

## Bob's Corner

Our middle child, Michael, came for a visit last week with our granddaughter, Kimberly, who's 8, but who wants to be older. Just wait until she's our age; then we'll see about those priorities.

Why, I recall when I was itching to be 15 1/2 so I could get my learner's permit for driving. For driving my parents crazy. Then the day I turned 16 and got my real license, I couldn't wait until I was 18, although I can't remember why. Age 21 was sort of a big deal, as was 30. Now I don't want to think about advancing years. I just want to be like fine wine that gets better with age. I told a friend this, and he suggested that I be locked in a cellar.

Anyway, as I was going to say back at the beginning, "Mikey" and "Kimmie" live in Covington, Wash., not far from Kent and Puyallup, which is not a law firm, but two cities. Speaking of Puyallup, the state of Washington probably has as many unusual, hard-to-pronounce-properly names as Oregon.

For example, the Evergreen State has locales including Ephrata, Hoquiam, Wenatchee and Snohomish. "WA" (for those with postal inclinations) also includes Klickitat, Nahcotta, Okanogan, Wahkiakum and Chewelah. Yow. Good names for a pronunciation test. And don't forget the twin cities, Walla Walla. Just kidding. And our neighbor also has a place that makes me chuckle when I say it: Minnehaha.

Our Beaver State has unusual names, and even some sorta' funny ones. The latter (for my sense of humor) include Boring, Drain, Waldo, Hugo, Goshen, Scappose, Sodaville and Sublimity. When it comes to how-do-you-say-it sites, Oregon has a few. They include Yachats, Blodgett and Chemult. And a couple of fun names to say are Molalla and Tillamook.

Continuing our impromptu geography lesson, we find that Oregon has a population density of approximately 36 people per square mile. Washington's population density is around 88. Interestingly (perhaps), Oregon is comprised of 98,386 square miles, while Washington has 68,192. Could have to do with who owns most of the land in Oregon. Hint: Think federal.

And now, continuing the brief story of that visit we began to outline at the beginning, it was great to have them here. Not only 'cuz we love them and enjoy their company, but because Mike can fix anything. So we had him busy around the house because I fix nothing, and Jan's been busy with "Noose" work.

Kimberly is a treat because she's polite and smart besides. In our living room she made a fort for herself out of several large cardboard boxes and some big tape I had. And then, because she's a member of the LDS Church, she included one small box with snacks, which was her food storage area. Pretty cool. Also, we couldn't talk to her when she was in the fort because she couldn't hear us. We had to write notes and put them in her mailbox.

We all went for a drive to find the Onion Mt. lookout tower, but I failed muddily and miserably. However, we did see some beautiful countryside. And there's still quite a bit of snow in that area.

We reluctantly let Mike and Kimberly leave for Washington after being here only 3 1/2 days. I think he had some things he wanted to fix at home.

**The only reason for being a professional writer is that you can't help it.**

- Leo Rosten -

## Illinois Valley News

An Independent Weekly Newspaper Co-owned and published by Robert R. (Bob) and Jan Rodriguez Bob Rodriguez, Editor El Jefe

Entered as second class matter June 11, 1937 at Post Office as Official Newspaper for Josephine County and Josephine County Three Rivers School District, published at 321 S. Redwood Hwy., Cave Junction, OR 97523

Periodicals postage paid at Cave Junction, OR 97523 Post Office Box 1370 USPS 258-820 Telephone (541) 592-2541, FAX (541) 592-4330 Volume 67, No. 50

Staff: Kacy Clement, Becky Loudon, Michelle Binker, Nina Holm Consulting, Shane Welsh.

Advertising Design Consultant - Wonder Dog Graphics

Member: Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association

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News, Classified & Display Ads, Announcements & Letters

**3 P.M. FRIDAY**

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## Letters to the Editor

(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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### USFS 'not terrorists' From Rochelle Desser O'Brien

The Feb. 9 issue of "Illinois Valley News" contained three letters to the editor chastising the U.S. Forest Service for the Biscuit Fire salvage logging.

One letter read, "The timber industry and agencies are eco-terrorists." This statement is untrue and deserves rebuttal.

The forest service has spent the more than two years since the Biscuit Fire studying the landscape and considering how best to respond. Strict environmental laws must be followed for any activity on a national forest.

The forest service spent two years and hundreds of thousands of dollars on Biscuit, working with the public and natural resource specialists to follow the environmental policies of our nation. Imagine what the result might have been without adherence to these laws.

Forest service decision-making is conducted in an open, transparent manner; any citizen can come in and review the records associated with forest service projects. Agency employees are not infallible, but as a rule they are committed to their mission of caring for the land and serving people.

They work hard to meet the spirit and letter of environmental laws. Calling them "terrorists" undermines the value of these laws.

I did not personally work on the Biscuit Fire salvage analysis, but I have many years experience preparing environmental analysis for projects on national forest land. I feel I contribute to democracy in action as we tackle tough environmental issues and find collaborative solutions.

