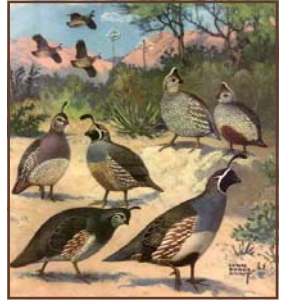


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Possible Rough & Ready closure may bring rough times to I.V.

After 80 years of being a pillar of the community, Rough & Ready faces hard decisions about its future as well as the valleys

By SAM NEWTON

"The decision to discontinue operating Rough & Ready is the most difficult decision that we have ever had to make," said Fred and John Krauss, co-owners of Rough & Ready Lumber Co. in Cave Junction.

After 80 years of having a collective, family operated business (21 years at the original Deer Creek site in Selma and 59 years at the present site) Rough & Ready Lumber Co. (the last remaining sawmill in Josephine County), the co-owners have decided that they are done "fighting the good fight."

If Rough & Ready closes, approximately 145 jobs will be terminated, and loss of an annual payroll of \$5 million will be the result.

On Wednesday afternoon, Dec. 4, during a meeting with Rough & Ready employees at the mill, the Krausses announced that they will attempt to sell their sawmill facility



within the next 30 to 45 days. If the sale is not successful, they will begin liquidating the sawmill inventory and close in spring 2003.

The possible closure, the loss of jobs and the revenue generated by the jobs not only has mill employees saddened and stunned, but also merchants throughout the valley.

"It's devastating," said Jessica Krska, manager of Shop Smart Food Warehouse

in Cave Junction.

"Not just to the businesses, but to the employees and their families who work for the mill," she said.

"It's just terrible," noted Krska. "I don't think people realize yet how this will affect them and the valley in general.

"Rough & Ready pays their employees very well. It's going to be impossible to find anything like that around here," said Krska.

Liz Paulsen, co-owner of Dave's Outdoor Power and Equipment said, "What I felt when I first heard the news was fear. Losing what business we get from the mill will not have an impressive effect on our business, but to lose the 145 families' business who shop with us is frightening," she said.

Blaming the failure of President Clinton's Northwest Forest Plan (established dur-

ing Clinton's in 1994), and successful litigation against federal timber sales by environmental groups, the Krausses claim that an substantial amount of timber has been sold since the mid-'90s.

"This is just another example of the chipping away of the strength of our nation," said Paul Dillon, co-owner of Dillon's Nursery and Garden Center in Cave Junction.

The Krausses also state

that they are under the understanding that even though more than 1 billion board feet of timber was burnt outside the Kalmiopsis Wilderness area during the Biscuit Fire, that only after a long planning and legal process will a small amount of timber be sold.

"By that time, the wood will have little or no economic value," said the Krausses.

"At a time when the state of Oregon is in desperate need for economic stimulus, it is not only appalling to miss this opportunity to harvest dead trees, but makes us certain that we cannot count on the harvest of green timber in the future," they said.

Rough & Ready has been actively working with the Job Council, Oregon Employment Dept., and other agencies to help mill employees through the transition and to help them find new employment.

"It's a sad and difficult time for all of us," said Carol Mayfield, a longtime Rough & Ready office employee.

Jump down turn 'round pick a bale of nickel

By SAM NEWTON

You can't get blood from a turnip; but you can get nickel from alyssum.

Murale (dark green) and Corsicum (silver gray) alyssum seeds have been sown as part of an experimental endeavor to extract nickel from the serpentine soil on Rough & Ready Flat, 6 miles south of Cave Junction.

The project, co-sponsored by Viridian Resources, of Houston, Texas; and Oregon State University (OSU), of Corvallis, consists of two areas, one south of the new industrial park off Airport Drive and the other west of Illinois Valley Airport, between the airstrip and Redwood Hwy.

Mark Wiest, western field manager for Viridian, along with youth from Illinois Valley and Grants Pass community service, have been working down to the wire to get the areas planted before the rainy season arrives.

Meeting with county commissioners and the public, and going through all the proper channels, Viridian and OSU have leased 100 acres of county property, but have chosen to plant only 70.

