



Illinois Valley News

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City approves RV park in city limits

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The Cave Junction City Council held its first meeting of the month Sept. 12, and while it was a lengthy one that included two public hearings, things progressed smoothly. The council was able to tentatively give the green light to the previously discussed RV park, and renewed the expired approval for the construction of the Lil' Pantry that is going to be built near the Dollar General.

Unlike the last meeting, Mayor Meadow Martell was present alongside all four council members:

Ethan Lane, Tina Casey Jones, Jean Ann Miles, and Jesse Dugas. The liaison updates that they gave were brief, though there was some excitement when Councilor Casey Jones mentioned that the Parks & Recreation Commission expects the new playground equipment to be delivered Sept. 29. This means that a groundbreaking ceremony is just around the corner, and local children will soon be able to enjoy the playground upgrade.

Public Works Director Alex Ponder gave his regular update, integrating a piece of galvanized pipe for council members to pass around

as an example of the materials his team has been slowly working to upgrade around town.

When the floor was opened for public comments, Lindsey B. Jones spoke on behalf of RiverStars Performing Arts regarding a planned pavilion use permit they will be filing in the future for the yearly class that they hold for interested youth. Jones urged the council to consider reducing or waiving the required fee for use of the pavilion kitchens so that the attached bathrooms can be used by the children who will be participating, rather than the park bathrooms, which are a significant

distance away from the pavilion.

The council also approved an OLCC license for local eatery The Replay, and declared several unoccupied properties on Wells Drive to be a nuisance. This latter decision was due to the extreme overgrowth on these properties presenting an obvious fire hazard. The property owner will be fined \$500 per day per property, backdated from Aug. 27 until the problem is fixed.

After all of this, the third public hearing surrounding the planned RV park near Laurel Rd commenced. In the time since the last hearing, council members had been given a

tour of the property so that they could get a clearer idea of what was being proposed. Lane recounted that he had researched the definition of "sight obscuring fencing," and after visiting the site had been able to determine that the existing vegetation, plus whatever the applicant chose to add to it, should meet that definition. He also felt as though the phased five-year paving plan was appropriate. Similarly, he stated that if the fire district were to sign off on the access point and propane storage, his concerns would be assuaged.

SEE RV ON A-8

Takilma grooves



(Photo by Laura Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Mike B along with the rest of the Takilma Band entertain the crowd during a show at Lost Camp Bar & Grill in Kerby Saturday, Sept. 17.

Burglars nab historic cemetery plats

By Laura Mancuso
IVN Editor

The Illinois Valley Historic Laurel Cemetery was hit hard with a burglary Saturday, Sept. 17. Thieves broke two windows to the chapel and stole the security cameras mounted on the outside of the building after allegedly driving around the locked cable entrance through a wooded area with a tombstone.

IVHLC board treasurer Sandy Upton, along with her husband Pat, met the Illinois

Valley News at the cemetery Monday with sadness to show all the damage and reported the list of stolen items.

The missing items that really upset Upton were the deeds – old and new – that proved ownership to plats. “Those files were irreplaceable,” said Upton. “We are pretty much back to square one now. Who would be low enough to steal from a cemetery?”

“The cemetery has been here since 1862,” said Pat Upton.

SEE PLAT ON A-6

\$1 billion timber suit dies at top court

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — The Oregon Supreme Court has declined to hear an appeal from 13 counties in a long-running \$1 billion lawsuit over timber revenue and what constitutes “the greatest permanent value” when it comes to forest management.

The denial ends a six-year legal battle over logging practices on 700,000 acres and is a victory for the state Department of Forestry and environmental groups. The decision leaves in place a lower court ruling saying that Oregon can manage forests for a range of values that include recreation, water quality and wildlife habitat — not just logging revenue.

“It’s the end of the road for what has been a false narrative for far too long ... that it’s the public forestland’s obligation to provide the bulk of the revenues for local communities,” Ralph Bloemers, who represented fishing and conservation groups in the case, told Oregon Public Broadcasting.

The counties gave forestland to the state decades ago and Oregon manages the land and funnels timber revenue to the counties.

But 13 counties took Oregon to court, alleging the state was not maximizing logging on the forests. A Linn County jury found in the counties’ favor in 2019 and awarded more than \$1 billion in damages, but an appeals court struck down the verdict earlier this year.

A representative for the counties called the high court’s inaction “disappointing.”

“The underlying issue of forest practices on public lands is left unresolved,” Linn County Commissioner Roger Nyquist said in a statement.

Linn is one of several Oregon counties and special taxing districts that receive a cut of logging profits from forestland they gave to the state in the 1930s and 1940s. Oregon agreed to manage those lands, which were mostly

burned and logged over at the time of donation, “so as to secure the greatest permanent value of those lands to the state.”

Oregon has sent millions of dollars to the counties over the years, bolstering local budgets. But 13 counties took the state to court, saying “greatest permanent value” meant managing forests for maximum timber revenue.

The Oregon Department of Justice, which represented the state government in the case, issued a written statement Friday calling the Supreme Court’s decision a “victory for Oregon’s environment and for sound forest management in general.”

“Our forests serve a range of environmental, recreational, and economic purposes,” the statement reads. “By allowing what we argued was the correct decision of the Court of Appeals to stand, we have a swifter resolution and finality after a six-year dispute.”