

Bob's Corner

Laboring on Labor Day seems to be the lot of those who crank out newspapers, including this very Illinois Valley "Noosepaper." Thank God the staff is first-rate and in good humor, or El Jefe would be up the creek without a paddle, a boat or MREs (Meals Rejected by Ethiopians).

Some might recall that a couple of weeks ago I spoke of laying out the "Noose" electronically and transmitting same for printing. It came to pass that last week's issue was our baptism of fire, ire and a perfectly almost intolerable bleary-eyed time. Some of us were at the office from before 8 on that fateful Tuesday morn until 1:30 a.m. the next day.

And there was a glitch that required one of us (not me) to return to the office at midmorning to resend or fix something that went awry the night before. And it was a 20-page paper, as some may have noticed. As this is written on Monday night, Sept. 2, it appears that we'll have a 16-page "Noose" for this week. It should contain plenty-o-pictures of the 30th annual Illinois Valley Lions Club Labor Day Festival and Parade. Plus photos of other stuff from around the valley. Hey - it's what we do.

Far be it from me to jinx this week's issue by saying that we will not be in the office, somewhat comatose, as last week. But we do have more confidence in this electronic whatsit.

For some reason, this seems an appropriate time to relate our animal happening of a week or so ago at home. At one point we had our two cats, Gracie and Nitro; and our dogs, Bingo and Rocky, and we also had Rocky's mother, Maggie, and his sister, Sadie. They came to be dog-sat while their owners went camping.

Adding to this jolly menagerie were Maui, the cat that Jan rescued, and her four kittens. She had the kittens after being ensconced in our guest closet. They are truly cute little critters, who've been named Bubba, Buttercup, The Dread Pirate Robert, and Cipher. This chorus of mewers should be weaned in another three to four weeks. I call them Velcro cats with their distinct talent of hooking onto our shirts, pants, bare skin and the like.

For a while we looked like an animal refuge. Come to think of it, that's exactly what we have become. Although I would deny it if you asked, the little purr machines are somewhat comforting. What's not comforting is Gracie's horrible attitude toward them. She regards them as something akin to Bubonic Plague, and hisses and snarls when they approach. Nitro, on the other hand, isn't sure if they're someone to play with, or maybe something fun to hunt and eat.

You've heard of it raining cats and dogs? We're in the neighborhood. And now, exit stage right.



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Letters to the Editor

Editor's Note: Views expressed in letters to the editor are strictly those of the letter-writers.

We no longer will accept single-spaced handwritten letters. Typed, double-spaced letters are acceptable for consideration. Hand-written letters that are double-spaced and highly legible also can be considered for publication.)

Measure 17.86 supports valley firefighters
From Dave Toler
Cave Junction

Illinois Valley voters will this week receive their ballots in the mail for the Sept. 17 election. On that ballot, they will find Measure 17.86, a bond levy for Illinois Valley Rural Fire Protection District to pay for replacement of four dilapidated fire stations at Selma, O'Brien, Holland Loop, and the main station in Cave Junction.

Here in Illinois Valley, between each and every wildland or structural fire and our homes or businesses, stands a dedicated crew of volunteers, our neighbors, who risk their health, and sacrifice time from their family or jobs to protect our property. Measure 17.86 simply provides these volunteers the minimal tools they need to do their job.

During the last few weeks, I have heard several very reasonable concerns from community members on this issue. Probably the most popular issue being the ability to afford what would be an average of approximately \$41 per year (based on a \$79,000 assessed property) for residents.

Being a property owner on a pretty limited income myself, this is an issue that is close to home for me.

Yet, when I look at the numbers, it's clear to me that I will save more by doing this now rather than doing it later. For example, Measure 17.86 will pay off the loan for the Holland Loop station, which will save taxpayers more than \$47,000 in interest payments: That's money that can instead go to replacing antiquated equipment.

Another issue is the lack of volunteers today. There is no doubt that IVRFPD needs more volunteers. But how easy will it be to recruit them with such dilapidated facilities? With stations that lack any facilities for cleaning their uniforms or themselves, today volunteers are expected to take the residue of structural fire and injured bodies back home with them.

Earlier this summer, a volunteer ruined his family's clothing with residue from the tire fire. As long as we expect our volunteers to put up with our inadequate facilities, it seems likely that recruiting volunteers will continue to be a real challenge.

Finally, thanks to the men and women who volunteer to protect our homes and businesses here in the valley, fire protection for I.V. residents comes with a pretty reasonable price tag. If we want to continue with a volunteer force, we will have to furnish them with adequate tools to do their job.

Protecting our property from fire is an extremely vital service for our community. I am thankful for the men and women who volunteer their time, and sometimes their lives, to ensure my community. I appreciate the men and women who volunteer their time, and sometimes their lives, to ensure my community is safe.

