

# Letters

(Continued from page 3)

ancient Celtic holiday called Samhain. According to the Scottish-Gaelic dictionary, “Samhain” translates as “Summer’s end.” Samhain marked the final harvest of the agricultural year, and herds were culled for winter food.

Samhain was also the New Year of the Celtic calendar, and therefore a time of great celebration. People traveled for miles to visit friends and family, going bravely from house to house in the winter darkness, and partying like champions (the Celts loved a good party). Hospitality was a sacred obligation to the Celts, so no one was turned away from the door on Samhain night. This is where the “treat” part of “trick-or-treat” originated.

The Celts believed in an afterlife, but they had no concept of Hell, devils, or demons. But they did believe in the existence of fairies.

Fairies could be helpful or harmful, as they chose, and were never to be taken lightly. At Samhain, when the veil was thinnest, fairies came out to roam with the spirits of the beloved dead, and they often played pranks on unsuspecting humans. The Celts set out offerings of favorite fairy delicacies, like honey, butter, and milk, to keep mischievous fairies from pestering them. This is the birth of the “trick” aspect of “trick or treat.”

It may also be the origin of the jack-o-lantern. Some scholars believe that the Celts carved out turnips, beets, and apples (pumpkins are native to America, not Europe), as safe places to set burning candles, to light the way to their homes for beloved guests, dead and living. Carving scary faces into these organic candleholders may have been a custom developed in the Christian era, when mischievous fairies and the beloved dead had been transformed by church doctrine into evil demons.

“Trick-or-treating” was born of the Celtic custom of visiting from house to house and receiving food and drink, and of setting out goodies to dissuade fairies bent on pranks.

Wearing costumes and disguises most likely originated in Scotland. While some scholars feel that costumes were added in the Christian era to fool wandering evil spirits (or at least to disguise human pranksters), chances are that costumes arose from a

simple desire to dress up in fancy clothes to make the Samhain celebration more special -- the same way we dress up for any holiday party.

“Samhain” was rechristened “Hallowe’en because Christian leaders did not believe the dead could or should come back to visit the living, but felt that, for various reasons, a holiday to honor the dead should remain in place. So they established the day after Samhain night, Nov. 1, as All Souls or All Hallows Day. Oct. 31 was then known as All Hallows Eve or Evening. This was shortened by the peasants into “Hallowe’en.”

Hallowe’en has come to be viewed by many as a celebration of evil, but in reality it simply celebrates the human experience -- life and death, our loves and fears, and the sense of community that we all hold dear.

So this Hallowe’en, why not raise a glass in memory of those who’ve gone on? Then share some goodies with the little ones who come to your door, and feel your own sense of continuity with those who, thousands of years ago, laughed bravely in the face of the coming winter darkness.

The information in this letter came from “Halloween” by Silver Ravenwolf. This book is available at Blue Moon Books and Coffee.

## Access to information From Sue Lily Cave Junction

Have you ever felt lonely, hot or bored; down in the dumps with no good prospects, no new thoughts to keep you perking? Then it’s time to visit the local library.

Our librarians are cheerful and eager to help you find whatever answers you need -- the newest dachshund book, a good mystery or the right Chilton’s manual to fix that engine. You can get any public information from county codes and soil maps to Oregon’s Constitution.

We have a wonderful collection of gardening books, animal books, computer books, children’s books, travel books, biographies, atlases, audio books, videos.

You can access local newspapers, trade magazines and the Internet, and you can take home books worth hundreds of dollars.

For all this, you’ll pay only \$20/\$100,000 assessed value per year to access more

than 850,000 books, periodicals, videos, audio tapes, records, microfiche and the Internet during 35 hours per week in Illinois Valley; and 50 hours in Grants Pass; and 24/7 with a home computer and [www.solis.lib.or.us](http://www.solis.lib.or.us). We can do library searches and reserve books.

I can’t imagine life without public libraries -- gifts we give each other everyday. I’ll vote for that.

## About city trees From Lou Chauvin Cave Junction

Regarding your page 1 story on sparing the city trees last week, I have a few ideas.

\*Install tree grates, allowing rain water to get to the roots, and the roots to rise without buckling sidewalks.

\*Drill holes in the gutters to soil depth, about two inches in diameter, every two or three feet; and backfill with sand to allow the run-off to wet the under-soil.

\*To avoid drilling, use cardboard tube forms in new road and curb-and-gutter construction to facilitate sand placement.

\*Don’t cut down any trees that are not hopelessly diseased, and plant new trees whenever and wherever possible, especially colorful fall trees (Japanese and Norwegian maples for example).

Beautiful trees are multifunctional. They provide shade and thus local and general relief. The whole town’s hotter when there’s nothing but asphalt and concrete.

This will become increasingly important as the Earth continues to warm. Trees provide sanctuary for birds, especially as they mature.

They will provide “oohs” and “aahs” for our visitors, as they appreciate the beauty and admire our foresight. And lastly, they will further justify our pride in our place.

## People for Parks From Sunny Sundquist Grants Pass

I am a member of People for Parks, becoming involved because I take advantage of the parks we have in the county.

I am appalled at the conditions I see. The roofs leak; the restroom plumbing is inadequate or not in good shape. We do not have facilities for disabled people to use.

