

# Letters to the editor

*Illinois Valley News* welcomes letters to the editor. Please e-mail them to [dan@illinois-valley-news.com](mailto:dan@illinois-valley-news.com)

## POLICY ON LETTERS:

'*Illinois Valley News*' encourages letters to the editor provided they are legible and not libelous or scurrilous. All letters must be signed, including name, address and telephone number. The latter need not be published, but will be used to verify authenticity. The "News" reserves the right to edit letters. Letters are used at the discretion of the publisher.

\*\*\*

(Editor's Note: Views and commentary, including statements made as fact are strictly those of the letter writers.)

## Letter to Rep. Carl Wilson

The Association of Oregon Counties and Dan DeYoung are attempting to wreak havoc upon an industry you have supported which many thank you for.

Dan DeYoung has helped to ban RR-5 grows in Josephine County which will undoubtedly hurt the local economy.

Furthermore he will drive many underground rather than pay his extortion.

This is a county you represent and you have spoken out very well at a state level against excessive taxation and regulation.

Many of your constituents wish you to do the same on this issue locally.

This all comes from a man who has no right being in office because he altered his sacred oath of office.

It should be blatantly obvious that what DeYoung can't ban he will tax out of existence. This is the mark of a skillful arrogant prohibitionist.

It is time to move away from lack of public criticism from such an individual.

There are rights and

wrongs and to recognize such.

We need our elected representatives to stand for ideals not political correctness.

This is an issue that begs your attention.

The financial fortunes of many individuals and businesses in your district are clearly at stake.

Please stand up for us. Sincerely,

**Mark Seligman  
Selma**

## Firestorm

Once upon a time we had effective systems in place to quickly detect forest fires and enough resources to suppress them before they grew out of control. A few got away, but with well coordinated efforts, the annual acreage burned between the 1940s and 1980s was reduced by 90%. So what happened?

Wildfire fighting has much in common with military campaigns yet although we equate war with National Security we regard wildfire as a natural disaster. Both use air resources, mechanized heavy equipment and large numbers of "boots on the ground". Yet where the military is lavished with the latest and greatest upgrades, to the tune of trillions of taxpayer dollars, wild fire preparedness has deteriorated to levels not seen since before WW II. Our leaders seem to have no problem pouring unlimited money and untold lives into foreign wars, with questionable public benefit, while our forests, towns and cities are destroyed by firestorms at an alarming rate. Despite major threats to public health and devastating losses to the economy, we dither about climate change and forest practices only to come up

with half baked solutions like thinning and prescribed burns or, dumber yet, raking and pruning, none of which will save us. Dismissing it all as human caused global warming doesn't help much either. Forest fires greatly exacerbate this very climate change. It is estimated that the recent Camp Fire in Northern California emitted as much CO2 in a week as all the cars and trucks in that state did in a year.

The one course of action which will really make a difference is to restore "initial attack" forces to levels maintained before the 1980s and put the fires out when they are small. Just like a military campaign, early detection and rapid response are far more effective than allowing the enemy to dig in. Small, well trained commando forces sent in immediately after a threat is detected, and with close air support, are far more effective than waiting for heavy armor to be assembled and bases to be established. Yet unlike warfare, fire behavior is predictable and small blazes will spread rapidly with dry fuels, heat, wind and low humidity. In war, the enemy is smart and cunning, in fire behavior we know what will happen and time is of the essence. Forest Service PR spokespeople and their cadre of armchair "experts" are patently irresponsible to proselytize that we've suppressed too many fires in the past or, worse yet, allow fires to burn during fire season.

With long, hot, rainless summers in the West and solid conifer forests, wild fires have been a terrestrial feature since the ice age. Native Americans used fire effectively for maintaining healthy ecosystems, but with the post Columbian

colonization of the west by non-native peoples, the environment, and now the climate, has changed irreversibly. The biggest land owner in the west is the U.S. Forest Service owning over 141 million acres in Regions 1-6. California and Oregon together comprise about a third of that total. In some Oregon counties, such as Josephine, over two thirds of the land is Federal. There is much debate about the cause of wild fires but the really big fires on Forest Service land are almost all started by lightning. "Lightning Busts", as they are called, haven't changed much over the years but today the Forest Service response is anything but robust. Gone are the lookout towers, the Smoke Jumpers and District Crews; unmaintained roads have become impassible; and now they want to reduce EU (Exclusive Use) air tankers for the entire western US from 21 to 13 and then close the Medford Base to save \$245,000 (approximately the cost of one or two houses). This is crazy in the face of hundreds of millions now spent on suppression costs, a ruined tourist economy, compromised human health, and the probable conflagration of entire communities. Where will it be next summer when we see burned out hulks of cars and trucks along the highway, subdivisions reduced to powder, and scores of people burned alive: Merlin, Illinois Valley, Butte Falls or East Medford? There is no such thing as a "Defensible Space" in a firestorm.

