Bob's Corner

Whether printed newspapers will survive because of the Internet has become a major topic of concern. Part of the controversy is why some newspapers (including this one) provide free access to their Websites, while others have a fee, except to subscribers to their printed issues.

The discussion rages, especially as the big daily publications in major cities and markets continue to lose their market shares. In fact, many metro dailies have slashed staff (laid them off or offered buy-outs), while several have announced that they will cease publication unless a buyer steps up with cash.

Fortunately (I say gratefully), newspapers such as this one continue to operate pretty well because we provide community news and information not available elsewhere. Yeah, we're good at it (I say modestly). Sure, we see declines as the national economy lurches along, but overall, *Illinois Valley News* is doing OK (I say with a prayer of thanks). Let's keep it that way.

As for PCs and so-called computers replacing newspapers produced with ink and newsprint, I say: Can you line your bird cage with a PC? Can you wrap fish in a PC? What about killing flies with a rolled-up PC?

Do the British put fried fish in cones made of PCs? While painting your bedroom, would you protect the floor with a PC? And would you, or can you, use a PC to help start a warming fire?

Ha. I think not.

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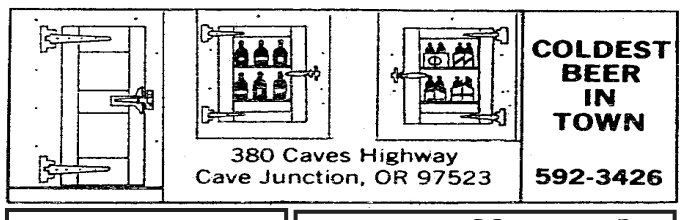
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Letters to the Editor

(Editor's Note: Views and commentary, including statements made as fact, are strictly those of the letter-writers.)

* * *

Typed, double-spaced letters 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.

Bumper crop
From Fred Krauss
Selma

I think we should all get down on our hands and knees and thank God that we are American citizens.

In South America, Europe or Asia, 80 percent of people would be shot or put in jail for having the bumper sticker which I saw on a vehicle in Josephine County. It said "Bush - the only dope worth shooting."

What, me worry?
From Neil White
Cave Junction

Big news as reported by the daily newspapers is that nearly 600,000 employees lost their jobs during January because of the faltering national economy.

That seems like a problem we should be concerned about. So with that kind of worrisome situation, what's the big deal about some of us drinking beer and smoking cigarettes around the town?

Homeless folks issue
From (name withheld)
Cave Junction

What to do with the homeless? I don't know either, but letting them be the "face" that the public sees when they enter Cave Junction isn't the answer.

As a recovering alcoholic, I know there is free help available for them here in CJ. Do the homeless seek it? It appears they do not.

Does the Oregon Dept. of Human Services offer job counseling here? Yes, it does. Are the homeless taking advantage of any of these government-sponsored (taxpayer-funded) programs? Again, it appears they are not.

Why is the public so outraged? It's because they pick the most public spots to exhibit themselves in a town struggling to bring in tourist dollars. Try being a business owner whose customers have to step over a passed-out, odorous homeless person on main street to enter their business. Try being a business owner who has to clean up human feces every morning before they can open.

Try being a mother whose child wants to play in the public park, but doesn't want them watching drunks urinating or playing on equipment that smells like an outhouse.

We who live here want to be compassionate and fair. Would the League of Compassion &Fairness build a shelter for them, staff it, and pay for it? It is so hard not to have bad feelings about people who don't seem to want to help themselves, but continue to give our beautiful little town a reputation we don't deserve.

We know that we have a problem. What we need is a solution, not only to benefit the homeless, but the others also trying to make a living here.

'All creatures …'
From Annette Rasch
Cave Junction

With the recession we see more stray dogs on the streets, and shelters are overwhelmed. Stray cats spread disease, breed, and kill wild birds. Too many horses and goats are quietly starving on the hoof.

To ignore, dump, or mistreat animals chips away at the soul and sends a horrible message. Psychologists say that small children don't distinguish between animals and humans. Kids instinctively know that we all breathe in and out; we all bleed red; and we all feel the cold.

We're warned that the economy is going to get worse -- but should pets pay the price?

I'm shopping at thrift stores and if I have to choose between a drive to the coast and feeding my animals, so be it. In the second half of winter, animals housed outdoors are worn down from working hard to stay warm. Here are a few tips:

Dog houses need new bedding throughout the season. Alfalfa hay doesn't flatten like straw and the smell is great. A dog lying on wet blankets in a doghouse too large cannot get warm. Add some eggs and meat scraps to their food. Consider bringing your pooch indoors at night – they're pack animals who are miserable when kept alone.

Horses and other large animals need a place to get out of the mud and rain. Horse people live in fear of colic. Studies show how 80 percent of winter colic occurs because horses don't like drinking cold water. A simple solution is to fill a few milk jugs with hot tap water and slowly pour it into the stock tank twice daily.

Many of us cannot afford additional feed and supplements, as hay is costly, so here's an inexpensive recipe that helps horses stay healthy. Buy a 50-pound bag of feed for $10, and use 1 or 2 pounds daily. Add discarded raw veggies: ends of broccoli, carrots, apple cores, etc. Finally, mix in a handful of stock yeast and a pinch of mineral salt with selenium.

We have several fine veterinarians in Illinois Valley. I am especially grateful to Dr. Joe and his dedicated and knowledgeable staff. I've witnessed people bringing in stray animals hit by cars or found sick, and whenever possible, these critters end up with a second chance at life. The costs of providing medical care: the equipment, tests and medicines, are the same, whether the patient is human or animal.

Still, Dr. Joe's prices make it possible for folks to care for their animals. His level of expertise and compassion are appreciated.

I implore folks to search their hearts to discern what's really important. Our critters are vital members of the family and have no one but us to ensure their well-being. The Bible tells how God marks the fall of a sparrow. So let us pay attention to those with no voice and put out a pan of warm water and a few crumbs for the "sparrows" that enrich our lives.

Forestry Action action
From Robert Pelletier,
FAC Board president
Cave Junction

During the January board meeting of the Forestry Action Committee (FAC), Susan Chapp stepped down as president of the FAC Board of Directors, and I was installed as the new president.

As the present owner of the majority of home sites in Takilma, I have seen Khoery Creek transformed into a lush forest setting, also some improvements in the Hope Mountain creek area. It is heart-warming to see how the wildlife are returning to these areas, as the forest is a much better habitat than the hard, empty ground.

I have personally insisted on new financial procedures at FAC, so that questionable occurrences in the past remain in the past and that the future shall unfold as beautifully as it is currently demonstrating. The FAC has new staff in place, new board members, and is actively working in making the Forestry Action Committee represent the people.

We are working on some wonderful community projects this year, such as restoring the old city park property. And are in the process of bringing back the weed-pull crew this year, which should provide some much-needed jobs for our community.

Hazel Reagan's letter to the editor (*Illinois Valley News*, Jan. 28) was a wake-up call to me, and is proof that the citizens of this gorgeous valley are truly the active participants in any forestry action. We welcome community involvement.

FAC meets on first Thursdays at 3 p.m. in the Butler Bldg. at the lower compound of the U.S. Forest Service in Cave Junction. The community is always welcome to attend our meetings and review our current financial records. The new financial procedures are available at the FAC office.

We hope to see a big turnout for our annual Volunteer Tree Planting Day on Saturday, Feb. 28 beginning at 9 a.m. Phone at 592-4098 for more information.

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