

# Bob's Corner

This was the week that I was going to tell you about the Mother of All Picnics involving my parents and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins way back when in the Cuyamaca Mountains of eastern San Diego County. However, my resident Column Keeper advises that the particular picnic, duly recorded in the history of California, already has been covered by yours truly in this very column.

So instead of the Great Picnic Fiasco, you will learn about the most difficult job the editor ever had. Not that it was particularly strenuous, although lifting 20- and 30-gallon coffee urns could fall into that category. Or not that it was too much of a strain on the brain, as the work was not especially difficult. And even having to arrive at work at 5 a.m. was not that big a chore back in those days.

The job was as a cafeteria worker at a major shipbuilding company in San Diego. The most difficult part of the many tasks assigned to me in my restaurant whites, including a full-length and quite stylish apron, involved working up to speed. The boss's speed; not mine.

For example, making sandwiches my way means that you carefully spread the filling completely on each slice of bread, even reaching the corners. But no. The boss wanted the sandwiches made at top speed, and so I was forced to just dab and go, dab and go. It was depressing.

And there was the matter of cutting pies. The boss wanted several dozen pies sliced, with each piece on a plate and covered with clear wrap, in about 90 minutes. I was taking about five minutes per slice, what with trying to be careful, and not licking my fingers. Speed was the order of the day, and I am not a speedy food person server.

Despite the "difficulty" of the job, I ate well. Until I saw the cook and his not-always careful techniques one day. But we will not go into that right now. Especially if you plan to eat soon. Anyway, after that incident I lived on coffee and pie, which did nothing for my complexion, stamina or waistline. But it was good pie.

Still and all, I learned a brand-vocabulary and some really interesting stories from the shipyard workers, most of whom apparently had their hard hats welded onto their heads. I'd tell you about the words and stories, but I just can't. Especially if you plan to eat soon.

Coming next week: More drivel and stuff about Bob and Jan's Adventure in California. You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll blow chunks. Many Pulitzer Prize-winning columns have been written. Next week's will not be one of those.

# Letters to the Editor

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

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**Typed, double-spaced letters are acceptable for consideration. Hand-written letters that are double-spaced and highly legible also can be considered for publication. Cards of thanks are not accepted as letters.)**

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**'Education first'  
From Sonny Moore  
Cave Junction**

This is my first year involved as a staff member within our schools, and it is alarming as to how the news media has misinformed the parents of our community. I have several things that I would like to clear up.

First: if you have seen a teacher looking down and not very happy, it is not because they have lost 10 days and will not get paid. Rather, they are very disturbed on how our state as a whole views our children's education.

This 10-day cut will only affect the students' academics. Teachers of this valley are down because our children will suffer the lack of proper education time.

Secondly, you may have read, or heard on the news, about our valley schools getting a "below average" or "satisfactory" report card from the state. This rating was determined by one factor and one factor alone -- student attendance. It is not based on anything else.

We have a high academic level in our schools along with highly trained and qualified teachers in the valley, but this satisfactory report card is simply because children are not going to school as they should.

The next time you think it would be more convenient to let your child stay home or go with you, remember that every time they do not attend school it will affect the rating and consequently could affect the federal funding to our schools.

Finally, children today have to deal with issues that most of us would not dream of. I commend those parents who strive to do all they can for their children by getting involved and allowing their children every opportunity to have fun and be involved in all the activities available to them.

The children of this valley deserve all we can give them. They deserve 120 percent.

Let's give it to them.

**'Biscuit Fire Ode'  
From Jim Nolan  
Cave Junction**

Well I've worked in the mill - Most of my natural days - Didn't make much money then - But at least my bills got paid.

Raised my kids and bought a home - And my future seemed OK - But now the Biscuit Fire came - And took it all away.

The Northwest Forest Plan stopped the logging - And the brush it grew like corn - Add a little lightning - And the Biscuit Fire was born!

Now there's 3 billion board feet - A-layin' in the woods - While the timber is rotting - Our mill shuts down for good.

The Biscuit Fire is a burning - It's burning mighty hard - While the Fire is roasting -

Spotted Owl's in my back yard.

The Biscuit Fire is a burning - It's burning mighty hard - The Hypocrites are getting fat off grants - While I am living in my car.

The Biscuit Fire is a burning - It's burning mighty hard - And the politicians don't give a damn - If you work or starve.

**'Ripe for catastrophe'  
From Ore. Sen. Jason  
Atkinson, District 25  
Salem**

This past summer, you were forced to watch helplessly as Illinois Valley was ravaged by one of the nation's largest wildfires and Oregon's largest fire in more than a century.

This destruction brought upon your homes and community was preventable. The management style of the federal government left the forest in a condition ripe for catastrophe.

Further, the fire-fighting priorities of federal agencies tied the hands of area and state firefighters, even when they were poised to attack the fire while it was still a small blaze.

After months of labor by thousands of firefighters and millions of dollars spent battling the blaze, the economy of Illinois Valley has been turned upside-down, and the community and surrounding forestlands have been left as a blackened wasteland.

This legislative session, I have drafted a memorial to be sent to the U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C. In this memorial, I urge the federal government to:

- \*Revise its fire-fighting priorities to match the fire-fighting priorities of the state of Oregon.

- \*Cooperate with state and area agencies when fighting fires.

- \*Quickly salvage the Biscuit Fire region in cooperation with the Oregon Dept. of Forestry.

- \*Restore and replant the landscape in the Biscuit Fire region.

- \*Provide funding for reforestation and economic renewal.

- \*Permanently station a rappelling and/or smoke jumping team in the valley.

Quickly salvaging the logs in the Biscuit burn area can bring some economic renewal to I.V. Further, the federal government must provide economic relief for those in I.V. affected by the Biscuit Fire.

**Ham shame  
From Vicki Jones  
Selma**

I am writing this letter in



**BYCYCLE VS. TRUCK** - Bicyclist Lloyd Thomas Henry Jr. was injured Friday, Feb. 14 at approximately 4:24 p.m. when he was struck by a pickup truck driven by Kenneth Lerew Jr. on Redwood Hwy. in front of Select Market in Cave Junction. Henry was taken by AMR ambulance to Three Rivers Community Hospital in Grants Pass. (Photo by Sam Newton)

disgust. My mom and dad started the Illinois Valley Open Door in Selma seven years ago.

They help everyone with no questions asked. They furnish food, clothing, personal items, baby items, etc. to anyone who needs them.

The I.V. Open Door is run on donations from the community, businesses and personal money.

We recently made a trip to the Food Share Warehouse in Grants Pass to buy food for the food bank on Tuesday, Feb. 11. We purchased four large hams that would be split later and given to eight families.

Sometime during the night someone made a stop at the I.V. Open Door and took the hams. Now eight families will be deprived of enjoying ham dinners.

I wonder if whoever took the hams will be able to look us in the face.

I say the thief(s) should enjoy the hams, and when they start eating, just know that they have taken the food out of the mouths of seven other families.

I am so sorry that this has happened. All they had to do is ask and we would have given it to them or would have helped them find it.

We appreciate all who have donated to the I.V. Open Door during the past seven years.

**'Is our angel gone?'  
From Joyce & Harry  
Abrams  
Cave Junction**

What kind of person steals an angel?

What kind of person takes pride in destroying something

(Continued on page 3)

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