

Bob's Corner

This “Corner” will be a departure from the usual effort, although as I type and think (yes, I can handle two functions simultaneously), I’m not sure where it’s going.

Let’s start with “the bums” who seem to offend so many folks. Comments we hear: They stink and have dirty clothes. They’re drunks. They hang out and booze it up in public. They pee in front of everyone. They bother people by asking for money. They steal from the grocery store. Why do they have Oregon Trail cards that we pay for? Can’t they get jobs? They stagger around sometimes and cause traffic problems. How can they afford beer and cigarettes?

Good pints ... er ... points all. I don’t know why they live as they do, but it seems that they’ve pretty much chosen that way of life. So? As long as they aren’t committing crimes, what’s the beef? Yes, some have committed crimes, but street people aren’t the only ones guilty. Are they the ones breaking into homes and businesses? Maybe. Maybe not.

OK, so they don’t “look nice” for our town and valley. Is that a problem? Is it wrong for churches to feed them? Not if you subscribe to the Christian ethic. Do they stay here because of free food, or is this just a nice place to live? Does the state make it too easy to get freebies?

I don’t know. But I think that if people really want to get them to move on, they need to figure out how to cut off their supply of fortified beer and other of their favorite beverages. It could work: but they’d probably just move to another community where the stuff is available. I’m thinking out loud here; these are only ideas and random views.

In fact, in 22 years of operating *Illinois Valley News*, this is only the second time I’ve written an actual editorial. People often mistakenly call my weekly humor column an editorial, but it’s not. An editorial consists of opinion and similar commentary by an editor or publisher. Nothing more, nothing less. On larger newspapers, editorials are directed by an editorial board. On smaller publications, such as your favorite *I.V. News*, an editorial represents the views of one person.

It’s food for thought. So that’s the “Corner” editorial for this issue. Maybe I’ll start writing one of each.

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Weather Watch

Cave Junction

Wednesday, March 26
Rain
High--56 Low--33



Thursday, March 27
A thick cloud cover
High--59 Low--39



Friday, March 28
Rain
High--61 Low--41



Saturday, March 29
Rain
High--61 Low--35



Sunday, March 30
Clouds with sun,
windy
High--65 Low--37



Monday, March 31
Cloudy
High--66 Low--43



Tuesday, April 1
Warmer with clouds
High--72 Low--41



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

*Fri.,	Mar. 14	43	36	.00
*Sat.,	Mar. 15	51	34	.00
*Sun.,	Mar. 16	52	31	.00
*Mon.,	Mar. 17	54	34	.00
*Tue.,	Mar. 18	58	47	.06
*Wed.,	Mar. 19	50	39	.35
*Thurs.,	Mar. 20	50	37	.14

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

*Fri.,	Mar. 14	44	35	1.27
*Sat.,	Mar. 15	52	33	.25
*Sun.,	Mar. 16	53	32	.01
*Mon.,	Mar. 17	57	33	.00
*Tue.,	Mar. 18	60	46	.01
*Wed.,	Mar. 19	54	39	.48
*Thurs.,	Mar. 20	53	36	.10

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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.

Kerbyville Museum help From Judith Knitter Cave Junction

I am a new land owner in Illinois Valley and board member for Kerbyville Museum. Since my interests are in genealogy, historical societies, and museums, I naturally gravitated to Kerbyville Museum.

Around town, the comments I hear are, “Boy! They sure can use some help!” “I used to be involved, but I didn’t like the way the museum was run,” or “I didn’t care for the folks in charge,” etc. But I’m here to say: Kerbyville Museum is a gem.

And no matter what your feelings, or the past circumstances, it belongs to each and everyone in Josephine County and particularly Illinois Valley. It is in our trust; we can stand around and voice our opinions and watch it slowly continue to go down hill or we can get involved with our time and/or money and watch it shine.

Our history is precious, and it needs our constant attention. It is discouraging to those of us trying to keep the museum available to the visitors, local residents, pioneer families, and as a learning tool for our children to not have the support and resources we need.

For those with farming interests, we have an equipment shed with artifacts that need cleaning and restoration. For those interested in mining in our county, we have early tools that need TLC. If you like books, we need cataloguing. If you like meeting the public, we have docent positions. If you like puttering in the yard, we could use some assistance. If you’ve been here years, we have unidentified pictures, etc.

Currently the board is undertaking a membership drive. (See coupon in this issue). Members will receive a quarterly bulletin, discounts on our local history books, and free admission to the museum complex.

With yearly membership dues to help offset operating expenses, we will be able to realize much-needed repairs and artifact restoration.

Gravel traffic concerns From Cheryl DeBrett Cave Junction

My husband and I live on Holland Loop next to the I.V. Ranch that the Copelands bought in anticipation of mining the old farm. This has us concerned, as we are sheriff’s

office volunteers who patrol for the community, and it appears that potential traffic issues are not being considered.

