

Year in Review: January

• The Forest Service offered permits for collection of “special forest products”: A permit must be obtained before removing most forest products, which include Christmas trees and firewood plus edible mushrooms, evergreen boughs and other floral cuttings, beargrass and other foliage, dry cones for decorative arrangements, posts and poles for fencing, and transplant trees and herbaceous plants. Basic permit types available at the USDA Forest Service District Office are free use permits, personal use permits, and commercial use permits.

• Dane Alvarez, a talented football player on the Illinois Valley High School (IVHS) team, was one of two students selected to represent Oregon in the Down Under Bowl, a competition held in Australia. The event was founded in 1989 by George O’Scanlon, a New Zealand native, whose love of American Football led him in his mission to bridge the gap between the continents. Alvarez, who plays as a running back and middle linebacker, said, I’m honored to be an ambassador of not only my community and state but also our country.”

• A special referendum in January may determine whether 12,000 low income adults and potentially 1,800 low income children in Josephine County will

lose their health insurance. A YES vote on Measure 101 would approve a 0.7 percent assessment on some hospitals for a year and nine months and a 1.5 percent assessment on some health insurance plans for a two-year period. A NO vote would force the Oregon legislature to go back to the drawing board in a quest to find other sources of funds to continue two programs: expanded Medicaid, called Oregon Health Plan (OHP), and expanded Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for children and pregnant women with up to 300 percent of poverty income. The programs could experience cuts of some sort or be discontinued.

• Homeowners need a permit to burn yard debris and other legally burnable materials and there are many materials that are prohibited any time of year. According to the Department of Environmental Quality , many items commonly found in household trash, such as bleached paper products and some plastics contain chlorine which, when burned, creates dioxin. Burning such prohibited materials can result in serious fines of up to \$10,000 per day of violation. Dioxin exposure is linked to cancer and birth defects as are the heavy metals released by burning slick colored papers and synthetic inks.

• On Jan. 8 the Cave Junction City Council met for a land use

hearing regarding whether or not the city will allow the owners of the Junction Inn to split their property, thereby allowing a Grocery Outlet to be located in what is now the vacant dirt lot between the inn and Shop Smart. However, a representative from Main and Main LLC, the developer interested in building the store, said that Grocery Outlet made up their mind and would not accept any other location in Cave Junction. He further added that the location had been found in their evaluation to be a perfect spot for a retail store because of the location’s activity.

• The primary opponent of Grocery Outlet occupying the particular location in question was the Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (IVCDO). They argued that the location is not ideal for the community and maintained that the 5.63 acre property should have remained intact so that a sprawling single story hotel could be built whenever the Junction Inn’s owners decide to sell. Despite the IVCDO’s opinion that Grocery Outlet should be located on the north end of town, they thought that the store would be a good addition to the community.

• Ordinance 2017-001, which went into effect Oct. 30, aims to eliminate unsightly, disruptive or potentially dangerous practices regarding fencing, lighting, buildings

and erosion with particular emphasis on cannabis operations. Community development director Julie Schmelzer said that many of the neighbors claiming to know of continued violations of 2017-001 filed formal complaints after being informed that was the primary method in which the county was made aware of those not in compliance.

• Jeffery Alan Burleson, 36, an out-of-state fugitive from Florida was shot and killed by police Friday, Jan. 12, in the parking lot of a local fast food establishment in Cave Junction. Burleson was wanted for aggravated assault with a firearm, domestic battery by strangulation and possession of a firearm by a felon from a Feb. 3, 2017 incident in Ocala, Florida. He was a passenger in a vehicle being driven by a friend, who claimed to have no knowledge of Burleson’s warrant.

• Healthy U offers three youth programs: Passages meets once every two weeks during the school day and was facilitated by Nicole Rensenbrink and volunteer Nancy Lindquist, who is also a Healthy U board member. In middle school, the program is most about learning how to build relationships with others, often starting with a game. Quest, for middle school boys, was the newer program, at nine years of existence. New this year was a third program, Steps for Success, a tutoring program

for seventh through 10th-graders who are at risk of failing.

• The E. Clampus Vitus known as Clampers, a fraternal historical society that prides itself on not taking itself too seriously, hosted their fifth annual fundraising Super Bowl event at the Sportsman Tavern which kicked off Feb. 4 at 2:30 p.m. All proceeds were used to facilitate a \$2,500 trade school scholarship for a hard-working student in Josephine County.

• The Josephine County Sheriff’s Department diligently reviewed its fourth round of applications so that they can put levy funds, passed by voters in July, to work. In total, 10 new positions will be added to the jail’s staff, bringing the total number of operational beds up to 185 out of 260.

