

## Bob's Corner

Saw a large black-and-white photo in a restaurant last week. The photo showed maybe five guys from the rear, all wearing Levi's and white T-shirts, grouped around the engine compartment of what looked like a '49 Mercury with its hood popped.

Brought a few memories of my coveting such a car when I was a stumbling, gangling seventh-grader at St. Rita's ("Robert is not performing to the best of his capabilities") Catholic School in San Diego. Really liked the looks of those '49s, maybe at least partially because it was the car driven by James Dean in "Rebel Without a Cause." All seventh- and eighth-graders want to be cool, you know. But it's not easy because of adolescent stupidity coupled with raging hormones and a tremendous craving for Twinkies.

Anyway, seeing the photo reminded me of how many times, as a younger dude, that I stood around peering at the engine of one vehicle or another while pretending I knew a camshaft from a Popsicle. For the record: I have about as much mechanical and automotive knowledge as Deputy Barney Fife has about police procedures.

Which means that I'm the guy who pushed a spark plug wire onto a spark plug. While the engine was running. All my fillings popped out, and I think it contributed to my baldness.

Also, I once told a guy at a custom car-clogged drive-in restaurant in El Cajon that his car sounded as though it needed a tune-up. Before he could respond (probably with a punch to my nose), my buddy, Wayne, pulled me away; shoved me into his '52 metallic blue Mercury, and took me away from the scene of what could have been extreme public humiliation. Turned out the guy had a racing cam in his power plant. It needed a tune-up like a chicken has lips. Something like that.

But that never stopped me in my late-teen years from making all the right noises and comments when standing around an open engine compartment in my Levi's and white T-shirt. Although I did get some funny looks when I couldn't find the dip stick, way before the sheriff in the "Dukes of Hazzard" called people "Dip Sticks." But when I couldn't tell the difference between the air filter and the oil cap my secret was out.

However, I was the one who had the \$60 per week (net) job pushing vending machine snacks at the San Diego "world-famous" Zoo. This meant that I had money for gasoline, and Jack-in-the-Box burgers and fries. So although I was an automotive ignoramus, I was tolerated because of my green-tinged wallet.

My first car was a disaster, but fast. It was a '52 Ford with a '54 Olds V-8 and (unfortunately) a '54 Olds automatic transmission. There was so much torque that three Ford axles literally broke in half, thus depleting my \$60 per week (net) salary. In addition, the conversion apparently was done by several intoxicated people having a race with welding torches. Besides the broken axles and thick blow-back, which made breathing fun, the car seemed to be a jinx. It also ate batteries, besides axles.

And the guy who sold it to me died a few weeks later after his hot-rod '57 Chevy went off a steep embankment behind what was then the Chula Vista DMV office. Plus, after I sold it, it broke down, and the buyer was killed while pushing it down a road in Lakeside.

As for me, I no longer wear Levi's and white T-shirts, but I'd still like to have one of those '49 Mercs.

**A word to the wise ain't necessary - it's the stupid ones that need the advice.**

- Bill Cosby -

### 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 68, No. 1

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

Advertising Design Consultant - Wonder Dog Graphics

Member: Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association

#### DEADLINES:

News, Classified & Display Ads, Announcements & Letters

3 P.M. FRIDAY

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

**POLICY ON LETTERS:** 'Illinois Valley News' welcomes letters to the editor provided they are of general interest, in good taste, legible and not libelous. All letters must be signed, using complete name, and contain the writer's address and telephone number. The latter need not be published, but will be used to verify authenticity. The 'News' reserves the right to edit letters. One letter per person per month. Letters are used at the discretion of the publisher. Unpublished letters are neither acknowledged nor returned. A prepaid charge may be levied if a letter is inordinately long in the editor's opinion.

**POLICY ON "HERE, THERE & EVERYWHERE," DISPLAY & CLASSIFIED ADS & NOTICES:** All submissions must be hand delivered, faxed or e-mailed to us for publication. Submissions must be resubmitted each week if the item is to run for more than one week.

#### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One year in Josephine County - \$20.80  
One year in Jackson and Douglas Counties - \$24.40  
One year in all other Oregon counties and out-of-state - \$28

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to P.O. Box 1370, Cave Junction, OR. 97523

## Letters to the Editor

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

\*\*\*

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.

\*\*\*

### 'Trusted wrong person' From Sharon Silva Kerby

Sometimes you can do your best to do things right and have them turn out all wrong.

A few weeks ago it dawned on my paralyzed veteran husband and myself that we were living in a tinder box. Our beautiful property was overgrown and totally dangerous if wildfire were to come our way.

We had the Illinois Valley Fire District fire prevention coordinator over, and she brought a man who had done fuel reduction work for the district. We took long walks around our property.

I was given a quote of \$4,800 for 3 acres of defensible space and 2 acres of fuel reduction. A lot of money, but money well spent with fire season almost upon us. So we decided that we would go into debt to make our home safe.

I want everyone to know that our fire prevention coordinator did a wonderful job on what she prescribed be done around our home. Her mistake was the same one we made: We trusted the wrong person to do the work.

This man told us all he would do and how good our property would look. I have some old slash piles. He told me he could bring in a backhoe, which would cost extra, but that our huge, ugly slash piles would be gone.

