

Bob's Corner

As Christmas Day nears, a memory stirs about a man named Ted, a friend of ours who loved the meaning of Christmas. He also was dying of leukemia.

Being ill did not slow him down much at first. He stayed active in his church and around his home shop. Also, Ted had a great sense of humor. He was one of those men who actually had a twinkle in his eyes. And they especially twinkled when he told jokes.

He enjoyed lots of funny stories. Some of them were what you might say were "slightly off-color" or "blue." Didn't stop Ted, even though his wife would chide him about his anecdotes. He was known in his church for telling such jokes too, and no one minded.

Ted was not a big man physically. He stood maybe 5-6 and weighed perhaps 130 pounds soaking wet. As the leukemia progressed, he began to lose what weight he had. Still didn't slow him down much because he was huge in courage and character. Especially around Christmas.

He thoroughly enjoyed playing Santa Claus. He came to our home several times on Christmas Eve. He would don a traditional Santa suit, and whiten his beard, which was black shot with gray. As his wife was a cosmetologist, he had some help in that area.

We'd be in our living room, and there'd be the sound of sleigh bells. We'd open the front door, and there would be a hugely grinning Ted... I mean, cheerful St. Nick. He carried a big sack over one shoulder, and would distribute gifts to our three children. They always enjoyed his visits. He was so exuberant that he radiated a spirit you could feel.

Came one Christmas, and Santa Ted was late. He eventually showed up, looking pale and wan. But still cheerful with his wide grin, and with a funny story and gifts. His wife told us later that he struggled mightily that night to become Santa. Everything was becoming a struggle because of his illness.

But that Christmas Eve, despite his aches and pain he was in as fine a form as he could be. He didn't want to let our kids down, or any other kids he would visit that night. He had a tenderness and a feeling for the part. It was the last time he made his appearance as St. Nicholas.

He died some months later. We were saddened. But whenever I want to feel the happiness of the true Christmas spirit - giving and sharing for others no matter what - all I need do is remember Ted, a right jolly old elf.

Hey, I think I just heard some sleigh bells ...

Tropical Island Tans Salon & Boutique

JoAnn Scroggins, Owner

Hair by Renee

Nails by Kris

541-592-2510

131 Redwood Hwy.
Cave Junction
tropicalisle@frontiernet.net

Weather Watch

Cave Junction

Wednesday, Dec. 19

Cloudiness with rain and snow
High-44 Low-33

Thursday, Dec. 20

Snow flurries with rain showers
High-42 Low-29

Friday, Dec. 21

Morning rain & snow then clearing
High-44 Low-30

Saturday, Dec. 22

Chance of sun though mostly cloudy
High-41 Low-35

Sunday, Dec. 23

Returning risk of rain
High-42 Low-39

Monday, Dec. 24

Some sunshine w/ night luster of mid-day
High-39 Low-37

Tuesday, Dec. 25

Cloudy with rain later
High-44 Low-36

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

*Fri., Dec. 7: 46, 34
*Sat., Dec. 8: 41, 33 0.01
*Sun., Dec. 9: 41, 30
*Mon., Dec. 10: 40, 27
*Tue., Dec. 11: 39, 24
*Wed., Dec. 12: 42, 27
*Thurs., Dec. 13: 42, 28

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

*Fri., Dec. 7: 47, 34 0.01
*Sat., Dec. 8: 44, 30 0.04
*Sun., Dec. 9: 42, 29 0.01
*Mon., Dec. 10: 42, 28
*Tue., Dec. 11: 43, 23 0.01
*Wed., Dec. 12: 48, 28
*Thurs., Dec. 13: 46, 25

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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.

Recalling Tom Green From Jen Berubee Grants Pass

I knew Tom Green and Tim Waddell and feel sickened and as though I have lost two friends of my family. My heart goes out to everyone affected by this tragedy.

My understanding is that Tom Green was attacked prior to Monday, Dec. 10. He was, I have heard, told not to contact the police "unless it was an emergency." Well, I guess the sheriff's office got its emergency, didn't it?

I understand hands are tied and funds are low, but I stand by my conviction that "something can always be done." What will it take to get a police presence in Cave Junction?

In the years my family has lived in Illinois Valley, my sister's business has been robbed, my brother's truck was burned, my mother's truck was stolen and abandoned, and now a dear citizen of this community is dead. The sheriff's office was warned that Tom Green was not safe, and did nothing. Is Sheriff Gilbertson paying attention now?

I cannot imagine Cave Junction without Tom Green walking around, asking, "How are you this beautiful day?" I can't believe that a young man, who was close to my family, was capable of such horror. I can't believe that two lives are wasted in one moment.

We should all take a moment and let the ones we love know we love them. And then we need to demand action from the sheriff's office.

'Tasteless reporting' From Mary Guerra and Arianna Guerra Cave Junction

The coverage of the brutal murder of Tom Green in *Illinois Valley News* was shocking. We didn't personally know Tom Green, but had been graced by his kindness by a friendly "Hello" in town or a wave as we drove by.

We thought he was the friendliest person in town. We were saddened by the loss of his life when I saw his picture in the *Courier*, and realized that he was "the friendly man" who had waved at us for years.

Then to actually be taken to the scene of the crime by *I.V. News* and to see Tom

lying on the street and read the graphic details of his death sickened us and our family. Instead we would rather have seen a nice picture of him to honor his life, and we are sure we are not the only ones.

This article in *I.V. News* was not in good taste. We ask *I.V. News* to stop this kind of tasteless reporting.

Using community resources From Guenter Ambron Cave Junction

In Ken Stern's Dec. 12 letter to the editor (Big Business as usual), he asked if there is someone who will stand with us? Jill and I will, and we have other friends also who can help.

