



Ten Minutes with ...

.... Millie Watkins - 'Angel of the Valley'

Where are you from?

Southern California. I came up here in 1948 and left in '53, and I decided then this was where I wanted to live when I retired.

How long have you lived in Illinois Valley?

Fourteen years. I moved here to get away from LA.

What do you like best about living here?

The mountains, the trees, the animals; everything about it. I think I might have lived here in a previous life. That's what I've always thought; something was like a magnet.

Everyone always knew this was where I wanted to go when I retired. It took me 20 years just to get back here on vacation and 36 years to move back up here.

Where do you work?

For the I.V. newspaper. I worked here for about 11 years. And then I also work at Shop Smart Food Warehouse; I do the demos for taste testing and service the cards and the Buckmaster coffee dispensing area.

And, of course, I volunteer managing the I.V. Senior Thrift Store two and a half days a week -- sorting clothes and that sort of thing.

Are you involved with any local organizations?

One Wednesday a month, my husband, "Buck," and I serve up at I.V. Senior Center for the bingo games. And once a month we have a public breakfast there and I cook eggs.

Are you married?

Yes. 41 years on Jan. 19. And he even remembered for the first time. I still think the kids tipped him off, 'cause I know he never remembers.

What is your favorite kind of ice cream?

Chocolate marshmallow. But you can't find it, so what I do is make chocolate marshmallow sundaes. I also make chocolate marshmallow milkshakes; they are so good.

- Interview and photo by Shane Welsh

ID theft case at post office underscores security need

With mail theft on the rise, thieves are looking harder for opportunities to steal identity information.

The U.S. Post Office in Cave Junction has noted a potential identity theft problem.

Three open-top waste paper bins for disposing of unwanted mail have been the target of recent concerns.

Postal employee Gary Noleroth advised, "Anything people don't want someone else to have, don't automatically consider that the trash bins are safe."

Although the bins are emptied each evening, discarded information can still be stolen throughout the day.

There is an additional bin with a secure top (inside the main lobby) which should be used when discarding mail containing Social Security numbers or other sensitive personal data.

-Shane Welsh

Survey ...

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mental health is on Caves Hwy.

So far, response to the survey has been low, but Phillips remains optimistic that the end result will prove beneficial to all who participate.

Survey forms are available at following locations: the Senior Center, Pharmacy Express, Home Valley Bank, Sterling Savings, the county office building, Dr. Kathy Mechling's office in Selma, Dr. Jim Nordal's office in Cave Junction, Kerby Post Office, Selma Community Center, Riverside Physical Therapy, New Life Natural Foods, Grange Hall, River Valley Village mobile home park (rec. room), and the 'I.V. News' office.

Med center

(Continued from page 1)

adult softball season and the Concerts in the Park sponsored by I.V. Chamber of Commerce.

*Approved a liquor license application from Nacho Mama's Restaurant;

*Approved an ordinance to amend municipal code allowing the city to recover 100 percent of the principle amount assigned to a collection agency by adding the collection fee to the balance due.

*Authorized a resolution to permit recreational use of city parks consistent with other areas regarded as outdoor recreational areas under Oregon Revised Statutes, and as such are "use-at-your-own-risk" areas. This effectively removes the city from liability for personal injury except where the city is negligent or has failed to correct something under its purview.

*Voted to pay an invoice from Reed Construction totaling \$56,018.40 for work completed on sidewalks in Downtown Cave Junction.

-Michelle Binker

JoCo unemployment falls slightly during December

Total non-farm payroll employment in Josephine County fell slightly in December, losing 110 jobs during the month. Those losses were mostly confined to the seasonally fluctuating construction, natural resources and mining, and leisure and hospitality sectors. Throughout the past year, payroll employment edged higher in the county, up by 40 jobs. Josephine County's December preliminary unemployment rate estimate was 7.8 percent, slightly higher than the previous month and also up from the same month one year ago.

In December, construction employment fell slightly, down by 40 jobs. Construction employment has grown by 60 jobs during the year.

