

Bob's Corner

"Eat Gas & Pop" is one of my favorite service station/cafe roadside signs. It was posted in Windblown, Ariz. Or maybe it was TooHot, N.M. Can't really recall the exact location except that I spotted it during a road trip with my family back when I was but a tad of a lad and really bad with my ducktail hair style, cuffed Levi's and Sir Guy shirt. Yes, a potential J.D.

Another memory is of a movie theater marquee somewhere in the Great Southwest. A current movie was *The Tattered Dress*. Someone with a sense of humor, I hope, placed the film title above the notation *With Selected Shorts*. And who among us, who traveled those long-ago two-lane highways, including the famous Route 66 Mother Road, will ever forget the famous Burma Shave signs.

Three of my favorites: His cheek/Was rough/His chick vamoosed/And now she won't/Come home to roost/Burma Shave ... The place to pass/On curves/You know/Is only at/A beauty show/Burma Shave ... On curves ahead/Remember, sonny/That rabbit's foot/Didn't save/The bunny/Burma Shave. Yeah, those red signs with white lettering helped ease the boredom of those long drives.

Once on our getting-lost expeditions (see below) we stopped for gasoline at a shabby station. There was a wooden box with chicken wire on top, and a sign that read, "Danger. Baby Rattlers." So I approached cautiously and peeked inside. There were two infant rattle toys inside. Ha-ha.

With Fathers Day recently passed, that's why some recollections of my late Dad and those summer trips to his hometown of El Paso, Texas came to mind. Most times, we drove straight through -- an 18-hour odyssey from San Diego -- except for breakfast, lunch and restroom breaks. Otherwise, he was loathe to use the brakes for breaks.

Many times we got lost, except that Dad would say, akin to Pee Wee Herman, "I meant to go this way." Of course, that's why we went via Flagstaff in northern Arizona to reach El Paso. Of course. At least on those outings, we spent the night in Flagstaff before arising at dawn to hit the road. Why we were always in such a hurry is still a mystery.

Other than getting lost, one of my favorite rollin' along pastimes was to count the refrigerated cars being hauled through the desert. One time, my Mom and I counted 203 cars in one train. It had four diesel engines at the head, two "in the middle" and two pushing. I've always had a passion for trains, as I recall riding them when they were pulled by those wonderful iron horse steam engines.

Don't get me started; that's a whole other train of thought.

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Weather Watch

Cave Junction

Wednesday, June 27
Beautifully sunny with evening breezes
High--85 Low--51.

Thursday, June 28
Interim day of clouds
High--80, Low--50.

Friday, June 29
Clearing with occasional sun
High--81, Low--42.

Saturday, June 30
Intermittent sunshine
High--81, Low--43.

Sunday, July 1
Sunny with instances of clouds
High--87, Low--44.

Monday, July 2
Sunny with clouds blowing in
High--88, Low--44.

Tuesday, July 3
More sun and warm clearing at night
High--92, Low--48.

Following are the high-and-low temperatures, and rainfall, recorded in O'Brien by Cheryl & Harry Johnson.

*Fri., June 15: 91 - 53
*Sat., June 16: 84 - 55
*Sun., June 17: 80 - 48
*Mon., June 18: 88 - 53
*Tue., June 19: 94 - 53
*Wed., June 20: 82 - 55
*Thurs., June 21: 79 - 46

Following are the high-and-low temperatures, and rainfall, recorded in Cave Junction at Mountain Wind Farm.

*Fri., June 15: 91 - 48
*Sat., June 16: 81 - 53
*Sun., June 17: 79 - 46
*Mon., June 18: 84 - 52
*Tue., June 19: 94 - 48
*Wed., June 20: 88 - 51
*Thurs., June 21: 83 - 43

Life becomes harder for us when we live for others, but it also becomes richer and happier.

- Albert Schweitzer -

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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.

'Thank you' submissions are not accepted as letters.

What's the answer to county's money ills? From Sue Norman-Jones Cave Junction

I recently read a photo caption in a newspaper suggesting to me that chainsaws are the answer to Josephine County's financial woes. I am still in disbelief.

At this time, global warming is heating up the planet. Trees protect the planet through shade and oxygen production. Trees need the underbrush for their own root protection, and nourishment from the decomposition of organic material.

Forests thrive when left alone. Fuels reduction treatments are detrimental to the forest's health, and consequently ours.

Josephine County is suffering financially, as well as all of its residents. Warprofiteering is one of the reasons the federal government doesn't have any money to contribute to universal health coverage, and other services provided by state governments.

The idea of a "sales tax" has always captured my attention. In this way, all people are taxed equally, including people who make money "under the table" through what we buy, with pennies, nickels and dimes. Where tourists even help out sometimes. Sales tax could replace property taxes, whereby less foreclosures. This could be an answer to the county's money woes.

Maybe we could do better.

Illinois Valley community newspaper appreciated From Sara Ball Cave Junction

The Illinois Valley High School Class of 2007 and the Grad Night Party Committee wish to express their appreciation to *Illinois Valley News* and Bob Rodriguez for the publicity and coverage of events and fund-raising activities.

This community service has been beneficial to our efforts not only this year, but in previous years. We are grateful for the assistance by *Illinois Valley News* to help keep our graduates safe.

U.S. troops in Iraq deserve best gear From Bill Pfohl Kerby

Our unarmed soldiers in Iraq constitute an act of war from within.

This is to let you know that our young servicemen in downtown Baghdad are not allowed to carry side-arms in this battle that they are up against.