• Illinois Valley radio station KXCJ-LP (105.7) held a fundraiser at the Takilma Community Building Tuesday, Jan. 23, which drew a capacity crowd eager to have a light dinner with yummy desserts, and hear a performance by performing duo Freddy & Francine (the latter was absent due to a case of influenza).

• The Illinois Valley Senior Center moved into their new store and invited all their neighbors and friends to come take a look, do a little shopping and enjoy a cookie for their grand opening Saturday, Feb. 3.

Year in Review: February

• The Rogue Community College Foundation was established in 1980 to serve the needs of Rogue Community College (RCC) and its students. The Foundation grew to offer almost \$450,000 in scholarships for the 2016-2017 school year. In addition to scholarships the Foundation planned to provide about \$30,000 in special program and project funds to RCC faculty and staff.

• Siskiyou Field Institute (SFI) in Selma launched its 20th year as an educational organization with a free program Saturday, Feb. 24. Dedicated to providing education about the Klamath-Siskiyou region, SFI also offered over 40 adult education courses in various natural history subjects this year.

• Max’s Mission, a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving lives in Southern Oregon through the education and free distribution of an opioid overdose reversal medication called naloxone, hosted a community meeting Feb. 28 at 6:30 p.m. in the Healthy U building at the Illinois Valley Family Resource Center, located at 535 E. River St.

• The second week of January marked the San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition - the largest competition of American wines in the world - in which local winery and vineyard Augustino Estate won two awards for their 2014 syrah and 2014 pinot noir.

• The North Fork of the Smith River and its tributaries, long an area

of contention between conservation efforts and mining interests, received special protection in 2017. On Dec. 7 of last year the Oregon Water Resources Commission unanimously voted to reserve these waters and their associated wetlands under a little employed provision of the Clean Water Act known as the “Outstanding National Resource Water” designation.

• Putting an end to the ongoing land-use discussion, Feb. 7, Cave Junction’s City Council voted unanimously to approve the construction of a Grocery Outlet in the lot next door to the Junction Inn.

• Love your dog? Don’t fool around with Parvovirus: Experts at the American Veterinary Medical Foundation (AVMF) say most deaths from parvovirus (parvo) occur within 48 to 72 hours following the onset of clinical signs. Parvo affects dogs’ gastrointestinal tracts and symptoms indicating your dog might be dealing with parvo can include: lethargy; loss of appetite; abdominal pain and bloating; fever or low body temperature; vomiting; and severe (often bloody) diarrhea. Veterinary treatment should be started immediately; sick dogs should be kept warm and receive good nursing care.

• The Illinois Valley Safe House Alliance (IVSHA), an organization created to put a stop to domestic and sexual violence in the local community, hosted the sixth annual Domestic and Sexual

Violence Leadership Summit. The primary purpose of the summit was to raise awareness and provide valuable information to those who attend in regards to the prevention as well as the impactful effect of domestic and sexual violence on individuals and also the community as a whole.

• Carl Jacobson Jr., 74, died in his sleep the morning of Sunday, Feb. 25. Jacobson, a husband, father and grandfather, was also a retired house painter and over-the-road truck driver. He was employed at both Rough and Ready Lumber Company and Cabax mill before he went to work in the New Mexico oil fields. Well-known in the community due in part to his many civic endeavors, including membership in the Lions Club since 1972 and Mason for 32 years, Jacobson was elected mayor of Cave Junction three times.

• The Josephine County Foundation (JCF) held their sixth annual Vision Clinic at Illinois Valley High School where they served 100 patients, including 60 who received prescription glasses and many others who received reading glasses.

• The Illinois Valley Senior Center hosted the Senior Expo March 10. This special event included educational booths, demonstrations, workshops and classes relating to senior services.

• Josephine County residents approved two successive property

tax levies to better fund their animal shelter, first a three year levy, then a five year levy. In 2017, the shelter took in 719 dogs, of which only 53 had to be euthanized and 1083 cats, of which only 171 were euthanized. Other animals taken in by the shelter included goats, rabbits and pigs.

• On Feb. 12, the Cave Junction City Council read four ordinances. The first was to update meter-reading techniques (i.e., to no longer round up to the nearest 10 cubic feet), and to set a limit on the use of short-term service requests.

The motion passed unanimously. The second ordinance allowed chickens to be kept by the residents of Cave Junction, undoing their current prohibition. The council then held the first reading of an ordinance to remove language from the code regulating marijuana-related businesses that gave the council unnecessary and arbitrary authority to revoke business licenses. Lastly, the council also heard the first reading of an ordinance to reduce the public’s exposure to tobacco products.



(Photo by Laura Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

The next generation of Cougar cheerleaders thrilled the crowd a the home basketball game against Tuesday Jan. 30.