We have witnessed accidents on Holland Loop and cannot imagine how anyone can claim that there won’t be an increased risk of accidents with rock-laden dump trucks running up and down Holland Loop constantly, day in and day out. These slow-moving trucks will have to turn out across oncoming traffic from the intersection of Holland Loop and Caves Hwy. from a blind corner.

And Caves Hwy. is the route all tourists take to Oregon Caves; Holland Loop is a route taken to visit three wineries. How will this benefit our local economy dependent on tourist trade?

We have neighbors with small children who sometimes walk or ride bikes here. The road is narrow, has two big dips that impair visibility, and when the county road was constructed it was never imagined to have the traffic we see on it already.

The past few years we have seen a dramatic rise in traffic, and the county has done nothing to accommodate this increase, nor does it have funds to widen or otherwise improve the situation.

We believe that the county will not be looking out for the best interest of local citizens if they allow Barlow/Copeland to establish a large mine in this area. The Josephine County Board of Commissioners needs to seriously consider the safety of all who will travel these roads, and not place them at risk for the sake of mining rocks.

We hope that many will attend the public hearing at 9 a.m. on Wednesday April 2 at Anne Basker Auditorium in Grants Pass to make sure that our commissioners hear the concerns of Cave Junction citizens.

Barlow/Copeland proposal From Cate Bendock Cave Junction

On Wednesday, April 2 at 9 a.m. the Josephine County Board of Commissioners will conduct a de novo evidentiary hearing regarding the future of the Illinois Valley Ranch at 2612 Holland Loop.

This means that Barlow/Copeland Sand & Gravel can submit new, additional material that was not presented during the previous hearings regarding the I.V. Ranch. Many valley residents have stepped forward to make their concerns known regarding Barlow/Copeland Sand & Gravel’s desire to make this site a gravel mine.

I’m glad that they have come forward during our public meetings to oppose this type of development for I.V. Ranch and Little Elm Ranch. But now is not the time to think that Barlow/Copeland will not get their way. Just because the planning board has recommended that this development not be allowed, our county commissioners can override this.

It is imperative that many people attend this meeting to voice their concerns regard-

ing this type of development. This does not just affect those who live on Holland Loop or the properties immediately adjacent to I.V. Ranch. This affects anyone who owns or rents property in the county.

If this company is given the go-ahead by our county commissioners to change the land-use zoning; given a conditional-use permit to mine gravel adjacent to the river; and not made to abide by the laws and codes of this state and county, our property is at risk in the future. They are doing it on the old Martin Dairy Ranch (now Little Elm Ranch) and allowing this sets a dangerous precedent for everyone.

Try to imagine listening to back-up bells on large equipment from sunup to sunset; encountering large trucks loaded with gravel on our roads daily; mud, dust, and dirt on the road and in the air; our children, pets and livestock affected by the traffic, noise, pollution, and safety issues; the river being compromised during high water – including possible damage to the city of Cave Junction’s main water intake; and further depletion of our salmon stocks; loss of valuable farmland; loss of business for those close or on the road to this enterprise.

The few jobs that this business brings to this valley do not outweigh the degradation it will create if it is allowed to continue this type of development on I.V. Ranch. It is not the public’s, the planning department’s, nor the county commissioners’ responsibility or duty to allow this to happen just because Copeland made a bad choice of property for their next gravel mine.

The land-use maps and soils maps are public documents and were available to Copeland officials before they purchased this ranch. This company, for too long,

has had the county board and planning department allowing it to disregard the public, the planning commission board’s recommendations, and state laws and county codes.

I am urging people to testify, or show the commissioners their support for those who do testify at the meeting, that this company does not have the right to destroy what we have all worked hard to have. Your neighborhood and property could be next.

Editor’s Note: A similar letter about Barlow/Copeland was submitted by Ken Stern).

Sheriff’s office comments From F. Bellermann Selma

As a property owner and taxpayer in Illinois Valley, I feel compelled to respond to a number of issues listed by Sheriff Gil Gilbertson (*I.V. News*, March 12).

He lists the mandated activities that his office is required to perform and then admits that he has considerable leeway to assign priority and resources. I am among those who feel that his office is a long way from efficiently administrating these responsibilities or providing us with a good return from our tax investment.

Can the courts not fund their own security through fees levied on litigants? If the sheriff’s office maintains supervision, can it not hire independent contract security for the courts, while maintaining a supervisory presence only? This way a whole group of portly sheriff’s deputies who have been sitting on comfortable court benches can be reassigned to the streets and reduce their weight (diminishing obesity related health benefits costs) by patrolling.

It’s a win-win.

Can the sheriff not dele-

(Continued on page 3)

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