A firestorm is a truly awesome event. Seventy four years ago the Allies deliberately started a firestorm over Dresden Germany. In the second week of February 1945, 3,900 tons

of explosives and incendiary bombs were dropped from 1,250 B 17s, B 24s and RAF Lancaster heavy bombers, which resulted in the total destruction of 1600 acres of the city's center and the incineration of 25,000 non-combatant civilians. This was six months before the age of atomic warfare was ushered into Japan and the morality of such actions is clearly beyond the subject matter of this monograph. The point is, however, that if we could muster that much airpower, two continents away and seventy four years ago to start a firestorm, doesn't it seem possible that we could prevent one by utilizing large numbers of aircraft, on our own soil to protect our own citizens now in 2019? (Incidentally, Davis-Monthan AFB, near Tucson, AZ currently stores about 4,400 surplus, mothballed airplanes.)

The Forest Service response to this enormous threat is to tell us to get used to it. Their stated goal is to "treat" 20 to 50 thousand acres with prescribed burns and thinning over the next decade with no mention of bringing back initial attack forces; and how about the other tens of millions of acres untreated? It seems that the main concern of the Forest Service is to keep the fire industry happy at the expense of the public. Contracted equipment and personnel, from shovels to helicopters cost far less through government GSA procurement than through inflated retail costs passed on from contractors to the Government. For example, large helicopters cost almost \$50,000 per day when hired on a CWN (call when needed) basis and jumbo air tankers \$17,000 per hour, even if they are grounded due

to smoke.

Fortunately, State crews (both ODF and Cal Fire) are not privatized and have proven to be much more effective as initial attack fire fighters. Department of Interior lands (such as BLM) are protected by the State, where Forest Service is responsible for its own. Both spent roughly the same amount annually on firefighting back in the 1980s, about two hundred million each but now the Forest Service is spending two and a half billion (over a tenfold increase) where Interior is spending one fifth that amount. When fires start on Forest Service land the public gets the quadruple whammy: inadequate protection, a ruined economy, compromised public health, and then end up paying for all of it through the nose. And, God forbid, if domestic and or foreign terrorists catch on to Red Flag weather; we better have a plan for initial attack to deal with it. The first smoke jumpers were trained to combat fires started by 9,000 Japanese balloon bombs launched on the Jet Stream in a last desperate attempt during the final months of the war to start firestorms all over the western States. Fortunately the military rose to deal with that threat at the time.

It is time to stand up and demand that wild fire be treated as a threat to national security again. This is not a matter of "left" versus "right" politics nor will it be decided locally. Forest Service policies must be changed and our representatives in the House and Senate can affect that. Contact them, demand it.

**Robert Hirning  
Cave Junction**

# ILLINOIS VALLEY FUNERAL DIRECTORS

WWW.SINCE1928HULL.COM 541-592-4110

## Save the date

### Jan. 16

\*Wednesday Jan. 16 & Feb. 6, 3 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Chess Club & Game Night at the library. All ages and levels are welcome. First and third Wednesday of every month. Chess boards and games will be provided or bring in your favorite game to share. Drop in for a game from 3pm - 6pm. For more information contact Roberta Lee at 541-592-4778. IV Branch, Josephine Community Libraries, 209 W Palmer St, CJ

### Jan. 19

\*Saturday, Jan. 19, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Martin Luther King Storytime & Craft at the library. All ages welcome. For more information contact Roberta Lee at 541-592-4778. I.V. Branch, Josephine Community Libraries, 209 W Palmer St, CJ

\* The Indigo Children's Project presents A Martin Luther King Celebration at the Dome School in Takilma, Saturday, Jan. 18 Includes: Rocker T, Soul Medic, Irae Divine & Molly Rose with the 7th St. Band, Mamadou & his Senegalese Ensemble, Classical Flamenco Dance with Maria, Cake Walk and dinner at 6 p.m. Show time is at 8 p.m.. This is an all-aged community event: no drugs, al-

cohol. Weapons, tickets at the door: Adults: \$15, Teens: \$10 and under 10 for free. For more information see [www.theindigochildrenproject.com](http://www.theindigochildrenproject.com), or call 541-592-9691.

