

the city of Cave Junction in the middle of Illinois Valley is known as the Gateway to the Oregon Caves. The national monument, including the historic Oregon Caves Chateau, is approximately 22 miles east of Cave Junction out Oregon Hwy. 46 (“Caves Hwy.”).

It’s essential for those coming to Illinois Valley (called “I.V.” locally) to note that the area should not be judged only by what can be seen from U.S. Hwy. 199 (“Redwood Hwy.”). It bisects the valley communities of O’Brien on the south to Selma on the north with the city of Cave Junction and the town of Kerby in-between.

It’s important to get off “the beaten track” and travel the side roads. That’s part of what this *Valley Visitor* is about. Because 199 is a major thoroughfare, lying between Interstate 5 at Grants Pass, and U.S. 101 on the California coast, it can be easy to simply drive straight through.

But that would mean missing a lot.

Illinois Valley has a rich history, much of which can be reviewed at Kerbyville Museum & History Center in Kerby between Cave Junction and Selma. The site includes the Stith-Naucke House, built in 1871 and fully furnished in the style of that period.

As the former county seat, during the significant gold mining days of the valley, the town of Kerby was once known as Napoleon. That name was based on the county being named after Jo-



sephine Rollins, said to be the first white woman in the area: Thus, Josephine had to have her Napoleon.

Besides the museum, the Kerby community includes It’s A Burl, Yanase Jewelers, Kauffman Wood Products, Hampton’s Rock Shop, Kerbyville Farm, and the Rogue Community College Learning Center. The

latter also accommodates Kerby Belt Masonic Lodge, and the Southern Oregon Guild Art Center.

Besides the latter, the valley’s arts are highlighted by Illinois River Valley Arts Council. Among its activities, it sponsors Second Friday Art Walks in Downtown Cave Junction from March through December.

The valley’s wineries, listed in a story elsewhere in this publication, offer tasting rooms and excellent vintages. Tours can be arranged.

Illinois Valley and its environs comprise one of Oregon’s “best-known secrets.” For example, the Kalmiopsis Wilderness and Illinois River (for rafting and boating) are included, as well as scenic drives out Eight Dollar Mountain Road and Illinois River



Road.

A wealth of information is available: Besides this *Valley Visitor*, published by *Illinois Valley News*, insights and directions to various attractions are available at Illinois Valley Visitor Center (which includes Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce) on Hwy. 46, just off 199; and at the U.S. Forest Service



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