

Bob's Corner

Because of last issue's reference to my having the honorific title, Mexican Trashman, from some times in Poway, Calif., before it became an incorporated city in San Diego County, this is your opportunity to learn about those thrilling days of yesterday. Or stop reading here, and go to "Police Blotter" or some other page. The choice is yours.

I think it's still "true" that from Rancho Bernardo and Penasquitos north to the Riverside County line, the area is known as North County. I always thought that the middle locales should be known as Central County. The North Coast reference makes sense, as it encompasses communities that include Del Mar, Encinitas, Cardiff (or Cardiff-by-the-Sea for purists), Carlsbad and Oceanside. And Camp Pendleton.

Before talking trash, I recall that my first fatal accident (it wasn't me) was in Poway. I was a fuzzy-cheeked cub reporter, and some poor guy had gone off Poway Road between Espola Road and Hwy. 67, apparently because of dense fog. Also, the fact that he was intoxicated didn't help. He had been ejected from the vehicle as it rolled down a long, steep embankment. It was sad to me, and my first exposure to the black humor used by emergency personnel. It didn't take long before I caught on.

But about that trash. We lived in an extremely rural part of Poway on Twin Peaks Extension, which was then a dirt road with only two abandoned farm houses and five homes. It seemed like a good idea to haul our own rubbish to save money. Plus, two of our neighbors, with whom we also were friends, were willing to help pay the freight if I removed their trash, an offer I couldn't refuse, so to speak.


Most Saturday mornings would find my late friend, Tom, and I loading my '66 GMC window van with trash cans. For a while we were able to use a landfill at the top of Espola off Poway Road, but once it was filled, we had to drive to Ramona. (The "had" is subjective.) It was OK by us, as we enjoyed each other's company, and seemed to always have cold beverages for the trip up and back. I don't want to say what beverages, but highway patrol and sheriff's deputy vehicles made us nervous.

We had a jolly time at the dump, sometimes finding "treasures," as long as we didn't take the "No Scavenging" signs seriously. And if a county employee wasn't watching. Some of the stuff we recycled turned out to be trash, as far as our wives were concerned, but we felt that we had made wise choices. Probably the best item I ever got was an ornate, older bird cage someone had callously tossed. We also got a really neat 55-gallon drum. All we had to do was remove the hog guts.

It was a lovely drive way before all the extensive development that has occurred in that area during the past 36 or so years. In fact, the first time I went to Poway as an adult (see "fatal accident" above), the length of Poway Road from old U.S. 395 up to Hwy. 67 was nearly bare. Now it's wall-to-wall businesses and homes. Homes on hills, homes in valleys, homes on flats, homes on homes. Expensive homes. The median price for homes in San Diego County reached \$500,000 this month. Wow. Our first "boughten" home, which was in Poway, was \$28,500. Long time ago.

Now it's time for El Jefe to stop rambling and reminiscing. But sometimes I just can't avoid talking trash.

CULPEPPER CATTLE CO.



Ride The Best in the West

**Guided Trail Rides at Lake Selmac,
Pony Rides, Lessons, Girl Scout Badges,
Sunset Rides and More**

1100 McMullen Creek Rd. (541) 597-2143
Selma OR 97539 (541) 592-2143

Phone for reservations and directions.

The man who has no imagination has no wings.
- Muhammad Ali -

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. 14
Staff: Kacy Clement, Michelle Binker, Becky Loudon, Bryan Harley, Nina Holm Consulting.
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 letter need not be published, but will be used to verify authenticity. The News reserves the right to edit letters. Generally, one letter per person per month at publishers' discretion. Letters are used at the discretion of the publishers. Unpublished letters are neither acknowledged nor returned. A prepaid charge may be levied if a letter is inordinately long in the publishers' 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 weekly if the item is to run 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 - \$36

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.

'A simple request' From George F. Long Grants Pass

(Editor's Note: The following letter to the Josephine County Board of Commissioners was submitted for this column.)

I would like to make a simple request. While my request is simple I believe you will experience great resistance to it from within the county government, but it is something the people should have access to without having to request information.

Indeed, this information is routinely available from governments nationwide; and where governments have refused to release it, such as Washington State, courts have ordered it released.

In the past, citizens who voiced their concerns about the county's finances were routinely labeled as misinformed or told their figures made no sense or were just dismissed out of hand. The county's response many times was to say that the "Public" needed to be educated.

This request will provide more data about this county's employees than any other thing you can do; and then we citizens of Josephine County, who employ the county government, will have a more transparent view of people we employ.

On April 27, the Josephine County Human Resources Dept. released an employee roster. This document contains the departments, job titles, names, the status, salaries and the number of employees in each department on that date.

The information is the most accurate snapshot of the government we employ. And the citizens of this county should have information at their fingertips.

Therefore I request that this information be placed on the county's Web site and be updated twice a year. Additionally I request that the information be sent to the Daily "Courier," "Illinois Valley News" and "Sneak Preview" with the request that it be published as a public service.

I believe I have heard just about every excuse from county employees as to why this should not be done. Reasons range from fear of identify theft, which is absurd, to getting their email spammed, to not wanting the public to know what they make or who they are. And that last reason is precisely why it needs to be published.

This document shows some very interesting things, like Mental Health had 157 employees, but the sheriff's

office only had 116. It shows that all the library employees except the managers and the employee at the Law Library are part time, the only county department so structured.

It will show we have a Communications Dept. with only three employees: a manager and two line staff. It will also show that the manager is paid \$22,630.44 or about 54 percent more than the most senior line staff employees in that department.

