

# Bob's Corner

It was our first Christmas in Oregon after moving in 1979 to Brookings from Escondido in San Diego County. With visions of being a mighty logger, although I still called them lumberjacks, our family set out to bag its own Yule tree. After awhile I discovered that lumberjacks actually are devices for holding up fallen trees. But that's another story.

Anyway, during that December 28 years ago, we were driving a "classic" 1964 red-and-white Chevy window van; you know, the ones that look like an ambulance or such and have back doors that open wide. Off we merrily drove with a hand-saw into the forested areas in the Brookings-Harbor community backcountry. I did not sing, "Hi-Ho, Hi-Ho, it's off to work I go." But some might dispute that.

At any rate (approximately \$10 per foot) we drove and drove, looking for that perfect tree. And I found it, although some in the vehicle disputed its dimensions. They claimed that it was much too tall for our small home. I disagreed and began my lumberjack ... I mean, my logger duties. Down came the tree. Finally. The blisters on my hands also went down eventually.

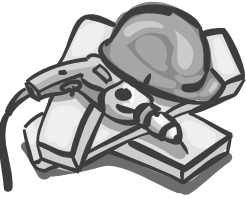
It took a mighty effort to haul the fallen Doug fir to our van and maneuver it inside. For some reason, it seemed much larger in the van than the height it appeared to be outside. We attached our Christmas tree tag, and the fam managed to squeeze in the back with our pungent plant. For some reason they were upset because I couldn't close the rear doors due to the amazing length of the fir. I think it grew magically.

When we got home, someone laughed out loud when they saw the tree coming out of the van. Unfortunately their laughter was an accurate comment. To make a long story (and tall tree) shorter, I had to break out the ol' saw again and trim the tree, so to speak. Actually, we had two trees that year, but I don't want to explain why.

The next year, the kids and I headed out again, seeking a cedar tree that Jan wanted for our holiday decorations. I was determined to find the right growth. With the proper height. We drove and drove through an Oregon rain that drenched everything in sight, including us when we got out of the van to hunt for the elusive cedar.

We spent hours in the wilderness, looking and looking, getting wetter and wetter. We eventually found the perfect tree. At a nursery. (See \$10 per foot, above). Now we're into artificial Christmas trees, which our cats love to climb. As for the ol' saw, I don't know what happened to it. But I no longer need it anyway.

## Gold Creek Construction LLC



- Concrete
- Remodel
- New Construction

CCB 174891

592-6609

## Weather Watch

### Cave Junction

#### Wednesday, Dec. 12

Cloudiness with rain & freezing rain later  
High-52 Low-32



#### Thursday, Dec. 13

Showers during the day turning to snow  
High-46 Low-30



#### Friday, Dec. 14

Morning clouds with peaks at sun  
High-46 Low-32



#### Saturday, Dec. 15

Cold, miserable rain followed by more rain  
High-39 Low-36



#### Sunday, Dec. 16

Returning glances of sun through clouds  
High-45 Low-31



#### Monday, Dec. 17

Return of nippy drizzles  
High-39 Low-37



#### Tuesday, Dec. 18

An abundance of liquid sunshine  
High-41 Low-39



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

*Fri., Nov. 30:	42, 28
*Sat., Dec. 1:	44, 40
*Sun., Dec. 2:	52, 40; .98
*Mon., Dec. 3:	61, 51; 2.64
*Tue., Dec. 4:	61, 43
*Wed., Dec. 5:	49, 43
*Thurs., Dec. 6:	47, 41; .75

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

*Fri., Nov. 30:	51, 27
*Sat., Dec. 1:	45, 28
*Sun., Dec. 2:	37, 48
*Mon., Dec. 3:	59, 51
*Tue., Dec. 4:	55, 45
*Wed., Dec. 5:	53, 45
*Thurs., Dec. 6:	48, 43

illinois-valley-news.com

# 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.**

### '07 good for small business From Todd Stottlemeyer, president, National Federation of Independent Business Nashville, Tenn.

We're well into the holiday season when people across the USA can take stock of their blessings during 2007 and look ahead to 2008.

Small-business owners are no different, and they have several items for which to be thankful. For example, they're grateful that Congress did not pass the Employee Free Choice Act, which would have gutted the right of employees to ballot secretly when choosing whether or not they want to join a union.