For that, I am willing to provide them the basic facilities they need to do the job. Given the sacrifices they are making for my community every day, my vote is "yes" for 17.86.

'The tire mire'
From Bill Hickerson
Cave Junction

As the considerable anxiety over the Florence Fire, to later be named the Biscuit Fire, slowly begins to fade from our minds, I want to revisit the fire that actually, in my opinion, has affected our valley in even a more negative way than the wildland fire over the ridge.

Do any of you recall a couple of months ago the large dark column of smoke that was seen throughout the valley coming from the Busk tire fire on Takilma Road? Unlike the Biscuit Fire, the tire fire was not started by an errant lightning strike; it was caused by man.

Unlike the Biscuit Fire that burned countless acres of Nature, the tire fire burnt countless numbers of tires illegally hauled into a piece of property during the last several years. As rumors became rampant that Busk was going to torch his manmade mess rather than let the county take over this already county-controlled property, more tires were being hauled into the property up to the day before the big fiasco, and we have the license number of the truck.

Unlike the Biscuit Fire that will slowly begin to heal in the spring, the tire fire location will only just be begin-

ning to leach toxins into the soil and underground aquifers from chemicals left over from the burning rubber slop.

I have several perplexing questions about both fires, of the why and how they happened, but my emphasis today is about the tire fire and how, in my opinion, it was allowed to occur.

Keep in mind that the county had already repossessed this property from Busk 10 years prior, but an arrangement allowed him to continue to stay on the property.

DEQ had spent \$78,000 removing thousands of tires from this illegal dumping ground in fall 1990, apparently only to have Busk have more tires hauled in. On the morning of the fire Busk told me personally, (I was driving the first arriving fire engine,) that his workers had apparently accidentally started the fire by dropping a cigarette. I have never heard anybody ask who these supposed workers were.

How is it that the grapevine around town knew this fire was going to occur days ahead of time if the fire was an accident? Why is the county to date allowing him to play the same game on another piece of property in the O'Brien area? Photos show this piece of property on O'Brien Street to be just another dumping/collecting garbage fire hazard site like the one Busk built on Takilma Road.

I have been involved with the Illinois Valley Fire District for more than 20 years, so don't get me wrong, I enjoy fighting fire. I relish helping

my neighbor in his or her time of need. My gut feeling about this particular tire fire was that it was maliciously started. I do not enjoy having myself, or my brothers and sisters in the fire service, put in harm's way because of someone's malicious intent.

If any out there in the valley know specific details of this crime I wish that they would come forward and let the authorities know.

Folks, in all seriousness, this tire fire actually had more potential to burn us out of our little valley than did the now smoldering Biscuit Fire.

Robbie Hanson bouquet
From Glenda Karr
Selma

I am writing this on behalf of a young man I had the opportunity and privilege to not call my friend, and who has become a very bright and hard-working individual. Not many young people today have the ambition that Robbie Hanson has shown during the years since I first met him.

He has shown leadership to not only his peers, but to those of us who not only respect him for the young man that he has become but, for the honesty that he has shown to all who know him.

I volunteered for several weekends this summer to see first-hand how a young man of Robbie Hanson's stature could handle such responsibilities as those presented him at Oregon Caves Chateau.

I eventually asked for weekend employment, as I also am self-employed and work during the week. The

Continued on page 3

THANK YOU!
 The American Red Cross,
 Rogue Valley Chapter,
 thanks everyone who contributed their time, goods, services, facilities, and money to assist Illinois Valley wildfire evacuees in recent weeks. You demonstrate the true spirit of **NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS!**

Marj Jameson, CEO
 Rogue Valley Chapter
 60 Hawthorne Street
 Medford 541-779-3773

Bill Blakely, Manager
 Grants Pass Office
 745 NE 7th Street
 Grants Pass 471-7822

American Red Cross
Help Can't Wait

IVHS Activities Calendar
 Brought to you by the folks at **WILD BIRD BREWERY & PIZZA CO.**
 Blame us if your life goes to Pizzas!

THURSDAY, SEPT. 5
 Girls volleyball at South Umpqua 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
 Freshman elections

FRIDAY, SEPT. 6
 Dance - 8 to 11 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 7
 Girls soccer at Phoenix Jamboree 8:30 a.m.
 Boys soccer at St. Marys - 10 a.m.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 10
 Girls volleyball vs. Henley Here - 5:45 to 6:30 p.m.
 Boys soccer vs. Henley Here - 4 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 11
 School pictures - morning

SCHOOL STARTS, WATCH FOR RED FLASHING LIGHTS ON BUSES

SISKIYOU COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
 is pleased to announce
Lucinda Kolo, M.D.
 will begin seeing patients
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LUCINDA KOLO, M.D.