

# New Commissioner Cassanelli aims 'to stop bad decisions being made'

By SCOTT JORGENSEN  
IVN Staff Writer

Sandi Cassanelli marked the official end of her days as a concerned citizen and the beginning of a political career as she was sworn as a Josephine County commissioner.



Sandi Cassanelli (File photo)

Cassanelli took position 2 on Monday morning, Jan. 5 in the county courthouse in Grants Pass, as she defeated Harry Mackin in the Nov. 4 election. The seat was vacated by Jim Raffenburg.

Cassanelli first moved to Josephine County in 1981, after she retired and bought "a little shack in Williams."

"I just wanted to be left alone," Cassanelli said.

But over time, she began paying attention to what was happening in county government -- and she didn't like what she found.

"I got fed up with it," Cassanelli said.

Before she knew it, she became involved in the rough-and-tumble world of Josephine County politics. Now a Merlin resident, she started writing letters regularly to the editor of the Grants Pass newspaper and phoning the KAJO Radio talk show.

In February 2008, Raffenburg announced that he would not seek a second term. That opened the door for Cassanelli and seven other candidates who filed.

Cassanelli spent approximately \$250 for the May 20 primary election, and had a total of 12 hand-painted, stenciled signs.

"All I did in the primary was shake hands with people in front of the Grants Pass Post Office," Cassanelli said. "I did the primary strictly alone."

On that election night,

she didn't attend or have a party. Instead, she spent a quiet evening at home by herself, and stayed up until 2 a.m. By that point, it was clear that Cassanelli would face Mackin in the November general election.

Immediately afterward, Cassanelli began receiving phone calls from people offering to help her in the general election.

"I refused for months," Cassanelli said. "I even refused money."

Not until late August did Cassanelli accept the assistance; form a campaign committee and begin campaigning in earnest. She and volunteers even established a constant presence at an outdoor market and across the street from the courthouse in the final weeks of the campaign.

"It was a lot of work, but we had so much fun," Cassanelli said.

She and her supporters spent election night at a Mexican restaurant in Grants Pass. They had originally planned on having a dozen or so people attend to celebrate, but got a crowd of 80.

"We had to keep adding



Judge Lindy Baker administers the oath of office while county officials and others look on.

(Photo by Scott Jorgensen, Illinois Valley News)

tables and chairs," she said.

Within two days of her win, Cassanelli was at the courthouse preparing for her transition to the position of commissioner. She moved into the office last occupied by former Chief Administrative Officer Marie Hill and has kept regular hours there, reading such publications as

the *Oregon Blue Book* and the state's rural land development code.

Mere minutes after being sworn in Monday by Circuit Court Judge Lindy Baker, Cassanelli sat in her office, reflecting on her unorthodox path to political power and what she plans to do with it during the next four years.

"I want to fulfill my campaign promise of transparent and accountable government," Cassanelli said. "I would rather see that the whole public has the opportunity to view what's going on in government and stop bad decisions from being made."

It's sad to grow old,  
but nice to ripen.

~ Brigitte Bardot ~

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birthday cake

## Obituaries

### Daniel McCarty

Daniel W. McCarty, 60, of Cave Junction, died Sunday, Dec. 28, 2008 at Three Rivers Community Hospital in Grants Pass.



A wake was conducted Friday, Jan. 2 at his residence in rural Cave Junction. Condolences can be sent to the family at [www.stephensfc.com](http://www.stephensfc.com).

Mr. McCarty was born Jan. 22, 1948 in Hollywood, Calif. to Clyde & Roberta McCarty. He graduated from Enterprise High School in Redding, Calif. and served in the U.S. Army Chemical Corps in Vietnam.

In 1968 he married Sylvia McCullough. Later divorced, he married his current wife, Janet. Mr. McCarty's chosen career was with the U.S. Postal Service, where he advanced to the position of Postmaster. He served in this capacity for 11 years in Vernal, Utah before his retirement in 2003. In 2004 the couple moved to Cave Junction.

During the past four years he was active in the Rogue Gem & Geology Club in Grants Pass and the Kerby Belt Masonic Lodge AF&AM where on Dec. 6 he was installed as Master.