Another sector of the local economy that has benefited from low interest and mortgage rates is the financial activities sector, including mortgage brokers, banks, insurance, credit unions, and real estate firms. While employ-

ment was unchanged in December, this sector has added 60 new jobs during the past year.

Health care employment rose during the month. Ambulatory health care services added 20 jobs, while nursing and residential care employment gained ten jobs in December. Employment in the health care and social services sectors increased by 80 jobs in the past year.

Leisure and hospitality sector jobs declined by 70 during December. This tourism-reliant group of industries has seen little growth in Josephine County during the past twelve months. Government employment was unchanged in December.

During the past twelve months, total government employment has fallen by 320 jobs in Josephine County. The bulk of the losses have been in local education employment (-320), which includes K-12 and community college jobs, and state government (-40).

	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2002
Josephine County	7.8	7.4	7.4
Jackson County	5.8	5.6	5.6
Oregon ("raw")	7.0	7.0	7.0
Seasonally Adjusted	7.2	7.3	7.3
United States ("raw")	5.4	5.6	5.7
Seasonally Adjusted	5.7	5.9	6.0



A RIVER RUNS THROUGH - Swollen with the recent rainfall, the Illinois River flows mightily at the Illinois River 'Forks' State Park south of Cave Junction. For anyone interested, peace and solitude abound during the winter months when the occasional sunny day brings a welcome respite from the cold and wet.

(Photo by Michelle Binker)

Health services get boost of \$2.75 mil.

U.S. Sens. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) and Gordon Smith (R-Ore.) recently announced \$2.75 million in Federal funding for Oregon health and human services programs.

These funds are included in the Fiscal Year 2004 omnibus funding measure that will now be signed into law by the president.

The bill also requires a National Institutes of Health (NIH) study to consider the affordability of prescription drugs to American consumers when taxpayer funded drug technologies are transferred to the private sector - as in the case of Taxol, a powerful anti-cancer drug originally derived from a tree found in Oregon.

"From keeping rural nurses up-to-date in their profession to securing mental health programs, making prescription drugs more affordable and exploring new fields like nanotechnology, these funds will improve the lives of Oregonians and bring them better health, education and job opportunities," said Wyden.

"Advancements in health services and education come at a critical time for Oregon," said Smith. "With this bill Oregonians will have more help providing a dependable level of assistance and social services."

Some Oregon projects that received funding are:

*Southern Oregon University's AuCoin Institute for Ecological, Economic and Civil Studies will receive \$75,000 to provide educational training to federal wildlife and resource employees and help them work more effectively with policy mak-

ers and the public.

*Asante health System, a not-for-profit health care organization in Medford, will receive \$75,000 to help implement a new technology system at its southern Oregon medical facilities to reduce medical errors and deliver health care more effectively in rural areas.

At Sen. Wyden's request, the legislation also requires the National Insti-

tutes of Health (NIH) to report to Congress on how it can or cannot ensure that taxpayer-funded drugs and inventions are offered to American health consumers at an affordable price.

In the past, NIH failed to make sure that consumers see price benefits for prescription drugs when the agency transfers taxpayer-funded drug technologies to private citizens.

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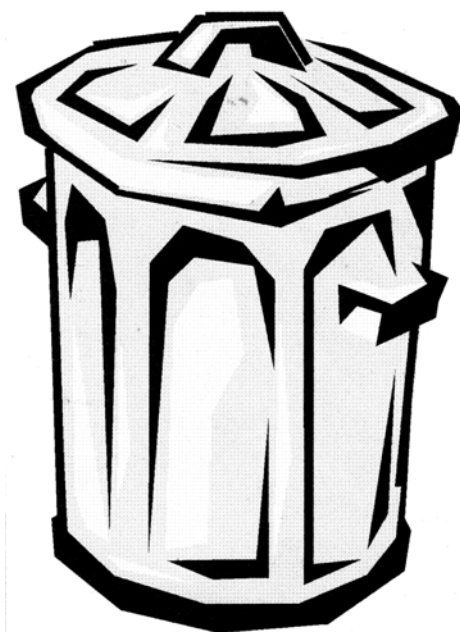
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