The parks department has not had enough funding from the county to take care of the parks in order to do anything but basic maintenance. We had beautiful parks in the 1970s, but by not funding them adequately, we are in desperate need.

The proposed Three Rivers Parks & Recreation District would restore and maintain our county parks; make them safe and accessible; and would fund development of new community parks.

Money raised by the district would be dedicated exclusively to the operation and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities. I am urging people to vote “yes” to help our parks and our quality of life.

## Fire stations work From Allen Reitan Cave Junction

Regarding the summary of Measure 17.95 in the county voters pamphlet: Will the funds be used specifically for new fire station construction as we have been told?

It reads, “This measure provides funds to the district to finance the costs of capital construction and capital improvements, including but not limited to providing funds for:

constructing fire stations and related improvements; acquisition of real property; acquisition of fire safety equipment and related improvements and pay bond issuance costs.”

Somehow the district “found” \$25,000 in its operating budget to begin work on the new Holland Loop Fire Station, and then borrowed \$182,000 for 10 years, without taxpayer approval, to finish the construction. Loan payments are being made from the operating budget? Is there too much money in it?

In an article in the Grants Pass “Daily Courier,” it was reported that “of the \$2.5 million being sought, about \$1 million would be used for necessary infrastructure improvements at the three stations such as fill material, septic and water systems. The rest would be used for the buildings themselves, as well as paying off a 10-year loan.” Does this mean \$330,000 for water, septic and fill material at each of the three stations?

## Sister backs Iverson From Karin Fiederer San Antonio, Texas

Heidi Iverson is my little sister. She and her husband, Frank, have made Grants Pass their Paradise on Earth.

When they lived on Guam, Heidi ran a quarantine kennel. All dogs and cats coming in had to be quarantined for three months before being released to their owners.

Much government paperwork and people skills were involved in dealing with pet owners, who were allowed daily visits. Heidi is capable and compassionate. She did the job.

Although I did not need to be quarantined, Heidi took me in when I needed help. She gave me and my two boys, 10 and 4, a room; and while I went to work, she took care of my baby until he was old enough for day-care.

Heidi is loving and generous. There is no doubt in my mind that the best new commissioner would be Heidi Iverson. She had the most votes in the primary election, and her education exceeds that of all other candidates by far.

Heidi believes and promotes the best of both parties without forsaking her ideas and beliefs on the issues concerning Josephine County. Every home and every office benefits by the presence of a good, capable and caring woman. That’s what Heidi is.

Neither she nor her opponent have held the position of county commissioner, but I believe that Heidi has the best qualifications.



**BIG HOUSE AVAILABLE --** Using a donated kit, teachers Cathy Bosse and Jackie Wright (the latter now retired) used their own time to construct a large wooden doll house. Evergreen Elementary School is raffling the house to raise funds for items including field trips and playground equipment. Posing with the doll house are (from left) Matt Anderson, 8; Tyler Robbins, 8; and Chaise Robbins, 6. Tickets are available at the school, and the drawing will be held on Dec. 12. Tickets also will be available during the Halloween Carnival at the school on Thursday, Oct. 31 from 4 to 6:30 p.m. And the house will be displayed during the first week of November in the Klamath First Bank Branch in Cave Junction.



## Ready to expand your home business?

**Get a Low Interest Business Loan**  
**Pick up an application & information at:**  
•IVCRT Office, 200-C Lister St.  
•The I.V. Library, 209 W. Palmer  
•I.V. Family Coalition, 535 E. River St.  
•Selma Video (next to Selma Post Office)  
•O’Brien Country Store

**Deadline for applications: Nov. 22**

**Illinois Valley Community Response Team  
Micro Business Revolving Loan Program**

## Harvest Festival

KERBYVILLE MUSEUM

Sat., October 26 - 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Free admission to all events & to the museum!

Contests and Prizes for:

- \*Children’s costume (judging at 1 p.m.)
- \*Bring your own carved pumpkin (judging at 2 p.m.)
- \*I.V. Lion’s Club train rides
- \*Festive bake sale
- \*Rummage sale
- \*Vendors
- \*Raffle

Josephine County Commissioners have been invited  
Come & enjoy a variety of festival fun!

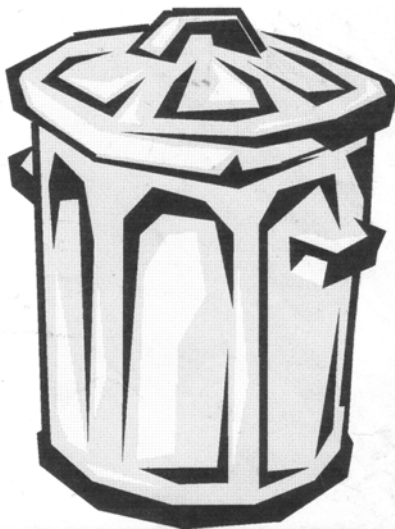


## The Kerby Transfer Station is open

**Saturdays:**

**9:30 a.m.  
to  
2:30 p.m.**

**Hours: Mondays - Saturdays  
9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
For more information phone (800) 922-1025**



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### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One year in Josephine County - \$20.80  
One year in Jackson and Douglas Counties - \$24.40  
One year in all other Oregon counties and out-of-state - \$28

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