We were at two meetings Wednesday, Dec. 12; the one at the county building with the commissioners about the I.V. Airport and that evening at the Selma Center regarding BLM's proposed Western Oregon Plan Revision presented by Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands and members of our community.

I would really like to share some of that information, but I'm sure we'll have some wonderful coverage of it in this issue.

I believe Barlow Rock and these issues have much in common. For example: 1. An extensive amount of public disregard, and lack of and misinformation presented by agencies and companies.

2. Extensive catering to big business via political pressure and unsavory methods. Red T-shirts reading "Tax-em Toler coming to your home soon," were worn by members of a real estate company, and land developers. They looked quite childish, and I kind of felt sorry for them. 3. A consistent effort to keep people divided among themselves on important issues concerning the welfare of the their community and economy. 4. Frequent shortsightedness and exceptional wastefulness of dollars and resources.

What we can do is realize that we have a great community in our valley, with plenty of courage, will power and wisdom. We can invoke it; contact each other; and meet as democratic-spirited people can. My number is 592-2408. I have some educational and community-oriented resources to share.

We are fortunate to have a great paper that serves the community and that isn't tied up with big media. A special thanks to Bob and everyone working at *I.V. News*.

'Truth a good thing' From Gloria & Bob Ziller O'Brien

We are grateful to the media, in general, for giving fair exposure to the following issues and to continue to shed

appropriate light on the real perpetrators of the problem or problems.

We are writing in response to Robert Haber's Dec. 11 letter, and in support of Olivia Taylor-Young and Kirk Taylor.

We have had the pleasure of getting to know them all, and find them all of the highest moral standards and intellect. They are using their time, energy and resources to bear light on an unfortunate set of circumstances at Cedar-Brook Estates in Cave Junction. We feel that this situation affects many who live in their community, and it is our opinion that this collectively puts them all at future risk of potential structural deficiencies as well as personal health problems.

Their situation is only the tip of the iceberg, as it seems problems like this are all too common here in our Illinois Valley. As for us, we always are advocates for the truth. We find it hard to comprehend that some in this community perceive Olivia and Kirk as the problem: Nothing could be further from the truth.

It would make so much more sense to be thankful for their efforts to expose the truth, and for their community and neighbors to jump on the bandwagon with them, demanding that all these problems be brought to light and rectified.

I.V. Airport representation From Cheryl Johnson O'Brien

I attended the meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 12 in Cave Junction regarding the upgrading/downgrading of Illinois Valley Airport. Afterward I spoke with Commissioners Jim Raffenburg and Dave Toler.

I am writing to reinforce my verbal comments to both commissioners, and to share my written comment with Commissioner Dwight Ellis.

I'm imploring them to appoint an I.V. Airport Board to be a locus of discussion for all matters pertaining to the airport. It is unbelievable to me that decisions are being made concerning the airport in our valley without oversight or input from a body of knowledgeable/interested people from the valley.

My suggestion is that they appoint a five-member board comprised of a representative of the Siskiyou Smokejumper Base; a pilot who utilizes the airport regularly (better if they could get someone who currently stores their plane at the airport); and an ecological/environmental representative.

Also, an I.V. business owner; and a citizen-at-large without ties of any kind to any of the other four groups. I know that there has been a

significant amount of infighting and conflict with Alex Grossi, county airports manager. Whatever the reason, allowing him (and only him) to unilaterally decide (or recommend to the commissioners) the direction of our airport without input is unconscionable.

If last week's meeting was "polite" then I would hate to see what happens if Alex is allowed to continue in his autocratic manner.

I appreciate the commissioners for having the meeting in CJ. I certainly hope that this is not the only manner in which public will be allowed to have a say in the future development (or not) of our valley resources. If that is the case, then our commissioners will be ignoring the knowledge and good intentions of valley residents who would willingly volunteer their time to be involved in the process.

Gravel and 'Welcome' signs From D. Wallis Cave Junction

Residents of the entire Illinois Valley would do themselves, the land and future generations a great justice by demanding that a meeting be held in Cave Junction, and attend it, regarding Barlow Sand & Gravel's request to start aggregate mining off Holland Loop on what is now agricultural land.

Mayor Tony Paulson has agreed to the use of city hall for such a meeting.

The damage to the land, runoff, dust, and noise and air pollutions from equipment and gravel trucks is astounding. I know, as I have lived near such an operation. What was, and is now agricultural land, will not only be raided and laid to rest, but become an eyesore as well.

Roads traveled by these heavy trucks are constantly dusty and require regular resurfacing. This valley does not need gravel trucks ruining and polluting Hwy. 199 in either direction.

Referencing the letters to the editor from Marilyn Arnold (Dec. 12) and the Woodwards (Nov. 28), I am in total agreement regarding the "Welcome to the Illinois Valley" signs at the south and north ends of the valley.

With all the talent, energy, kindness and generosity in this valley, I see no reason why the current signs cannot be replaced by something such as our natural valley river rock and wood. We have plenty of both resources. Rich, rustic and simple would naturally be conveyed to every passerby.

I am willing to voluntarily head a committee to get this effort off the ground and moving forward. I can be reached at 592-6868.

(Continued on page 3)

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

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3rd Annual Bridgeview Church

Community Christmas Dinner

FREE Food
FREE Gifts for Children + FREE Drawing for Prizes
Lots of FUN
Tuesday, Dec. 25, 1 to 5 p.m.
5181 Holland Loop Road, Cave Junction
Need a ride? We'll pick you up.
To arrange a ride or for more information call 592-3923