



**BATS IN LIBRARY** - Fredda Stephens, a National Park Service employee from Oregon Caves National Monument, gave a program, 'Understanding Bats,' on Friday, Nov. 22 in the Cave Junction Branch Library. The group shown swelled to triple that size after the photographer had taken the photo. Stephens explained how bats live and noted that most myths about the creatures are exactly that.

## Get the dope on soap from Schaffer, owner of Oregon Mountain Soap

By BRITT FAIRCHILD

It used to be everywhere: in the kitchen, the dining room, the living room.

Even their bedroom brimmed with bars of soap.

Granted, Alice Schaffer was in the business of making and selling handmade soaps. But sharing a house with a husband, teen-agers and lots of the scented stuff made for crowded quarters after a while.

"Some lady got a kitty from us and she came back and asked, 'Do you have to bathe these kittens? They smell like soap,'" Schaffer laughed.

Things are different now, and Schaffer isn't complaining.

In September, she opened Oregon Mountain Soap Co.-- which she owns with her husband, Ted Crocker -- in Downtown Cave Junction. Months prior, Crocker began building her a special room outside their home for her to make her soap.

While she enjoys making both glycerin and lye soap, she said she prefers the more complex and tedious method of mixing the strong alkaline liquor with essential oils.

"It's a fun process. It's real rewarding," Schaffer said.

Schaffer and Crocker bought the company from an O'Brien woman on Sept. 10, 2001. Schaffer, who worked at Fire Mountain Gems at the time, said she initially considered the purchase as strictly a

business venture.

It has since become a creative outlet of sorts, as well as a full-time job.

"I've never been an artsy-crafty person in my life," Schaffer said. "It's kind of brought out (that) side of me."

While drawn to the artistic side of making something that looks pretty and smells good, Schaffer also relishes the precision of its production.

"It's a science. It really is," Schaffer said.

Each of Schaffer's lavender, rosewood and other fragrant bars require an exact amount of ingredients. Adding too little, or too much, of one could spoil an entire batch of soap.

"I've been really lucky with it," she said, knocking on a wooden table in her workroom. "I've never had a batch of soap turn out bad."

Schaffer must also pay close attention to the temperatures of her ingredients.

Preparing the lye takes the most amount of time, so she mixes it first, making sure to add the water to the lye, and not the other way around. Once mixed together, the water and lye automatically heat to 180-200 degrees, Schaffer said.

"It's (the lye) very caustic. You have to be extremely careful with it," she said, noting that even with wearing rubber gloves and long-sleeved shirts for protection, she has still splashed herself.

She noted that she also

has learned that vinegar will counteract the lye, a tip she picked up from watching the film, "Fight Club."

As the lye cools -- a process which takes 6 to 8 hours -- Schaffer measures her base oils, heats them and prepares the soap mold by spraying it with silicone, which helps keep the soap from sticking.

When the lye cools to 100 degrees, and the base oils -- palm oil, coconut oil, olive oil -- heat up to 100 degrees, then she combines the two.

"You have like a five-minute window" where both mixtures are the same temperature, Schaffer said.

She then stirs the concoction well and hits it with a blender stick until it thickens.

"It starts to get like pudding; it starts what they call, "tracing," she said.

The last thing she does is add scented oils and coloring if needed.

For her oatmeal soap, she adds in two cups of oatmeal.

"I'm finding that the ground is better. The whole is too coarse," she said.

Next, Schaffer pours the substance into a greased mold. One mold makes 72 3 1/2- to 4 1/2-ounce bars.

Schaffer said she makes approximately 300 to 400 bars a week, although she would like to make more.

Once it is in the mold, Schaffer covers the mold with plastic and a heavy blanket. She leaves it on for 24 hours, so the temperature slowly decreases.

"That's one thing that's really important," she said, "you've got to keep it covered and make sure it does its chemical process. It's amazing, I'll make it one day and come out the next day, and it's still warm," Schaffer said.

Directly out of the mold, the bars are rough around the edges, so each individual one is beveled by hand (she saves the shavings from one batch to add to the next).

But the soap still isn't ready for purchase. It must cure for four to six more weeks.

"If you look in the back of my store, there's soap that's not ready to put out for my customers yet," she said.

So, the soap Schaffer's customers buy is at least one or two months old.

The store on Lister Street, behind Century 21 Harris & Taylor, and Blue Moon Books & Coffee, is closed on Sundays and Mondays, so Schaffer can make soap to sell along with the bath oils, candles, massage oils she makes.

Like many of her customers, Schaffer is partial to one particular scent.

"The lavender is my favorite," she said.

## Yipes! Frozen pipes can cause big gripes

Hurricanes. Floods. Tornadoes. Frozen pipes?

