

Bob's Corner

It should not be difficult to come up with a column topic this time, what with Thanksgiving staring us in the face and gobbling our attention. Therefore, I will share some Thanksgiving memories, which might be as popular as dry turkey with runny mashed potatoes and weak gravy, but here goes.

As a small child, I always looked forward to "turkey day," not only because of the time away from school, but because of the food, especially pumpkin pie. However, one aspect of the celebration I did not enjoy was the Dreaded Children's Card Table. Often banished to that rickety, out-of-the-way dining site -- away from the adult population -- I felt ostracized. Besides, some of my cousins had less-than-polite table manners.

Beyond that, it always seemed that we got the odd bits and chunks of turkey, not the nice, juicy slabs. OK, so I'm a snob who should have been happy I got anything at all. Anyway, the pumpkin pie with whipped crème was always good.

We had a turkey once, back in Poway, Calif. I forget how we came by it, but the bird did live up to the critical comment, "You turkey!" Actually, it was a mean critter that would pursue anyone around the yard while rattling its tail and looking stupidly menacing.

The feathered fool met an untimely end one summer. Those familiar with San Diego County will know that Poway summers had temperatures hot enough to cook a turkey on the driveway. Well, that's not exactly what happened. Unknown to us, the poor thing managed to enter our doghouse, then couldn't get out. All it had to do was turn around, but ... well, you know about the derogatory "turkey" nickname. So the bird expired because of heat stroke inside the doghouse, and we had to bury it. Sad.

A few years ago, Jan and I took a short trip during the Thanksgiving period and found ourselves at a small settlement not far from Reno. We went to the combination restaurant-gambling hall-liquor store for turkey day dinner. I don't think that Jan ordered turkey, but I did. And guess what? As it was late afternoon, I got the odd bits and chunks of turkey, not the nice, juicy slabs. Oh well, at least I wasn't at a wobbly card table. And the pumpkin pie wasn't bad.

Other than the time I inadvertently smoked a pipe of illegal weed with my slightly eccentric ex-brother-in-law one Thanksgiving Day in Ramona, Calif., I've had mostly mundane times of it. On that sole occasion I have to admit that I ate two complete turkey dinners, and I didn't care what shape the meat was in.

Also, the pumpkin pie was delicious. The whole thing.

Legislation for flat tax introduced by Wyden

Flat tax legislation has been introduced by U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.).

He called it comprehensive tax reform legislation that contains major tax relief for the U.S. middle class because, "It would make the income tax code simpler, flatter and fairer."

Wyden's bill, the "Fair Flat Tax Act of 2005," allows every taxpayer to file taxes on a simplified, one-page 1040 form; collapses individual tax brackets from the current six to three; and sets one, flat corporate rate.

It also would end the Alternative Minimum Tax for personal income taxes, and allow federal taxpayers who don't itemize to receive a tax break for state and local taxes.

Ending a number of corporate tax preferences also allows the legislation to reduce the deficit by approximately \$100 billion during the next five years.

"By making the system simpler, flatter and fairer we can provide real tax relief to the struggling middle class of America and begin reducing the deficit that is destabilizing our economy, our security and our future," Wyden said.

"This major middle class tax break will help financially struggling American families who have been hammered by the economy in recent years."

According to the Congressional Research Service, the Fair Flat Tax Act of 2005 can provide tax cuts for middle-class families and for families with wage and salary income up to \$150,000. Wyden's plan provides higher standard deductions for every individual, and ends tax provisions that prefer unearned income such as capital gains and dividends over wage and salary income.

It provides an unprecedented, refundable 10 percent tax credit for every taxpayer's state and local taxes -- a direct benefit for the more than two-thirds of taxpayers who currently do not itemize their taxes.

Just be glad you don't get all the government you pay for.

- Will Rogers -

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.

'No one living at I.V. Grange Hall'
From **Kendell W. Phillips, president, Illinois Valley Grange 370 Cave Junction**

This is in response to the ad placed by Robert Hodges in the Nov. 16 issue of "Illinois Valley News."

I want Hodges and others to know that no one is living at the I.V. Grange Hall. I.V. Grange is a community service-oriented, family based, fraternal organization -- and its hall is used only for those purposes.

We do, however, have numerous continuing projects where people are needed at the hall on a regular basis and, as such, can be seen coming and going at all

hours of the day.

In the past, in times of community or individual need, we have opened our hall for temporary shelter from disasters such as floods, fires, storms, domestic violence and other such occurrences, but only for short periods and never on a permanent basis.

The hall is not set up as a residence and has no similar facilities available, except in times of emergency.

Those with further questions can contact us at P.O. Box 974 in C.J.

He wonders about USFS arson suspect
From **Jim Nolan Cave Junction**

Did this news just pass us by? This is an interesting story about the kind of people who manage major fires.

I also want to point out that the suspect was an incident commander on the Biscuit Fire. Also, that locals at the Los Pritas Fire are wondering if it would have been put out much sooner if Van Bateman had not been in charge.

The article, from

Reuters, states that Bateman, "the commander of an elite U.S. Forest Service firefighting team, was indicted on arson charges" earlier this month.

It notes that he was one of the first out-of-state commanders dispatched to New York City after Sept. 11, and that he last week was accused of setting two wildfires in the Coconino National Forest last year. He is charged with setting timber afire, and arson on public land, the story said.

It said further that USFS Chief Dale Bosworth initiated the investigation and is cooperating with the U.S. attorney general.

Bateman has been placed on paid administrative leave, according to the story, and faces an unpaid suspension.

The story states that a conviction for setting timber afire carries a maximum penalty of five years or a \$250,000 fine, or both. Also, that a conviction for arson on public land carries a maximum penalty of 20 years, or a \$250,000 fine, or both.

V.A. announces Website designed to help survivors of country's military personnel

A new resource tool has been developed by the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (V.A.) to assist the survivors of military personnel who died either while on active duty or who died after leaving military service.

The new tool is an Internet website that provides users with information about a wide range of benefits for the surviving spouse, dependent children, and dependent parents of deceased active-duty personnel and veterans.

The Website is organ-

ized into two general categories -- death in service and death after service.

While most benefits are the same regardless of whether the service member or veteran died on active duty or during civilian life, the death in service portion includes additional information specific to death in service issues.

The site also contains information from, and links to, other federal agencies and organizations such as the Dept. of Defense and the Social Security Administra-

tion that provide benefits and services to survivors and dependents.

The website is located at vba.va.gov/survivors/. If you have questions or plan to apply for benefits, you are encouraged to contact your local county veterans' service office or contact the Oregon Dept. of Veterans' Affairs at (503) 373-2085 or toll-free at (800) 692-9666.

Application for veterans' benefits is a complex process. The assistance of these professionals is provided at no cost, said VA.

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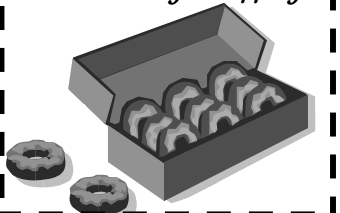
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DEADLINES:

News, Classified & Display Ads, Announcements & Letters
5 P.M. THURSDAY

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

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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.

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