

'I.V.' community historical, diverse, beautiful -- and growing

Approximately 18,000 people have made their homes in the scenic and historic Illinois Valley, so named because of the early day Althouse Brothers, who found that it resembled their native state of Illinois.

Originally a gold-mining and lumber area, Illinois Valley (or "I.V." as many call it) now has only one lumber company, Rough & Ready Lumber Co., a family owned business, whereas records indicate that in years past there were nearly 40 of varying sizes.

There are still gold miners, but not on a large commercial scale. The Waldo Mining District is an organization of miners that works to protect their rights and deal with environmental regulations.

The town of Waldo existed near the valley community of Takilma, but little remains of the Waldo General Store or any other

structures that were built.

However, the area off Waldo Road includes two cemeteries from those early days. One, the Waldo Cemetery, is a U.S. Dept. of the Interior site. The other, known as the Catholic Cemetery, has been cared for by St. Patrick of the Forest Catholic Church, of Cave Junction, since inception.

The name Takilma is from an Indian tribe, the Takelmas, recognized as the first residents.

Illinois Valley today, especially the city of Cave Junction (incorporated in 1948 and known informally as "CJ"), is poised to spring into a new era. More than 400 new homes are under construction or planned, with expansion of Illinois Valley Golf Course also on the drawing board.

In addition to an office complex nearing the construction phase, a 38-acre residential-

commercial development has been approved by the city, and the initial work is to begin soon at the north end of CJ.

Cave Junction is the second-largest city in Josephine County.

Besides many new individual residences, plans include a senior citizen assisted-living development. And Siskiyou Community Medical Center, working with Asante Health System, is planning a new clinic at the north end of CJ.

The Kerby Water District and the city of CJ have signed agreements for the city to provide water to residents who are members of the district. Indications are that unincorporated Kerby also will begin growing.

There are tentative, long-range plans for an attraction, similar to Old Sacramento, on a site, former location of Cabax Mill, across from the Kerbyville Museum. The

museum features a cornucopia of history, not only from Illinois Valley, but the country as well. A visit to the museum is worth the time for historical insights.

Kerby, the first recorded plat in the area, served as the county seat for a time, until railroad construction stopped in the city of Grants Pass. Kerby is said to have been known initially as Napoleon because "Josephine" needed to have one with her always.

Several historical buildings still stand in Kerby.

Some 22 miles east of Downtown CJ is a major attraction: Oregon Caves National Monument. Discovered in 1874, the site was declared a national monument by President Taft in 1909.

With its diverse population and scenery, Illinois Valley has something for everyone. Check cavejunctionoregon.com for more.

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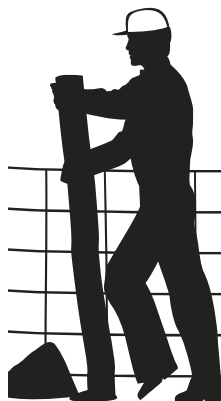
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