



COOL IN POOL - Saturday, June 12 is set for the grand reopening of the Cave Junction Swimming Pool from 1 to 5 p.m. There will be free admission, hot dogs and soft drinks. Photo shows (from left) pool manager Robin Paulson, assistant manager Lora Rice and city employee Steven Bethke. At left, Bethke works on maintenance. There is a possibility that the high-dive board will have to be removed because of structural damage, but Mayor Ed Faircloth said the city might replace it with a slide, and a lesser slide at the shallow end of the pool. (Photos by Shane Welsh)

Kathy Heald leaving CJ Post Office

By CHRISTINA HILL
Correspondent

Most people don't have the luxury of "retiring" at 55, let alone at any age younger than that.

However, Kathy Heald, the hard-working chief window clerk at the Cave Junction Post Office, will opt out in a few months. And the best part is, she's not even 50 yet.

"The Postal Service is trying to downsize, so they offered anyone who was at least 50 years old or has had at least 25 years of service an early out," said Heald.

Heald, who has been married to Dean Heald since 1986, is the mother of four children. Kitti Keigtes and Alicia Fox are Heald's two older daughters. Her two younger children are Michael and Jenna Heald, who are still in school. Heald also has a granddaughter, Aydan. Keigtes and Fox are pregnant and "due any day."



Kathy Heald

"I've always wanted to be a stay-at-home mom, but never had the chance," said Heald.

"So, now this way, I can do all the things that I've always wanted to do but couldn't, like being with my two children that are home. I also get to do gardening, yard work and canning, which is really nice," she said.

"I also do a little Ebay on the side," said Heald. "It's great because I go to yard sales, and that's where I find the stuff to resell on Ebay. It's almost addicting."

Heald began her career with the U.S. Postal Service in 1975. She started as a letter machine operator at the Santa Ana Post Office in California. After traveling all over Oregon in search of the perfect home, Heald finally settled in Kerby and took her new job at the Cave Junction Post Office in 1981.

According to Heald, "It just felt like home here." She now lives in Cave Junction.

"It's a great crew at the Cave Junction Post Office," she said. "Everyone is great to work with. The postmaster is great to work with. He worked with us when we wanted time off and gave me extra time off to be with my kids around the holiday times," said Heald.

Heald's co-workers have also been through thick and thin with her, but always stuck by her side, she said.

"I had breast cancer two years ago, so the crew got together and donated their hours," she gratefully recalled. "Whether it was their vacation hours or their holiday hours, they gave them to me. I made it through with all their help," she said.

"That was a really special time that they pulled together because there was no way I could make it without them," Heald said.

The exact date of her retirement has not yet been set, as details are still being worked out. However, she is anticipating retirement from her 29-year career in just a few months.

Bob Richardson 'canceling out' ...

(Continued from page 1)

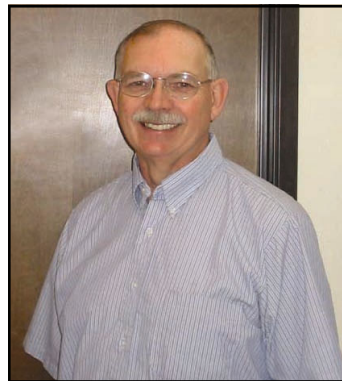
As postmaster, a few of Richardson's responsibilities include the CJ Post Office's finances, the directing of employees and personnel clerk, maintenance upkeep and much more. He is also an area trainer for new postmasters in Southwestern Oregon.

Richardson's road to a successful career began in 1966.

"When I got out of the Air Force, I went to work at a mill in Klamath Falls and soon realized that wasn't what I wanted to do," he said. "So, I took the Post Office Dept. test; that's what it was called back then in 1966. And I was hired soon after. I was hired on Memorial Day 1966 and will be retiring basically on Memorial Day 2004," Richardson said.

He began as a clerk/carrier making \$2.23 an hour. No matter how many hours he worked, he wasn't paid overtime.

"You just worked and got straight time for however many hours you work in a week. It was quite a



Bob Richardson

challenge," he said.

For the first 19 years of his career, Richardson traveled throughout the Pacific Northwest and quickly moved through the ranks.

"In 1978, I went to Ketchikan, Alaska as postmaster," he said. "I was the director of Customer Service for over 55 post offices over 250,000 square miles," Richardson said.

He also spent time in Linwood, Wash. as superintendent of mail, and in Klamath Falls. Since 1985, he's been in Cave Junction.

"It's really been half my life," he said, "but I believe it's time to make a

change. The Post Office is changing fast. There's a lot more automation."

Richardson is married to Mary Lou Richardson and they have three children together. Their daughter is Bobbie Arnold. Robert Jr. Richardson is their oldest son and Brian Richardson is their youngest. They are also the proud grandparents of five grandchildren.

"One of the most special times in my career was on Saturday, May 22," said Richardson. "The postmasters in Southern Oregon gave me a retirement party. That was pretty neat.

"Also, working in Alaska was an outstanding part of my career. The scenery and the people were unbelievable," Richardson said.

On the Memorial Day holiday Monday, May 31, when Richardson officially will retire, his crew at the CJ Post Office will host a retirement party for him at a restaurant.

A replacement as postmaster will be announced.

Suspect in CJ pursuit still sought

It's possible that the driver of a vehicle in a high-speed pursuit in Illinois Valley wanted to avoid arrest under several felony warrants, according to Josephine County Sheriff's Office.

The chase began around 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 20. Speeds reached 90 to 115 mph, after pursuit began in Cave Junction and ended somewhere along Waldo Road when the driver eluded deputies.

The vehicle, a blue Toyota 4-Runner, was found rolled over off a trail off a dirt road. The driver was not located. He was described as a white male person with dark facial hair including a goatee.

Those with information about the driver are asked to phone the sheriff's office at (541) 474-5123.

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