And they're grateful that when Congress voted to increase the minimum wage, legislators included tax incentives to ease the pain of the cost increases and enable entrepreneurs to preserve jobs. Small-business owners especially are grateful for the opportunity to live and work in a free-enterprise system that allows them to thrive and grow their businesses.

Despite the gloomy news put forth by the major media, 2007 was a good year for small businesses.

Latest reports on private-sector employment shows that small businesses created 113,000 new jobs during October. More than half of those jobs -- 63,000 -- were in businesses with fewer than 50 employees. What's more, the rise to 113,000 jobs was a marked improvement from the average of 43,000 jobs during the past three months.

While all this growth was occurring, large employers cut a net of 7,000 jobs.

However, the issue of affordable health-care coverage for employees of small businesses continues. We must find the means and the political will to address this issue, or risk falling into a stagnant economy.

### Vandals can't read From Linda S. Tedder Cave Junction

This is about those who can't read and have made the 500 block of Schumacher Street their personal raceway, and who ignore all the properties clearly marked "No Trespassing" and use them as urban off-road playgrounds.

Unless they own it, and I know that they don't, the signs read, "No Trespassing." What part of those two simple words don't they understand? Those properties are owned by other people, so what gives anyone the right to vandalize them?

I've watched those properties literally torn up by people, children and adults, on off-road vehicles just ripping up the environment there. Seems that any piece of land is up for grabs -- never mind the many signs stating, "No Trespassing." What's with knocking over the green utility towers? None of this stuff belongs to the vandals.

Seems that many think the signs are meant for a parking lot. They're not. "No Trespassing" means just that: No trespassing, stay off this property, this is not a parking lot, this is not an off-road vehicle playpen.

As for the "adults" -- children are what they see. So next time the adults should be honest with the children and say, "Hey, let's go out and vandalize some other peo-

ple's property, and disturb and invade a really nice neighborhood.

"Why? Because we can!" No class/low class. Breaking the law is still breaking the law. Just because we don't have a full police force doesn't make a "No Trespassing" sign any less meaningful. Can these people not police themselves?

Learning what's right or wrong is not a difficult trait. Many know the Golden Rule, but just chose to not live by it. Good idea would be for the boneheads to find a real off-road playground. There they could tear up anything and everything; plus wearing a brainbucket (helmet) would do them some good also.

What's really disturbing is that many of these violators don't even live on this street. We all live here, and we must get along and abide by the land laws. Also, those gates are up for a reason: To keep us who don't own property there out. Yeah, it's a let-down, but someone else owns it. People should stay off their land. It's posted.

I understand that before the fences, signs and gates went up it looked like a scene by Rockwell, especially in the summer, but the situation has changed and the rules must be obeyed. Also the speed limit on Schumacher is 25 mph. And that goes for the school bus too.

### 'Big Business as usual' From Ken Stern Cave Junction

On Monday, Nov. 26 there was a follow-up meeting held in Grants Pass to discuss Barlow/Copeland's request to convert an old farm on Holland Loop into an aggregate mine.

Those who have been following this story know that that Barlow/Copeland, with their history of exploitation and environmental abuses, bought the farm in anticipation of getting their way, as they usually do. We attended the meeting with concerned neighbors who feel that this mining would be a bad thing for our neighborhood and Cave Junction.

We arrived to find out that the original plan was altered enough that the Josephine County Planning Commission decided to postpone responses until the next meeting is held on Jan. 14.

The "new" plan proposes mining closer to the East Fork of Illinois River, enough that 90 percent of the trees that serve as a buffer between the farmlands and the river would be eliminated. They did this because Oregon Administrative Rules prohibit reclassifying the rich farmland into a rock mine, as originally proposed.

It seems that Barlow/Copeland knew this when they bought the farmland, now called I.V. Ranch, but gambled that they could get their way, as they are accustomed to doing in Josephine County. They are currently mining rock across the river at the Little Elm Ranch, under the guise of constructing a sump for "agricultural purposes." The board of county commissioners and the planning department won't ac-

knowledge that this is really a mining operation in disguise. Shame on them.

