

## Bob's Corner

Heck, turning the corner from one decade to the next wasn't too painful. Yeah, the editor entered his 61st year of la dolce vita last week.

I don't *feel* 61, whatever that means. Actually, Jan keeps reminding me to act my age and quit pretending I'm 17. Whatever that means.

How different can I be? I only weigh 35 pounds more than when we married 40+ years ago. And I wear different-style glasses than I used to; you know, the Clark Kent model favored by that reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper. Plus, I have a lot less scalp protection.

Of course, I've got a few more scars. Ask anyone who's undergone open-chest surgery, or other such operations, and we'll compare scars. That's one aspect of "growing older." And I find myself telling the kids what I ate for lunch or dinner. Good grief -- is that a sign of a senior citizen or what?

Jan, who was out-of-town baby-sitting in Washington state with one of our grandchildren, phoned to wish me "Happy Birthday!" That felt great. Good friends Jack & Valerie Brown phoned and sang the song to me. It brought a tear to one eye because my late parents used to do the same.

Jack & Valerie also gave me a belly button brush and some classic John Wayne Westerns on CD. Also received a "burrdy" card from Vicki, Matt and Nat (Natalie) in San Diego County. Plus, 8-year-old granddaughter Kimberly (the reason for Jan being absent) also sang "Happy Birthday" via the phone lines. Her version was unique, as she incorporated several "cha-chas" in the lyrics. It was cool.

At the office, other friends and co-workers wished me well, and provided a balloon bouquet, and some good, healthy lemon cookies.

Thought I had experienced all possible for the day until the phone rang at home Thursday night, Jan. 20, and nearly 2 1/2-year-old Natalie sang the birthday song to me. That was a wonderful happening too. Good, warm feelings that day.

My gift from Jan is a super-scanner that can pick up transmissions from NASA, the FBI and secret agents worldwide, plus the more local frequencies of our emergency responders. Another good gift, along with all the wishes for happiness.

I know that most people think the most-important event of those Jan. 20s every four years is the presidential inauguration, but I know better. To misquote lyrics from a popular song of years ago: It's my birthday and I'll brag if I want to.

Gotta' go. My super-scanner is picking up a transmission from the latest Mars probe. Or it could be the morning tone test for Illinois Valley Fire District.

## Letters to the Editor

### The public forum

(Editor's Note: Views and commentary, including statements made as fact, are strictly those of the letter-writers.)

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Typed, double-spaced letters written solely to this newspaper are considered for publication. Hand-written letters that are double-spaced and legible also can be considered.

Cards of thanks are not accepted as letters.

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#### 'Thanks,' Republicans From B.C. Marston Cave Junction

I want the people in the valley who signed up for HUD 10 to 12 months ago to know that there will be no more funds. I know this because I looked it up online.

I looked up the state-wide distribution of funds: Josephine County got \$0. We can thank the Republican-controlled government by asking anyone we know, who voted Republican, "Why?"

One more thing. There are more cuts coming in HUD dollars. For this too we can thank the Republican party.

We also can thank the Republicans for cuts in V.A. funding, and blocking the bill calling for the automatic funding of the V.A.

We know who these people are. They're usually affluent and don't care who their vote hurts. Shame on the veterans who vote Republican.

#### 'Act locally' From Susanne Fahrnkopf Cave Junction

I support sustainable development in Illinois Valley; not the profits of national timber companies, which don't employ locals.

I support the U.S. Forest Service plan to upgrade the facilities on the Illinois River Wild & Scenic Corridor. This will help protect the area from vandalism and abuse, while encouraging people to respect and safely visit our public lands.

The idea of the TJ Howell Memorial Drive; a scenic loop drive up through the Kalmiopsis to Babyfoot Lake Botanical Area, and Fiddler Mt. are important.

Since the injunction was lifted on logging Fiddler Mt. and other old-growth timber sales, that area may be ecologically and scenically affected, making future possibilities for ecotourism less likely.

We need to realize the amazing resources we have and start planning on this kind of development, and move away from being a "timber-dependent" town.

Pulling tourism from the 199 corridor will happen if we promote these projects, as well as allowing overnight camping at "Forks" State Park, and build other public campgrounds and RV parks.

Lately, it is encouraging to see the economic boom of small businesses in Cave Junction and Kerby. We need to keep encouraging new business and green companies to open here and diversify our workforce.

Many new residents have moved her for the incredible beauty and health of the surrounding Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion. Many will appreciate more recreation choices in our world-class old-growth forests, wild rivers and roadless areas dotted with serpentine fens and endemic wildflowers.

We need to protect what's left of our precious public land, or the ancient forests will disappear from America forever. We are the last stand. To have lost our wilderness heritage will be in unimaginable outcome.

We need to stop the logging of any and all old-growth forest reserves regardless of disturbances which are part of Nature's process.

Private land owners need to manage their timber with natural selection rather than clear-cutting to finance home construction.

We should act locally to make this valley a place to be proud of.

## Ambulances in fire stations

(Continued from page 1)

benefit because it'd be able to utilize the AMR personnel in fire service, as well as the emergency service part of it, so basically the paramedics involved would double as firefighters," Zabriskie explained.

"This would form a more cohesive relationship between I.V. Fire and AMR, and it's one that would save everyone money, mainly the community," Zabriskie added.

Zabriskie, who has worked in the community since 1986, started volunteering for IVFD approximately six months ago.

"I've been working with AMR and the fire district to staff a brush truck as a

quick-response unit equipped with an advanced life-support unit," he said.

"AMR would contribute the medical aspects, including meds; the district would donate the vehicle."

The idea for the quick-response unit is that it can be used as back-up when all available ambulances are out on duty, and it can also serve as a medical unit during fire crises, as it can reach more places than a normal ambulance

Zabriskie is also co-owner with his wife, Wendy, of Z Coffee, a drive-through coffee stand in Cave Junction.

Married since 1984, the Zabriskies have two young children.

## USFS looks at selling acreage

Comments on whether the U.S. Forest Service should sell 9.02 acres of national forest land in Illinois Valley will be accepted until Feb. 23.

The forest service proposes to sell the property in the Page Creek watershed to the adjacent land owner.

The 9.02 acres are completely surrounded by private property and not accessible to the public, said the forest service. The private property is a series of patented mining claims known locally as the Cowboy Mine.

## Alcohol noted in fatal crashes

Of 20 traffic fatalities during 2004 in Josephine County, alcohol was involved in nine, representing 45 percent, said Oregon Dept. of Transportation (ODOT).

It also reported that in

Jackson County, which led the state last year with 28 traffic fatalities, 16 involved alcohol. That represents 57.14 percent.

Curry County had six fatalities with four alcohol-involved or 66.67 percent.

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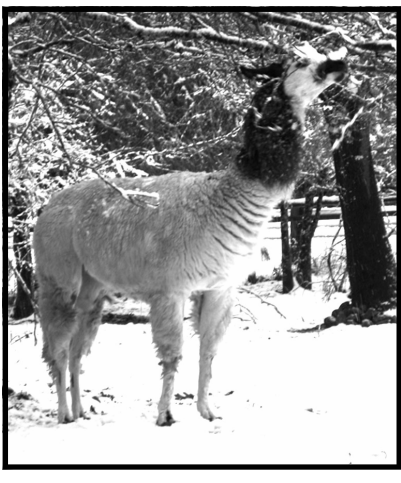
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