The \$4,800 price, plus the cost of paying a backhoe operator, was high, but he said he would have to pay his team, buy gas, and it was a lot of work, which would take 10 days.

Had he done what he promised, we would be thrilled.

Four days into the project, he informed me that he was almost done. I was horrified. Trees were still touching the roof of my house. What he, the fire prevention coordinator and myself had discussed clearly was not done.

I phoned the coordinator, and she came and instructed him as to what had to be done to finish the job.

Five days into the project our chainsaw-wielding friend told my husband that he could not get a backhoe operator to separate our slash piles so they could be burned.

Too bad, we would have to eat it on the slash piles. Boy, were we mad.

I phoned the coordinator and told her that if the man had been honest with me in the first place, that he couldn't get a backhoe operator, we would not have hired him, as we wanted those slash piles gone.

She came out again, and in spite of us not having the option to pay extra to have our slash piles burned, was not totally happy with the work done. Again, more instructions to the team leader.

She also explained to me that he had two more days of work. She again gave him explicit instruction on what needed to be done for fire safety.

The team leader and his crew left that afternoon, be-

fore the fire prevention coordinator. The next morning the men were back, and worked about four hours. I was shocked when he demanded money, saying he was finished with the job.

I knew that he could not have done in four hours what the fire prevention coordinator had instructed. My husband was angry, for starters, about the slash piles, and the guy did not clear 10 feet around my propane tank, something he had been instructed to do the day before.

He left about a half-acre of fuels reduction space untouched, not to mention that my property is now unsafe for humans or animals due to the sharp punji sticks he left everywhere when cutting down small trees.

Another firefighter has told me that in case of fire, hoses will get caught on these sharp little stumps, and that the proper way to cut down these small trees is to cut them very close and evenly to the ground.

Well, our fire prevention coordinator was beside herself when I left a phone message that the place looked like Hell; that he hadn't finished what she had instructed him to do; and I could not believe that I was stupid enough to pay the guy. I did so because my paralyzed husband, who would have loved to be able to do the work himself, was so furious I thought he was going to shoot the guy.

Because of that, I thought it best to pay the guy and get him off my land.

Our fire prevention coordinator was stunned, because this same man had told her earlier in the day that we were happy with the job he had done.

Later that day, when we were feeling stupid and totally taken, here comes the coordinator up our driveway. We figured that the guy made more than \$3,000 profit for seven days of work after paying his crew. Too bad, since they did 75 percent of the work.

The coordinator assured me that she would never refer this guy again. All was not lost, as he managed to make the property defensible, even if my slash piles are still here; the job is sloppy; and I overpaid for what I got.

My husband and I will recover from this financial loss, and someday will have the money to pay and have the work done correctly. We know there are a lot of folks in this valley who live on

fixed incomes, and have incredibly expensive medical bills, prescription drug costs, etc. For them, the kind of experience we had could be catastrophic.

People should phone the fire district and talk with the fire prevention coordinator before having this type of work done. She knows of hard-working folks who are tried and true at doing this kind of work.

It was just my misfortune that these folks were busy when I called to have my property made safer. She had no reason, up to now, to not trust the guy who suckered us. I believe she thought he would treat us right, especially for the money he was charging us.

(Continued on page 3)

OR License #2331

## MASSAGE THERAPY

**Pain - Stress - Injuries**  
**Deep massage - CranioSacral Therapy**  
**Monday - Friday by appointment**  
**Senior Discounts - Gift Discounts**

18-years experience

**Rachel Goodman, LMT 202 W. Lister - 592-6947**

## OUT HORSIN' AROUND



### NEW AND USED TACK & GIFTS

**Skip & Liz Leahy**  
**315 S. Redwood Hwy., Cave Junction 592-2212**

**Open Mondays through Fridays 2 to 7 p.m.**  
**Saturdays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

We're happy we made

# the Switch!

"My friends and I made the switch to Frontier

High-Speed Internet. Why? Because we wanted **SPEED** fast enough to do everything we want,

**GREAT SERVICE**, and the same **RELIABILITY** we've been getting from our phone service for years. And switching from cable Internet was easy.

**Come on, Make the Switch!"**

— Mike Belmont

- Always on, always fast
- Talk and Surf at the same time - all on one phone line
- Free personal 24 x 7 tech support
- Free anti-spam technology
- Access e-mail when you travel
- Up to 8 e-mail addresses



Frontier High-Speed Internet Customers

ONLY

# \$29<sup>95</sup>

A MONTH With Frontier Choices™

FOR 12 MONTHS

**WIRELESS router package**

## \$9<sup>95</sup>

ONLY Save \$133

Available while supplies last. Plus shipping & handling where applicable.

**866.900.9932**

**frontier**  
HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

© 2005 Citizens Communications Company. Offer limited to residential customers when ordering Frontier Choices DSL Max Speed Internet. Expires 4/15/05 and cannot be combined with any other offer. For offer, 12-month term commitment is required. If service is not maintained 12 months, your account will be charged the full value of the offer plus applicable taxes and surcharges. You must choose FrontierNet as your ISP to qualify for this FrontierNet promotional pricing. Service subject to availability, technical line qualification, and Frontier's Acceptable Use Policy. Installation options vary and charges may apply. Applicable taxes and surcharges will be billed. Some restrictions and other charges may apply. Wireless router package limited to one router per customer.