We need real accountability from the people who have been voted into office and are overseeing this area. We need to rein in the people exploiting Illinois Valley for material gain at the expense of the local residents. We need people to stand up and say this is our area, and Big Business moving in and calling the shots at the locals' expense isn't going to be tolerated.

Is there anyone who will stand with us? We have a lot of nearby neighbors on our side, but the whole town has something at stake. I received this response from Gerry Spence, an attorney from Wyoming who has seen too much of this type of abuse:

"This is horrible. It is the ever-recurring theme of big business, big money, and small concerns for people invading people who have little power. I have fought this all my life. Don't know where to send you. But don't give up.

"Hit the press. Petition. Raise he\*! Get neighbors to help. Do what you need to do to make this whole thing public. Call meetings. You might even find a young lawyer who wants to make a name for himself who will help. Best of luck."

### Sign of the times From Marilyn Arnold O'Brian

I support the letter in your Nov. 28 issue from John Woodward and Linda Corey-Woodward regarding the Illinois Valley "Welcome" signs that so desperately need repair. I too feel that the I.V. Chamber of Commerce is way overdue in taking steps to see that the signs on Hay's Hill and near Rough & Ready Creek are repaired or replaced.

I think that the condition of those signs sends negative messages to the thousands of drivers on Hwy. 199 that the citizens and businesses, not to mention the chamber itself,

are too poor, lazy or simply don't care about our valley.

Next time *Illinois Valley News* publishes statistics about the dwindling numbers of persons to I.V. Visitor Center in Cave Junction, we should think about the "Welcome" signs that preceded their impression of that town. Do others feel this way?

Has the chamber obtained estimates from local merchants like the sign shop in Kerby? Is there a plan? If there isn't one, then what will all the fund-raising proceeds from last year and this be used for?

### 'End times?' he asks From William Schneider Cave Junction

Sometimes I feel like one of those nuts on the street with the sign reading, "The end is here" or "The end is coming soon." And sometimes I don't.

I'm not speaking of a deity floating back to Earth, with a bunch of folks going to Heaven and the rest to Hell. Lotta' love there. I'm talking about the USA as we know it.

Some will say that already has happened, and I would agree up to a point. However, we still call ourselves the USA with all the checks and balances that help maintain at least some semblance of a democracy. Such as our legal system on the drawing board (since before Monica's dress grabbed the attention of U.S. intelligence, or lack thereof). Since then there's been a plan to merge Canada, Mexico and the United States into one entity: the North American Union.

Much like the European Union, it would dissolve sovereignty of all three into one new government. This plan is to be completed by 2010.

How many people are aware of this imminent threat? It's not from some vague terrorist group, but from the same folks that brought us, among other situations, 9/11, a several trillion dollar national debt, and the War in Iraq.

# Darn Near Everything

Collectibles - Antiques - Gifts

Kathy Blakeley

592-5255

24553 Redwood Hwy. Kerby OR

# GOOD OL' BURGERS

Jay & Pam  
Selma, Oregon 597-2000  
18398 #3 Redwood hwy.



Charbroiled ☞ Tri-tip & Ribs  
Buffalo Wings ☞ Fries  
Espresso ☞ Sarsaparilla ☞ More...

Rated by our customers...

"Best Burgers in the Valley!"



# Forest Edge Farm

People hats are available at  
The GUILD GALLERY in Kerby &  
SHOP RJVER ROCK in  
Grants Pass

For information on our llama felt hats, call the ranch at 592-6078 or the Guild Gallery at 592-5019



# Illinois Valley News

www.illinois-valley-news.com

An Independent Weekly Newspaper Co-owned and published by Robert R. (AKA Bob or El Jefe), Editor and Jan Rodriguez

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

Email: newsroom1@frontiernet.net or newsdesk@illinois-valley-news.com

Volume 70, No. 39

Staff: Michelle Binker, Zina Booth, Josiah Dean, Jennifer Newsted, Millie Watkins, and Tina Grow

Member: Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association

## DEADLINES:

News, Classified & Display Ads, Announcements & Letters

5 P.M. THURSDAYS

(Classified ads & uncomplicated display ads can be accepted until Noon, Fridays 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 - \$22.80

One year in Jackson and Douglas counties - \$26.40

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