It seems that officers are allowed to carry side-arms, but the lower-rank personnel actually doing the fighting are told if they bring their own side-arms to the war for personal protection that they will be charged with murder if they use them.

Since this is what we have going on with this Republican presidency, I will be changing parties and voting Democrat. I believe Hillary Clinton will be our next president due to the lack of leadership with this administration.

Really, she could do no harm as compared to this guy, Bush, we have at present time.

It was a proven fact that during World War II that one of the German foot soldiers could equal six Polish soldiers due to their side-arms and other equipment that made them a force to be reckoned with.

Are we to send our best and brightest to be slaughtered? Then we better make sure they have the best chance they can and have the most firepower that they can carry on themselves.

I think that these enemies that take them will think differently if our soldiers had side-arms that they could quickly get control of to defend themselves with. It's apparent to me that they grab these soldiers only when they see no rifle on their persons.

I think people should consider taking back our country by voicing their opinions with our elected representatives because they apparently do not care about our soldiers that they send to war.

Our founding fathers would consider this an act of war from within. We need to stand up and be counted.

'CJ was and is already a good neighborhood'

From Linda Schluter Tedder Cave Junction

Larry Osborn (who's not from this area) should know that nothing really good happens when developers rape a beautiful small town like Cave Junction.

Jim Frick praised Osborn on being the only one to build on such a large scale, willing to risk millions of dollars to improve an existing community.

Yeah, he's never seen anyone do that before. Check out the pristine places Osborn and his like have so-called "improved."

The quality of life will only bring it down. Redwood Hwy. is a nightmare; wasn't that way this time last year. I feel that Osborn is taking advantage of the good small town people we already have here in Cave Junction.

He is familiar with California and the toilet it now is. Because Osborn was the only one wanting to "develop" here is because maybe, just maybe, the other developers had too much respect for the residents and the land.

More population will also bring more crime. "No Trespassing" signs where we used to walk and ride bikes. "Take Paradise and put up a parking lot."

'Housing glut' effect on valley pondered

From Don Smith Cave Junction

A June 20 *Illinois Valley News* page one story, "City on the move with projects north of town," quotes a real estate agent who cheers California developer Larry Osborn for being "willing to risk millions of dollars to improve the existing community."

Jim Frick, the agent, who no doubt hopes to make his wallet bulge, will have to excuse me while I offer a contrary view.

The housing market in the United States is on the skids. Things have gotten so bad that 89 lenders have gone bankrupt (see: ml-implode.com).

With inventories of unsold homes across the country at near-record highs, it's not likely that the real-estate bust will recover anytime soon. Some argue it will take years. In fact, the National Home Builders Association reported last week that new home construction is at its worst since 1991, during the last big housing bust (see: calculated-risk.blogspot.com).

To top it off, the cost for a home loan is on the rise as long-term interest rises. Add to this tighter lending standards and fewer people able to get loans to buy new houses, which explains why mortgage applications across the country are on a downhill slide.

What is taking place nationally may not necessarily be something to concern ourselves with locally. But drive the streets behind the new clinic to view the "spec" homes. Count the number of homes that are sold compared to the number for sale.

And drive past Taylor's meat plant down to the river. Take a look at streets laid out for the new housing development, streets that have been on the ground now for around two years. Count the number of homes. Not many are there.

Go to the new streets by the airport built for new homes. How many houses are there? My last count two months ago was zero.

With the real-estate market looking more and more like smoldering ashes, including locally, one has to wonder what Osborn and the other developers were thinking when they jumped into the valley to improve our quality of life. Could it be that they and some lenders missed the party when it was going full bore?

When I've brought up the housing bust to friends and asked what might be the consequences here: namely, how many folks are likely to move to the valley and buy all these new homes, they say: "People in California can still sell their homes and buy ones a lot cheaper here, so they'll come, right?"

Nope. Fact is, the housing bust is greatest in California, where the subprime debacle has led to record-setting foreclosures, creating a glut of new houses. So, if those retirees -- about the only ones likely to move here since jobs are few and far between -- want to sell their homes to move here, they'd have to reduce their selling prices drastically. Chances are they won't do it.

With all the new homes in the valley that are unsold, plus the new homes being built, along with those on the drawing board, and then add the increasing number of old homes up for sale (for the latter see: realestate.yahoo.com),

seems likely Cave Junction too will have a glut of unsold homes.

As a result, home owners should expect their property values to come down significantly, at the same time that property taxes are likely to go up. Not a happy scenario, is it?

So, instead of Osborn's lots offering views that he says will be "absolutely incredible," instead of a cheery nesting place for happy new residents, we'll see half-empty row houses that resemble Anywhere Suburbia USA, sticking out from the rest of the community like a sore thumb.

One last point. As I understand it, Osborn also plans on building some commercial stores for our pleasure, although *I.V. News* makes no mention of this. If it's true, he may want to rethink this before it's too late. As it turns out, the booming commercial real-estate market looks like it may go the same way as housing.

Seems that the subprime debacle is creeping into commercial real estate as the cost for loans sold to investors goes up. Bankruptcies are likely as ill-advised loans snare unwary developers, ones who underestimate the "risk" Frick refers to in the first sentence above. (see: market.com and go to CMBX for increasing costs to builders).

(Editor's Note: The letter-writer is incorrect in his statement that the commercial aspect was not included in the story.)

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• Food & Music

• Farmer's Market

• Animal Exhibits

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Illinois Valley Family Coalition

535 E. River Street, CJ

Phone 592-6139

A community organization helping those in need.