



Sam Griffin and George Griffin

Pawn shop provides financial help

Providing friendly, convenient service for the community-at-large is the daily diet at Cave Bear Pawn in Cave Junction’s Western Plaza.

Operated by 22-year Illinois Valley resident George Griffin, with his brother and right-hand man, Sam, Cave Bear Pawn operates under the same rules as banks, said George.

Items are pawned for cash, for varying percentages, and there is a 60-day period during which they can be bought back. If they’re not claimed, they can be put up for sale to recover the loaned money.

The business, regulated by the Oregon Dept. of Business & Finance, provides weekly reports to the Josephine County Sheriff’s Office of all pawned items. The report includes all the information from the driver’s license or other appropriate ID of those pawning items.

When the business buys merchandise outright, said George, he holds it for approximately a week before trying to resell it. The idea, he noted, is to help ensure that it isn’t stolen.

For pawning and selling, people must provide valid identification, and that information, as well as serial and other identifying numbers, is entered into the store computer.

Besides the weekly report to the sheriff’s office, the brothers are working with Cave Junction city Deputy Ray Webb, who will provide them a weekly report of items reported stolen.

Cave Bear Pawn is open Tuesdays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays from

noon to 4 p.m. The telephone number is 592-2987.

The store’s inventory turnover is fairly constant, as people reclaim their items, or merchandise is sold. Besides pawning and selling, George offers two-for-one trades for taped and CD movies, and music CDs.

He also cashes checks, charging 6 percent for the service. In addition, he will help people learn about the worth of their items, especially antiques.

And he buys scrap gold.

Generally, the store has a good selection of jewelry. “We work with a gemologist with 30 years experience to help us determine the value,” said George.

Other items include musical instruments, DVDs, tapes, tools and climbing gear. A variety of ceramic and decorative items also is available.

“We have top-quality items,” said George, “including Red Wing and

Tiffany pottery, military memorabilia, and a good selection of knives.”

Items available for sale also include a unique Civil War bayonet, and a 125-year-old Japanese officer’s military sword. Bicycles, garden tools and flatware are also usually available.

Prior to opening Cave Bear Pawn, George said that he conducted a business study and considered what type of business the valley needed, considering its population and economy.

“We’re like a banking institution,” he said, “taking collateral into consideration so that we can help people who find traditional credit avenues unavailable.

“And our loans are confidential,” he said.

Cave Bear Pawn is the only pawn shop in Illinois Valley and one of only 45 in Oregon, George said.

“We’d like to expand,” he said, “because our business is growing.”

City permits show work

Eight over-the-counter permits -- nearly all of them for building construction -- were issued by the city of Cave Junction during January and February.

During January, the following were issued:

*H.D. Patton Jr. Construction; 1,000 square foot shop shell at 117 N. Junction Ave.

*Richard Crow, Ollis Road, 56-by-15 carport.

*Challenger Fence, Mt. Valley Subdivision lot 16, fence.

*David Hoover, for six single-family dwellings in Cedar Brook Estates near the north end of Laurel Road.

*H.D. Patton, remodeling/616-square-foot addition at 317 Millie St. for Ken & Sherri Armstead.

During February, the following were issued:

*Speedy Mart, sign clearance.

*Loren Conner, 121 S. Sawyer St., zoning clearance for a 20-by24-foot garage.

*Pete R. Schmadeke, a new manufactured home on Ollis Road.

*Admiral Construction, for two single-family residences at Cedar Brook.

*Bob & Sandra Johnson, a new manufactured home on Ollis Road.

*Jerome Claussen, new fence, 506 S. Junction Ave.


*Bruce Jackson, new fence, 180 Raymond St.

*E.C. Box, 24-by-50 mobile home at 611 N. Old Stage Road.

*Illinois Valley Fire District, new Station One at 679 Caves Hwy.

*Mike Murphy, remodel/new porch at 327 S. Redwood Hwy.

*Harvey Rhodes, existing and new sign at 144 N. Redwood Hwy.



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