

# Bob's Corner

It seems that the "best" columns are those written without regard for making a point, or consciously sweating to ensure that they are "really good." Writing with intent doesn't seem to work real well, most of the time.

So I'm sitting here just typing, not really thinking much (which is not unusual), wondering what words or phrases will emerge from my clunky, magical typing fingers somehow driven by a certain amount of brain power. (No jokes please.)

I'm looking at my list of possible topics, worrying about selecting one that will make a good column.

Here's one: "Mission vision." It refers to a time when I was a cub reporter in San Diego around 1965 or so, sent to get a story about some sort of observance at Mission San Diego de Alcalá. It is the first of the 21 California missions, and known as the Mother of the Missions. It was founded on July 16, 1769 by a Franciscan friar, Junipero Serra. It was designated as a Minor Basilica in 1976 by Pope Paul VI, and today is an active Catholic parish in the Diocese of San Diego.

There I was in my reporter slacks, sport coat and tie, and carrying an official notebook, all the while searching for a new angle for my story. After all, a place that old has had more than a few articles written about it. I wandered around the place, accompanied by a Catholic priest, who was some sort of wheel there. He was describing the history and how so many people had lived, worked and harvested in connection with the site during its early days.

I found this quite confusing. Likely because Mission Valley already was about fully developed, with hotels, car dealers, restaurants and the like, not to mention a major highway. So while standing on the bell tower and looking across the valley, it didn't jell with me.

My guide was telling me that the land area had encompassed 50,000 acres, and that there were harvests of corn, wheat, barley, kidney beans and chick peas. There also were vineyards and vegetable gardens. The mission owned 20,000 sheep, 10,000 cattle, and 1,250 horses. These are amazing statistics considering that the area was arid chaparral with no livestock when the Spanish arrived.

I just didn't get it though. I looked out at the bustle of humanity, people and cars going this way and that, neon signs everywhere, airplanes flying by, and could not reconcile all that with the starkness and near-wilderness of the early days as described.

But as I stood on the bell tower staring across the valley, I suddenly got an image -- I hesitate to call it a vision -- of a great agrarian complex. I saw an irrigation system, horse-drawn wagons, people working in the fields; others dealing with animals. The trappings of modern society disappeared, and I saw what it was like long ago.

The picture lasted but a second, maybe less. But it was all I needed to finally comprehend what it had been like.

The image is still with me.

So there is one idea for a column I can cross off my list. Who knows what will come up next week?

P.S. After my experience with The View, the piece I wrote turned out right well. Probably better than this column, but that's another story.

# 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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## Socialized health care; greed in government From Crystal Griffin Cave Junction

I've been thinking how all my life I have been taught at school and by people how socialism is something to be feared and avoided at all costs.

It was even associated with communism. Now that Hurricane "Katrina" has wreaked its havoc, I've heard that Cuba wanted to send 1,500 doctors to help. That's Castro, who also volunteered to pay their way and salary. Isn't it time we made up with Cuba?

Then there was Mexico driving its army vehicles in to help with the rescue. My goodness, even the NATO secretary general pledged to send ships and aircraft to aid in the rescue of those flooded and injured from "Katrina." I believe that China also stepped up to the plate to help.

Back to socialism; some countries care more about their people than, let's say, property. I'm glad that I no longer must whisper the word "socialism" for fear of being ostracized by my own country.

We have been taught the wrong lessons. Socialized health care should be a priority in our country. This means that we, the people, pay taxes and get a health-care benefit.

It also has been shown to me that the Republicans

are good at raising money for their campaigns, but they do not know how to govern. Right now the Republican Legislature has a bill pending that would make deep cuts in Medicaid, health care for the poor, help for grandparents caring for relatives in foster care, food stamps for the poor, and going after deadbeat dads who owe child support.

All in order to give more than \$70 billion in tax cuts to the top 1 percent of income earners for the next five years. People need to stand up for themselves. Greedy and invasive people need to be voted out of government. The emperor has no clothes.

## Volunteer termination, format questioned From John & Margie Morrill Cave Junction

In reference to De Spellman's letter to the editor in last week's edition of "Illinois Valley News," we would like to offer our support to her, and voice our disappointment with the current leadership of the I.V. Fire District.

My wife and I live just south of Cave Junction and have called 911 on two occasions. Both times De and another volunteer arrived within minutes. Both were very professional, helpful and thorough in performing their tasks.

We have both had occasion to witness De interact with elderly and disabled persons, and were impressed with her compassion. Her people skills were exemplary.

Before we retired, my wife and I worked more than 37 years with the Bay Area Rapid Transit District and the Alameda/Contra Costa Transit District, the last 11 of which I worked in

a supervisory capacity.

Never have we heard of someone being terminated without a chance to review and answer to charges or face their accusers without having some type of appeal process.

Due to the rural nature of our community, we believe that volunteers play a critical and important role in

the fire district's ability to respond, offering a wider availability of personnel.

We sincerely hope that it doesn't take tragic consequences for the current leadership to realize the value of the dedicated volunteers who live and work in Illinois Valley, and what the reality would be without them.

? **Is someone being allowed to live at the I.V. Grange Hall?** ?

signed,

? **Robert Hodges** ?

*Tribute to a Fallen Volunteer*

*There are many of us whose lives pivot around themselves. However, few find space and time to share with others!!*

*Your willingness to contribute part of your life to helping others, especially promoting in school students the idea of saving and managing money, is greatly appreciated and no doubt will help young people in their lives.*

*Thank you Les Saffer for your tireless efforts.*

*We are going to miss you!*

*Our prayers are offered for your new life beyond this journey.*

*With Respect,*  
*Junior Savings Program and Education Trust Board of Directors*

# Club News

## Illinois Valley Garden Club

As it's time for holiday decorations, "Building Christmas Wreaths" will be the topic during the club's open meeting Friday, Nov. 18 at 1 p.m. at Immanuel United Methodist Church across from Shop Smart in Cave Junction.

Coffee time will begin at 12:30 p.m. The horticulture table will feature show-and-tell "Ornaments for the Birds." Guest speakers will be Gena Goddard, a member of the Siskiyou Judge's Council, and club member Donell Kemmer.

The club meets on third Fridays.

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The Swedes and Norwegians would put out a Christmas tree for birds with ornaments of suet, apples, straw and seed. It would be nice to remember the custom, and put out a bird tree when we put up our own.

Also, birds need water even in winter.

## American Legion Unit 70

American Legion Auxiliary Glenn Morrison Unit 70 joins the National Education Association's (NEA) in the 84th annual American Education Week celebration from Sunday through Saturday, Nov. 13-19.

A goal is to raise awareness about the critical need to provide every child with a quality public education.

The theme, "A Strong America Starts with Great

Public Schools," represents NEA's vision of "calling on all Americans to do their part in making public schools great for every child, so that they can grow and achieve in the 21st century."

"Our schools of the Illinois Valley are so special," said Ellie Buell, Education and Scholarship chairman. Representing Unit 70, she went to valley schools with certificates of appreciation, poppy corsages and baskets of goodies for teachers and education-support professionals.

Two teacher's aides, Noriene Beeman and Caroline Held from The Bridges class at Illinois Valley High School, were honored by the unit individually for outstanding work during the years.

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