While you might not associate cold weather with a natural disaster -- frozen pipes -- just as other catastrophic events, can cause costly damage.

Unlike other disasters, however, this one is largely preventable, according to State Farm Insurance, which provided the following.

During a cold snap, pipes can freeze and break if unprotected. Even a small crack in a pipe can spill 250 gallons (950 liters) of water a day. This can cause ceilings or walls to collapse, soak carpets and flooring, and ruin furniture or appliances.

Freezing pipes can occur almost anywhere, but homes in warmer climates, where pipes lack insulation or other protection, can be especially vulnerable to a drop in outdoor temperature. Here are five easy steps you can take to reduce the likelihood of frozen pipes:

\*Insulate the most susceptible pipes -- typically those on outside walls, in crawl spaces and in the attic.

\*Disconnect outdoor hoses.

\*During extreme cold, let hot and cold water faucets trickle overnight and keep doors under sinks open to allow heat to get to pipes.

\*Set thermostat no lower than 55 degrees Fahrenheit (13 Celsius).

\*Never try to thaw a pipe with an open flame or torch, and be aware of the danger of electric shock in standing water.

For a free "No Frozen Pipes" brochure, write: Editor, Oregon News & Notes, Public Affairs Dept., P.O. Box 5000, Dupont WA 98327.

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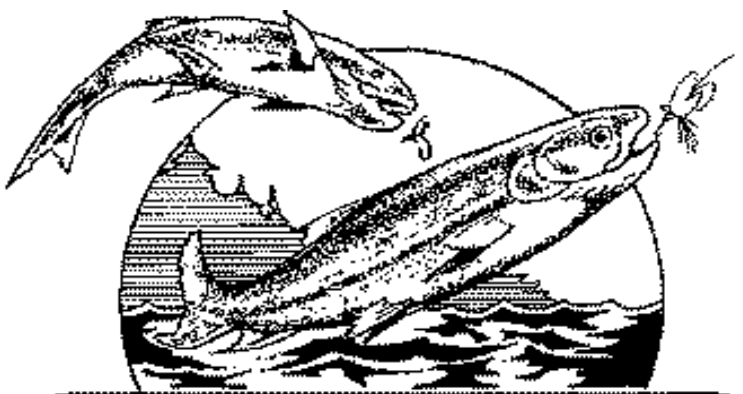
## Annual Holiday Parade

**PARADE ENTRY FORM**  
Please mail or return to  
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Name of Org. \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact \_\_\_\_\_  
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Type of Entry (float, animal, band, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce  
**CHRISTMAS PARADE**  
will be held on Saturday, Dec. 7  
(if rain) Saturday, Dec. 14  
Line up at 2 p.m.  
at Evergreen School  
Theme: "Peace on Earth"

**Support the merchants who advertise in the  
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They pay 'the freight' for the valley community**



### SOUTHERN OREGON FLY FISHERS, INC.

Our membership wishes to express its gratitude to the following businesses & individuals for their generous donations to our annual fund-raiser. We encourage our members & the community to give these businesses your consideration when seeking goods & services.

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*Bridgeview Vineyards Winery	*Pietro's Restaurant
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*Exley Mixon III	*Selma Select Market
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*I.V. Building Supply	*Taylor's Sausage
*Junction Inn	*Valley Farm & Garden

\*Wild River Brewing & Pizza Company

**TREE PLANTING**

## IT'S OUR 11TH ANNIVERSARY! TREE PLANTING TIME IS NEAR!

**THE COMMUNITY'S 11TH ANNUAL  
RIPARIAN TREE PLANTING PROJECT IS HERE!**

The Forestry Action Committee's First Distribution Event is scheduled for Friday & Saturday, Dec. 13 & 14.

JUST AS BEFORE, OUR GOAL IS TO IMPROVE, ENHANCE & MAINTAIN  
*the health of the waterways of the beautiful Illinois Valley*

**THE FORESTRY ACTION COMMITTEE NEEDS HELP FROM  
LANDOWNERS - VOLUNTEERS - ANYONE INTERESTED**

We will need help from volunteers through various stages of the project for tree care, planting, crew coordination, and project activities.  
We are looking for planting sites along  
Illinois Valley rivers, streams, wetlands and ponds.  
The Forestry Action Committee offers free riparian consultation and  
**FREE TREE SEEDLINGS!**  
(Native hardwoods and conifers will be available from Dec. to March)

**'LET'S CONTINUE OUR COMMUNITY'S  
TRADITION OF SUCCESS!'**

For more information or to participate phone  
Kevin O'Brien or Wayne Fitzpatrick at  
**592-4098**  
GRANT FUNDING PROVIDED BY:  
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)  
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Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)

**"PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE PLANT TREES"**