christy Solo, Illinois Valley News)

A fisherman on the Rogue near Trail fly fishes Monday, May 28, 2018.

French Flat is 1 out of 4 restorations

Anita Savio
IVN Contributing Writer

Ask my dog where one of his favorite Illinois Valley hikes is and he would probably reply, "Woof, woof, French Flat!"

A 650-acre area comprising both woodlands and meadows and most easily accessed from Rockydale Road, French Flat is currently one focus of four restoration projects being carried out under the auspices of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). All four areas have been designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs). The other three areas are Waldo/Takilma, reported upon in a previous *Illinois Valley News* story; Rough and Ready Creek; and Reeves Creek.

According to Bryan Wender, a botanist for BLM Medford District, French Flat was designated as an ACEC because it is the stronghold for Cook's lomatium, a federal and Oregon-listed endangered plant species.

"We're obligated to protect it," said Wender, "and we're also obligated to improve its outlook and try to get it off the endangered species list if we can."

There are other rare plants as well, and also a rare butterfly, the coronis fritillary, which Wender said likes the same "open habitat" that the rare plants like: open meadows, grasslands, savannahs and open woodlands.

Toward that end, the project also includes a substantial element of brush cleanup.

Wender remarked, "If we don't manage those habitats, or allow them to burn, they get too dense with woody vegetation. In the past those habitats would have burnt frequently." The reclamation project attempts to replicate those conditions, by manually cutting, piling and burning the undesirable vegetation.

SEE FRENCH ON A-3

Not into turkey for Christmas, steelhead fishing is in full swing

Christy Solo
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Tired of typical holiday fare on the table? Then bundle up, drag out the drift boat (or hire a guide), hit one of our area rivers and you could be the one to serve up some fresh-caught steelhead for the holidays. If you hit the upper Rogue, you might even bring home some Coho-ho!

The upper Rogue drift boats aren't actually necessary; there are lots of places to angle for the wily steelhead from the shore. In whatever manor you get out there, get out there and know the rules. Public access is available at McGregor Park, Casey Park, and Rogue Elk where bait is allowed.

Fishing is restricted to artificial flies and lures between the Shady Cove boat ramp and Fishers Ferry. Bait is allowed between Shady Cove and Cole Rivers Hatchery. Most floats in the upper Rogue have been from the Hatchery or Rogue Elk downstream to Shady Cove.

According to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Southwest Zone recreation report for the upper Rogue, as of Dec. 12, "2,103 summer steelhead had entered Cole Rivers Hatchery, with 157 new for the week. If past years are any indication, around half of the run has yet to enter the hatchery. For the week,

82 additional coho entered, bringing the total to 395 for the year. Anglers should be aware of their identification. Only hatchery coho may be retained, so when in doubt, release the fish."

Pickings are a little slimmer in the Illinois River, which is open for trout fishing. As only hatchery trout may be retained, fishing will be primarily catch-and-release for wild trout.

The middle Rogue is still good for steelhead. Running plugs from a drift boat continues to be good, but drifting night crawlers and even throwing blue fox or mepps spinners have been producing. Unless you're an experienced drift boater, fishing from public access points on the shore is recommended. You can also catch hatchery trout (release native) in the middle Rogue as well.

The bottom line is, if you're up to facing the chilly weather, you can have yourself a merry little fishmas on any one of our area rivers.



(Photo by Christy Solo, Illinois Valley News)

A couple fishes the upper Rogue near Trail, Sunday, Dec. 2.