### Continuing

\*Weekly Community Watch meetings are every Monday, 5:30 p.m. at Wild River Pizza, CJ. We help you build your neighborhood watch, fire emergency preparedness program, Immediate Alert Notification system (smart phone), 2-way radio service. Contact Guenter 541-415-1929 or [ivwatch541@gmail.com](mailto:ivwatch541@gmail.com).

\*GET YOUR TAX RETURN FILED FOR FREE! The Josephine County Tax-Aide program offers free federal and Oregon state tax preparation to low and moderate income taxpayers, with special attention to those 60 and older. We are trained volunteers certified by the IRS.

We will be offering our free service to Illinois Valley residents at the Illinois Valley Family Coalition, 535 E. River St., on Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., beginning Feb. 2. Please call 541-592-6139 to make an appointment.

\*Evergreen Elementary School is looking for **SMART (Start Making A Reader Today) volunteers**. Come read with children for an hour a week and change a life. Currently the program is on Wednesdays, but with enough readers, we'd like to expand to Tuesdays and Thursdays also. Volunteers are asked to arrive about 11:35 and will be finished reading by 12:45. To learn more about SMART you can call 541-734-5628 or visit the website at [www.getSMARToregon.org](http://www.getSMARToregon.org).

\*The Sheriff's Office Substation in Cave Junction is now open on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10 to 2. Volunteers are still needed to staff another day and expand hours. Applications are available at the substation or online at <http://www.co.josephine.or.us/Files/Volunteer>. For information call 541-474-5123.

\*Public Health Clinic- Location: I.V. Family Coalition, 535 E. River St., CJ, 1st Thursday of every month. Services offered STI Testing/Treatment, Women's Health Exams (Annuals/Problem Visits), Birth Control (All Methods Available), Pregnancy Testing, Pre-pregnancy counseling. 3rd Thursday of every month: STI testing/treatment, birth control counseling (methods limited), Pregnancy

Testing, Immunizations. Call 541-474-5329 for an appointment, and make sure to tell the receptionist to schedule you in CJ. Walk-ins welcome! Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

\*The Illinois Valley Democrats meet quarterly at the I.V. Family Coalition. Join with like-minded people Saturday from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the I.V. Family Coalition, 535 E. River St. in Cave Junction. Join with like-minded people for camaraderie and to plan actions in support of the Democratic agenda. Call Anita 541-592-3073 to confirm meeting days. Check us out on FB!

\*Cave Junction Patrol, LLC is looking for volunteers. CJ Patrol is a private citizen volunteer organization dedicated to effectively addressing heretofore-unchecked property crime in our city and neighborhoods. The primary mission of CJ Patrol is to prevent, interrupt, report and decrease property crime in the city of Cave Junction. Call 541-592-9665 or visit [cjpatrol.org](http://cjpatrol.org).

\*Committee Meeting STATE OF JEFFERSON Josephine County 1st Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. 3rd Thursday of each month at 6 p.m., Wild River Pizza in Cave Junction.

# Illinois Valley News

Published weekly by I.V. News LLC  
Daniel J. Mancuso, Publisher

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to P.O. Box 1370, Cave Junction, OR 97523

Illinois Valley News is published at 221 S. Redwood Hwy., Cave Junction, OR 97523 Telephone 541-592-2541

Since 1937 periodicals postage paid at Cave Junction, OR 97523 P.O. Box 1370 USPS 258-820

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES**  
One year in Josephine County - \$35  
One year in Jackson and Douglas counties - \$36  
One year in all other Oregon counties and out-of-state - \$43.00

Illinois Valley News does not refund subscriptions. Remainder of subscription will be donated to the charity of your choice.

editor - Laura Mancuso  
[laura@illinois-valley-news.com](mailto:laura@illinois-valley-news.com)

copy editor - C.J. Schatza

classified ads - Laura Mancuso  
[laura@illinois-valley-news.com](mailto:laura@illinois-valley-news.com)

circulation - Laura Mancuso  
[laura@illinois-valley-news.com](mailto:laura@illinois-valley-news.com)

advertising / composition - Dan Mancuso  
[dan@illinois-valley-news.com](mailto:dan@illinois-valley-news.com)

mailroom - Kimberly Potter

**DEADLINES:**  
News, Classified and Display Ads, Announcement and Letters  
**4 P.M. FRIDAYS**

**AP AP EXCHANGE**

'Illinois Valley News' encourages letters to the editor provided they are legible and not libelous or scurrilous. All letters must be signed, including name, address and telephone number. The latter need not be published, but will be used to verify authenticity. The 'News' reserves the right to edit letters. Letters are used at the discretion of the publisher.