Mr. McCarty is survived by his wife, Janet, of Cave Junction; daughter Michelle McCarty, of Sacramento; son Paul McCarty, of Thousand Oaks, Calif.; stepchildren Tod Hilstad, of Hood River; and Tammy McKee, of Vernal; sisters Penelope Torribio, and Pamela Fleuret; brothers Rocky McCarty and Mike McCarty; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Arrangements are by Stephens Family Chapel.

### Marianne Gonsalves

Marianne C. Gonsalves, 50, a longtime employee of Shop Smart Food Warehouse died at her Cave Junction home on Sunday, Jan. 4, 2009.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Jan. 10 at noon at St. Patrick of the Forest Catholic Church in Cave Junction. Private inurnment will be held. Chapel of the Valley/L.B. Hall Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Mrs. Gonsalves was born Oct. 22, 1958 in Marin County in California to James D. & Ruth (Willis) Kohl. She married Joseph "Joe" Gonsalves. For 25 years she worked as a meat wrapper and clerk at Shop Smart in Cave Junction.

Besides her husband, she is survived by two daughters,

Lisa Miller, of Selma, and Tina Young of Cave Junction; her father, Jim Kohl, of Bend, Ore.; two sisters, four brothers, five grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

### Beverlee Keith

Selma native Beverlee Jean Keith, 62, of McMinnville, Ore., died Jan. 3, 2009 in Sheridan, Ore.

A funeral service will be held at Adamson's Sheridan Funeral Home on Saturday, Jan. 10 at 1 p.m., with interment in Green Crest Memorial Park in Sheridan.

Mrs. Keith was born on April, 10, 1946 to Raymond L. & Loretta Ruth (McCracken) Frost. She grew up in Selma, and attended college in Redding, Calif. She married Calvin Jackson in Grants Pass, and they had four children.

Together they operated the Selma Shell service station and Calvin Jackson Logging. After their divorce, she married Bruce Keith and they were married 25 years. Together they drove semitrucks for various companies, eventually owning and operating their own truck.

She was a member of the Church of the Nazarene in Sheridan.

Mrs. Keith is survived by three daughters, Loretta Garcia, of Carlton, Ore.; Suzan McCartney, of McMinnville, Ore.; and Jennifer Martin, of Salem, Ore.; a son, Scott Jackson, of Sheridan; three sisters, Lorraine Gregg, of Cave Junction,

Patricia Buckhaults, of John Day, Ore., and Mary Lewis, of Grants Pass; 15 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents.

### Suzanne Hooper

Suzanne (Susie) Denise Mowles Hooper, 45, of White Pine, Tenn. died on Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2008.

A celebration of her life for friends and family will be held Saturday, Jan. 17 at 1 p.m. at Valley Evangelical Free Church, 498 Laurel Road, Cave Junction with Pastor Les Knapp officiating. Refreshments will be served following the service.

Mrs. Hooper graduated from Illinois Valley High School in 1981. She moved to Tennessee in 1984.

She was known as a loving mother to her two daughters, Liberty Rose Warfield, of Kingston, Tenn., and 2-year-old Stacey Jo Bittinger of White Pine, Tenn. She also is survived by a granddaughter.

She also is survived by her father, Roy Mowles, and stepmother, Rosalie Mowles, of Cave Junction; her fiancé, Ken Bittinger of White Pine; two sisters, Sherry Rogers and Karen Stewart-Sinnwell, both of Cave Junction; and a brother, George Sibert, of Marysville, Wash.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Lillian Mowles, and a brother, Michael Mowles.

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Tuesday at 12:30 p.m.  
[www.illinoisvalleybaptistchurch.org](http://www.illinoisvalleybaptistchurch.org)  
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Tuesday Youth group - 6 p.m.  
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[www.goodshepherdlutheraniv.org](http://www.goodshepherdlutheraniv.org)

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Pastor Les Knapp  
Sunday School - 9:45 a.m.  
Worship Service - 11 a.m.  
[evfree@frontiernet.net](mailto:evfree@frontiernet.net)  
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