And there are many more things to learn by studying this information. Indeed I chose the previous examples just because the information stood out so much.

During the last election the citizens were made aware of many problems within the county, and elected Dwight Ellis and Jim Raffenburg with the mandate to change the way this county functions. This information, if made readily available, will allow the public greater knowledge of just who we employ and what the costs are.

There are those who will say that merely publishing the "wage tables" will serve the same purpose. It will not, and it will be viewed as an attempt to hide information.

We have a right to the information. If you wish to have transparency in county government you will do the right thing and put this information on the Web site.

'Open your eyes' From David Korrell Cave Junction

As a young boy I remember going to the store with my grandfather.

I reminded him that he left the keys in the car. He calmly replied, "This is Cave Junction," left the keys and walked into the store.

Try that now, and not only will your car be gone when you return, but if your house keys were on the key ring your house will get robbed too.

Recently our "Law Enforcement" had what I would consider a lapse in judgment that cost the taxpayers almost \$50,000. This money was spent in overtime and increased patrols to control a group of motorcycle riders (also known as tourists), who were described by every business they visited as "model citizens."

For our \$50,000 they did manage to break up one fight and hand out 40 citations to the group. I would like to believe some residual effect on our real problem occurred with the increased police presence.

What is the real problem? Methamphetamine -- plain and simple. If only a fraction of that money were spent to control this problem, we might see some reduction in the out-of-control crime in our city.

Since December 2004 I have fought this problem at my business, spending

around \$1,000 on an alarm system with six cameras, and another \$500 repairing it after it was repeatedly vandalized. Then I spent two weeks working nights, as this was when it was happening.

The pictures of the criminals are in the hands of our "Law Enforcement." However, no action has been taken, and no arrests have been made. Further I was told that I could not take any action against them unless I caught them in the act. Pictures are worthless.

Even the homeless are victimized by those responsible; they have little, but what they do have is fair game for the meth users.

My next attempt at protecting myself and the tools of my trade has created quite a stir. I lock up the few belongings of three of our homeless in exchange for their watching my shop at night. It is not a perfect solution, but it works.

Most of the other businesses in the area appreciate the drop in crime and nighttime traffic in the area. However, one business owner did express his dislike for the situation, by calling the police repeatedly, the fire district (a barbecue grill was on fire, cooking food), and the city demanding that they be forcibly removed.

The business owner claimed that it was affecting his business that is not yet open. This same business owner, when asked if he had an extra garbage bag to clean up the neighborhood replied, "I don't give a damn about this neighborhood."

Does he expect the neighborhood to support his place when and if it finally does open? Maybe he should care.

When I got word from U-Haul reps that a city official had taken pictures of our night watchmen and sent them to U-Haul with a nasty letter, it became apparent I had stepped on one too many toes.

I understand how cutting off the supply of free gasoline to move meth around has hurt their economy. And I do feel bad that other innocent folks are being victimized. But as least I'm not. I'm just defending what is mine.

I have returned my business license to the city, and have no plans to reopen in Cave Junction. That makes two businesses in one location that have been run out in favor of the meth trade.

The third will soon follow, as with no protection, Joan and Robbie Robinson do not stand a chance. At \$2.49 a gallon, and with

each truck holding around 30 gallons, it costs them more to fill the tank than they get from the rental.

You do the math: It won't take long.

'Thieves and vandals' From (Name withheld by request because the writer 'fears for his life')

Unfortunately, thieves and vandals are overwhelming us. Robbie (Robbie's Auto Care Center) has suffered greatly recently, as thieves have taken nearly all his tools. I can certainly understand and sympathize with his frustration.

Things have certainly changed at his U-Haul store in recent days. It is my understanding that he has hired a night watchman, according to the sheriff's office.

It is inconceivable that this could be true, as the cost of such would be enormous and hardly worth the value of the gas theft he had been experiencing. Perhaps the state would be interested in whether the "watchman" is getting minimum wage and Workers Comp. Talk about substandard housing.

It also is my understanding that he has been notified he is in violation of city laws, and basically has thumbed his nose. Maybe all the CJ businesses should pick and choose the laws they wish to abide by?

What is this all about really? The fact of the matter is that a vagrant community has blossomed at the rear of the U-Haul lot. There is trash, stray dogs, drinking, fights and drunken behavior. What does hiring a "night watchman" have to do with five to 10 homeless people hanging around 24/7? It makes me wonder how the transient "watchman" can tell the good vagrants from the bad.

Most everyone knows the saying about if it looks like a duck, acts like a duck, sounds like a duck, then ... What is the deal with all the traffic back there?

Car after car stops briefly; then leaves. What is the attraction to so many people about a guy living in a U-Haul? I cannot prove that there is drug dealing. But a man in a recent traffic accident was one of the visitors to the transient camp.

Robbie used to help children cross Hwy. 199. Thank goodness summer is here, and children no longer have to walk past.

I want to note that this community of vagrants is causing far more problems than I can relate here. In my opinion, and I am not alone, this is a bad situation that should be cleaned up.



**Members of
Western Star
Order of Eastern Star**

Will be selling lunches in the pavilion at Jubilee Park, Cave Junction on Friday, June 24, 10:30 to 3 and Saturday, June 25, 11:30 to 3:30.

This is in conjunction with the C.J. Lions Club Classic Car Show on these two dates.

Thank you for your support.



Flowers on the Flat

The new greenhouse on Sauer's Flat

NOW OPEN

Saturdays & Sundays, 10 to 5

Perennials & Annuals

Do-it-yourself Hanging Basket Kits

We have lots of new plants just in!

Come check us out.