"We wanted to leave a buffer between Hwy. 199 in some areas and also the Rough & Ready Botanical Wayside," he said. "We purposely used only the 70 acres just to play it safe," said Wiest.

Harvest of the alyssum will occur in July and August of 2003 before the alyssum blooms. "If the alyssum is allowed to bloom we would take a big loss," said Wiest.

"The first stage of harvesting is much like harvesting hay," said Wiest. "We'll

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SANTA ON PARADE - The 12th annual Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade was a success despite the cold weather. Much to every ones delight, Santa arrived in style courtesy of the Illinois Valley Fire District. (Photo by Kathy Young)



BIG BOYS ON LITTLE TOYS - The I.V. Bikers held their 20th annual Toy Run on Saturday, Dec. 7 throughout Illinois Valley to provide toys for those who might not have a toy under the Christmas tree this year. (Photo by Kathy Young) (Related photos on page 8)

I.V. Chamber Christmas parade winners

The foggy weather didn't keep the holiday spirits of the 12th Annual Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade participants and spectators down on Saturday, Dec. 7.

Approximately 18 parade entries marched through Downtown Cave Junction while judges Becky Newstead,

Sonny Moore, and Rachel Bennett undertook the daunting task of choosing their favorites in nine categories.

Winners in each category are as follows:

*Grand Marshal (Best of all) - I.V. Bikers Toy Run.
*Children - Honeybee Kids.

*Car - None.
*Truck - None.
*Music - IVHS/Lorna Byrne Middle School Band.
*Schools - ROTC.
*Animals - Sheriff Dave Daniel and his mounted posse.
*Church, Organization or Business - I.V. Lions Club Train.

Historic Kerbyville slated for authentic 1880s style theme park development

By ELNO STINT

Two Illinois Valley men are hatching a plot for the historic town of Kerbyville.

In fact, as financing, time and resources allow development, Kerbyville, or a reasonable facsimile, will rise again - using the original town plot plan -- obtained from Kerbyville Museum, located across Redwood Hwy. in Kerby. Roadways, with material resembling brick, will be included, with angled parking.

In keeping with the theme of early day authenticity, neon signs will not be allowed. "We want it to be authentic," said Bill Pfohl, "and we don't want it to look like a strip mall."

Partners Bob Stellflug and Pfohl see their plan to establish somewhat of an 1850-1880's theme park, akin to Old Sacramento or the city of Jacksonville, near Medford, to result in a significant visitor attraction for Illinois Valley.

It will feature, they plan, a wide range of Illinois Valley artists and craftsmen with shops, galleries and displays, including work in progress. In the latter category, they're looking toward crafts such as glass-blowing and blacksmithing. Restaurants and an RV park also are on their agenda.

One of the main assets to the development of this project is that First Love Fellowship (currently located in Suite A, 139 Caves Avenue in Cave Junction) plans on building an 1880s style church at the location.

And they'd like to include

valley wineries as well. In addition, they have an idea for possible ethnic food areas.

"We're looking for good ambience," said Pfohl, "the sort of major, nice attraction that will make people stop." The partners also plan a large parking area, besides angled parking, in the development itself.

They're purchasing the 65-acre site, which runs from Redwood Hwy. to Illinois River and a bit beyond, from California resident Hank Westbrook. The site is the former location of Cabax Mill. The partners, who began paying for the site in September 2001, plan the development operating as Kerbyville Industrial Center LLC.

A certain amount of site work is under way, including erecting a new facility for Kauffman Wood Products, severely damaged by fire a few months ago. Stellflug, who operates his own construction company; and Pfohl, who operates Q-Bar-X Ranch, plan to utilize pre-cast concrete walls for construction. The walls will be cast on-site, and then tilted into position for various buildings. Storefront facades, similar to Jacksonville or perhaps Ferndale, Calif., will complete each structure, to resemble a building from the 1800's.

The first order of business, depending on resources, will involve a 6- to 8-acre RV park with a pond near the river, said Pfohl. This will

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Holiday 'Noose' deadlines
Absolute deadlines for Dec. 25 and Jan. 1 are Friday, Dec. 20 and 27 at 5 p.m.
Newspapers will be printed and on stands Monday, Dec. 23 and 30.