

Bob's Corner

It was Labor Day 1979, when a 35-year-old guy from San Diego floated into Brookings to become news editor at the “Curry Coastal Pilot.” He was unused to working on Labor Day, but welcome to the routine at a private, family run business.

This guy was sitting in the “Pilot” newsroom on his first day of work, looking out a window at a Holywood rainstorm on a gray day. He was feeling uneasy. Was the move from San Diego to then-tiny Brookings a wise action? Would it ever stop raining?

Plus, he missed his wife, who stayed behind to take care of packing and other stuff. She showed up two weeks later, but it was a long two weeks. Fortunately, the then co-owners of the “Pilot,” Dick and Polly Keusink, were friendly and mentoring.

They cordially allowed this guy’s oldest son, Bobby, and me (I mean, the guy) to live in their guest house until he could locate a rental house. Bobby was just entering high school, so he came with his dad, while Michael and Vicki stayed with their mom during some of the hottest weather ever experienced in Escondido, from where the move was made.

When this guy’s wife drove up to the “Pilot” building, and he went for a big hug, she gave him a linebacker shove and said, “Don’t touch me!” He couldn’t blame her, as she had suffered through 110-degree heat at their former home for two weeks; then driven nonstop with the kids, two dogs and two cats in a somewhat less-than-reliable vehicle. She wanted a shower, and she wanted it now. And two quarts of oil for the vehicle.

Unfortunately, it had stopped raining for a short time, so she had to find the rented house.

A year later, the Keusinks sold their weekly newspaper to Western Communications, headquartered in Bend. Thanks to their faith in “the guy,” he was made editor and publisher, a job he held for eight years. Strangely enough, the same situation had occurred in Escondido, where the guy was news editor at the former “Times-Advocate.” He worked there for a year before the owners sold the daily newspaper to the Chicago Tribune Co.

Eventually, the guy, through a series of fortuitous circumstances, wound up knowing Bob and Jan Grant, who owned “Illinois Valley News.” And although the transfer of ownership wasn’t to occur for several years, it was expedited by Bob Grant’s ill health. He died a year after selling the paper to the guy and his wife.

Prolly (as Bob Grant said) you’ve figured out who “the guy” is. Yes, it’s Bob Rodriguez, 25 years later and with a lot less hair. Gee, time flies when you’re having fun. Or as Kermit the Frog says, “Times fun when you’re having flies.”

What more felicity can fall to creature,
than to enjoy delight with liberty.
- Edmund Spenser -
‘The Fate of the Butterfly,’ 1591

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(Classified ads & uncomplicated display ads can be accepted until Noon, Monday with an additional charge.)

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Letters to the Editor

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

Typed, double-spaced letters are acceptable for consideration. Handwritten letters that are double-spaced and highly legible also can be considered for publication.

Cards of thanks are not accepted as letters.)
* * *

Labor Day joy
From Ann Reser
Cave Junction

While sitting and listening to great Gospel music under clear blue skies and watching tail-wagging dogs milling with the listeners and toddlers toddling about, it was easy to forget all the uglies going on in the world -- politics, storms, insane killing of children and adults.

What a delightful respite the Illinois Valley Lions Club provided in putting on this great Labor Day escape. If one is not a Lion, it is hard to imagine all the hours of hard work and organization by members of that group that goes into bringing this festival to the people of the valley.

If you know a Lion, be sure to express your appreciation. This group is such an asset to the community.

I hope that everyone, the city council included, will be proud of our fantastic pride of I.V. Lions.

Kerry favoritism
From Gregory D. Anderson
Cave Junction

Remember when CBS “60 Minutes” was an investigative news program? Unfortunately, it has become apparent it has become an infomercial for the Kerry campaign and the DNC.

The program promoted Joe Wilson’s anti-Bush book a short time ago (which their parent company published), which proved to be full of falsehoods. Now it appears they were so anxious to denigrate Bush, Dan Rather presented anti-Bush documents that appear to be forged.

The major media bias is getting out of control. Rational reporting by the desperate liberal press is becoming a thing of the past. The loony, liberal, Lenin wing of the party -- that includes radical environmentalist and extremist anti-American groups -- has hijacked the respected Democratic Party of JFK and Harry Truman.

John Kerry tried to convince us he was the man for the job because he spent four months in Vietnam 30-plus years ago. Eyewitness reports from some 60 Vietnam veterans, Democrat and Republican, dispute many claims of Kerry’s campaign.

The documents and events that most of his medals and ribbons were based upon seem to have been embellished or exaggerated, at best, by Kerry himself.

Now look at his record of voting against every modern weapon system we have in our arsenal and cutting millions from our intelligence services. It is difficult to determine where he stands on the issues today because his positions change more rapidly than the weather.

He has made it clear that he will consult with Kofi Annan and Jacques Chirac before he makes any important decisions for this country as president.

The ABBs (Anybody

But Bush) have a real dilemma. We haven’t seen such an empty suit since the “Invisible Man.”

Flag thefts
From Dan Warden
Selma

I would like to address the person or persons who ripped our American flag and POW/MIA flag down, and cut the rope that holds them, from the American Legion Post flag pole.

The dad of the culprit may have even been a veteran who fought for the right to do this brave act. Attacking the flag that stands for the freedom that our young men and women are dying for in Iraq today is not acceptable. It is disrespectful.

To do harm to our black POW/MIA flag is taking it too far. This flag is dedicated to the ones still left behind; the ones who have given their all for their country.

Possibly, those responsible don’t even know what the black flag is about. I blame a lot in part on the parents and even the government that won’t let the kids get punishment they deserve.

It really shows how far our young people have come. Unfortunately, the few who do these things get the attention, and those who work so hard don’t.

At the Labor Day parade, the American Legion Auxiliary’s parade float broke down and was pushed off the road to a side road. Before it could be retrieved, the flags were taken off.

Ironically, the auxiliary handed out 950 flags to the public at the parade. The ones from the float were larger. Hopefully

they will be displayed in a patriotic manner in support of our veterans.

We at the American Legion Post try to help this community and support our veterans. So this really bothers us when things like this happen and it costs more money to replace the flags -- money that could be helping someone who really needs it.

Valley pleasantries
From M.J. ‘Slim’ Hooey
Mount Vernon, Wash.

“The Illinois Valley.” The valley I remember so well -- Eight Dollar Mountain -- why not seven or nine? A whole mountain of pure serpentine. Cobra Lilies growing in rows. The river flowing around it down to a swing bridge with a cave rock in the middle.

There are memories I will never forget. Remember old “Fred,” who sold honey and made his own wine? He set all girls’ hearts aflutter; I think he was 89.

So send me a copy of romantic lines that tell me the history of Happy Camp Road, Sucker Creek, and the Queen of Bronze mine. A whole family of pioneers buried under a pine. They decided to stay until the end of time.

A special note
From Dee Paige
Cave Junction

I enjoyed Kathy Scherrer’s letter, “The worst president,” in the Sept. 1 issue of “Illinois Valley News.”

If there had been a contest, she’d have won first prize.

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