Some folks are convinced our nation's environ-

mental laws are too strict and difficult to comply with.

Calling the forest service "terrorists" undermines the value of working hard to follow environmental laws and adds fuel to this argument.

### 'Diatribes' From William Reid Cave Junction

Webster's dictionary defines "diatribe" as "a bitter and abusive speech or writing."

That definition best describes a letter to the editor in last week's issue from Catherine Austin. In discussing the 14 characteristics of fascism she tried to link them to the Republican administration. All the attributes of fascism she tries to link to the current Republican administration are feeble attempts at best, and blatant falsehoods at worst.

I shall attempt to show the error in Austin's assumptions by following the outline of her letter, using my parenthetical notes.

\*Powerful, continuing nationalism. (Flags everywhere, on the 60th anniversary of the flag-raising on Mt. Suribachi by our Marines; flags are still an important national symbol.)

\*Disdain for the recognition of human rights. (Nothing new here. Who signed the interment order of Japanese-Americans in 1942? FDR.)

\*Identifying enemies or scapegoats as a unifying cause. (Again I would refer to the interment order signed by a liberal president.)

\*Military supremacy. (She is worried about the Dept. of Defense budget, which is about 18 percent of the total budget. Social Security Administration is 19 percent, while Medicare and Medicaid are at 22 percent.)

\*Rampant sexism. (Strangely, she has no comment on this, perhaps because the current administration has a woman as secretary of state.)

\*Controlled mass media. (Way off on that one; lots of liberal media out there. Note that Dan Rather is looking for a new job due to his poor judgment.)

\*Obsession with national security. (Here she

zeroes in on Homeland Security, which is a product of both the administration and Congress. What should we do after 9/11?)

\*Religion and government intertwined. (She focuses on Bush's inaugural speech. I suggest that she read Washington's first inaugural address or his Farewell Address. Seems that religion and government have been there all along.)

\*Labor power suppressed. (While looking at Wal-Mart actions, look back to Ludlow, Colo. in 1914 when 17 were killed by state militia in labor strife.)

\*Disdain for intellectuals and the arts. (She feels that there will be intolerance for her letter. As a Conservative, I welcome the discourse. It promotes a better country.)

\*Obsession with crime and punishment. (Incarceration rates have skyrocketed. On that she is correct. Between 1850 and 1970 the rate was about 100 per 100,000 population. After 1970 the rate rose to about 600 per 100,000 population. Not the result of fascism in the Bush administration, but from drug use in society.)

\*Rampant cronyism. (She looks at Halliburton. I say that this is a continuing problem, not linked to any one administration. Ever hear of the Teapot Dome

Scandal?)

\*Fraudulent elections. (She does not give an example. I would suggest the suspected fraud in the 1960 election, when Mayor Daley was believed to have delivered Chicago to Kennedy.)

A review of our nation's history will find these problems scattered throughout all administrations. Sometimes the pendulum of politics swings too far to the right or left, but our government of the people will prevail.

### Crash condolences From Patrick Patton Cave Junction

I am extremely sorry about the losses to the Dangerfield/McGhee families in connection with the fatal traffic accident near Grants Pass on February 22.

I know that lives have been adversely affected, and some unfortunately cut short.

I have the utmost respect for the families, and will send them condolences.

### 'Live with it' From B.C. Marston Cave Junction

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(Continued on page 3)



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## Tax News

### CELL PHONES: BUSINESS OR PLEASURE?

Americans love their gadgets. And the more features we can combine into one device the better. Cell phones, once used only for talking, now serve as appointment trackers, digital cameras, and web browsers. But combining the business and personal use of cell phones is as hard as ever if you are seeking a tax write-off.

Self-employed cell phone users often view their mobile phones as just another piece of business equipment. But the IRS sees things differently. Because cell phones, like computers and cars, can provide significant personal entertainment and pleasure, usage charges can be deducted only when the business use is formally documented. This is where many taxpayers get disconnected.

Proper documentation means keeping track of the cost, time, and business purpose of each call. The purpose should include what association the other party had with your business. Daunting as this may sound, your monthly statement might answer some of these questions automatically if itemized. But by itself the monthly statement will not be sufficient to allow a tax deduction for business calls. All four points must be covered.

If your cell phone company charges a flat monthly fee, you must go even one step further. You must figure the percentage of calls made for business reasons and apply it to the monthly fee to calculate the deduction.

What about the cost of the phone itself? If the business usage is more than 50%, the business portion of the phone's cost can be deducted in the year of purchase under Section 179. Otherwise, you are looking at writing off the business portion of the cost of the phone over ten years.

Business expenses can be tricky. Before you go "roaming" for a new phone, take a minute to set up a recordkeeping system that will give you all the tax deductions to which you're entitled.

### Federal, Oregon, California, and other state tax returns.

Karen M. Bodeving, CPA PC

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