

Bob's Corner

Wow, 2010 coming up. How did that happen? Where did '09 go, and where was I when it happened?

Maybe this is a sign of getting older. No, wait — don't want to go there. Actually, we're all "aging." It's a term that's often misused in a way. In fact, there is no one who is not "aging." But some of us (present writer included) fail to "act our age." Whatever that means.

At any rate (try six for five bucks), our Christmas period was fun. This especially is true because part of our family came for a week-long visit. And it wasn't long enough. Our daughter, Vicki (the baby daughter who turned 41 last May) came by car with husband, Matt, and our granddaughters, Natalie, 7, and Ella, 4, which we appreciate.

We had a fine time. And it was truly an interesting experience to play Sorry with the little ones. The game was a gift from us at their mom's suggestion. The girls were aware of the rules. Mostly. So it was fun. However, the only game I won was against Ella.

We had time to visit; time to eat; time to eat; and time to eat. Yikes. I probably gained some weight, and ate "stuff" that's not on my continuous low-fat/nonfat diet. But hey, as the excuses go, it was Christmas. Yeah, that makes a difference. Removes all the calories and fat content.

During the evenings, we watched rented movies. Among the flicks we viewed: *District 9*, *Julie & Julia*, and *Gran Torino*. Jan and I had seen the latter, but Matt & Vicki hadn't. It's such a good film though, that we didn't mind a repeat. *District 9* is ... um ... let's say "different" for a sci fi movie. Matt and I watched it; no one else was interested. *Julie & Julia* was, for me, a tad tedious. But it was sorta' interesting.

We also went to see *Old Dogs* with John Travolta and Robin Williams. Well, we didn't go *with* them; they were the co-stars. Had some mildly funny stuff in it, but for my taste it was a bit too slap-sticky and contrived.

The gkids watched several movies made mostly for children. And I liked them all. What was that about acting one's age? OK, OK. I'll get with it for 2010.

Oh, and Happy New Year. May all our lives be blessed.

Letter from the Editor

**Re: errant pedantry
From Michelle Binker
Editor-in-Chief
Illinois Valley News
Cave Junction**

Attention anonymous sniper: Please extend my appreciation to your 9-year-old for his or her diligent and detail-oriented reading skills. You might discuss with your child that it is not always necessary or convenient to use the clumsy constructions "he or she" or "his or her" when the gender of an individual is not known.

For clarification, you could direct your child to the article, "They with Singular Antecedent" in the *American Heritage Book of English Usage: A Practical and Authoritative Guide to Contemporary English* (1996), which notes that: "The alternative to the masculine generic with the longest and most distinguished history in English [he] is the third-person plural pronoun. Recognized writers have used *they*, *them*, *them-*

selves, and *their* to refer to singular nouns such as *one*, *a person*, *an individual*, and *each* since the 1300s."

I sincerely hope that your child was not a party to your taping a clipping from the *I.V. News* to my office door with your snide, anonymous remark concerning word usage and my professionalism. If he or she witnessed this action, I recommend that you have a conversation with your child about courage, forthrightness and the value of reflection before acting upon the petty urge to commit mockery.

It is my opinion that the decline in civil society can be ascribed to persons such as yourself who are quick to seize the opportunity to condemn and criticize, but slow to seek or build relationships.

If you haven't yet taken the time, please congratulate your child for their attentive readership. With adequate attention given to character development, it seems likely they'll go far.

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Guest Opinion

**By KATE BROWN
Oregon Secretary of State**

Oregonians can be justifiably proud of our voter turnout.

Just look at 2008, when 85.7 percent of Oregon's registered voters cast ballots, the third-best turnout in state history and one of the highest in the nation. When Oregonians register, they vote because they love vote-by-mail.

Oregon has the highest turnout of states without having same-day voter registration. But we lag in one important area when it comes to voting. We can do a better job of getting eligible voters registered.

The importance of this

Letter 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.

**'Lies' pointed out
From Judy Hoyle
Cave Junction**

I am responding to lies printed in the Letters to the Editor section of the Dec. 23 issue of *I.V. News*.

The first writer lied about the content of the Social Justice Alliance Website, sjajoco.ivicati.com in an attempt to promote her candidate, Jack Brown.

It will take a heap of lies to elect Brown as a Josephine County commissioner after the recent fiasco when he and Sandi Cassenelli "inspected" the county vehicle fleet. This publicity stunt cost taxpayers more than \$10,000 and exposed the county to legal liability. Imagine the damage they could cause if this anti-government pair were in office together.

The second writer lied about the content of Measures 66/67 to be voted on in Janu-

ary. The facts are, if 66/67 pass: 1) Oregon will have lower corporate taxes than 48 other states. Hardly the job-killer claimed by greed-heads who've spent millions to defeat these measures. 2) 97 percent of Oregonians won't pay a penny more in taxes. Currently, 300 rich corporations like Sprint pay \$10 per year in Oregon corporate taxes — a rate unchanged in 80 years. Measure 67 raises this minimum tax to \$150 for 88 percent of all Oregon businesses.

3) Under Measure 67, a business generating a million dollars in sales would pay only \$500. Measure 67 protects actual small businesses.

4) The richest 3 percent of Oregonians would pay slightly more under Measure 66; while the first \$2,500 of unemployment benefits are tax-free.

5) More than 90 percent of Oregon's budget goes to education, health care (Oregon Health Plan) and public safety — which all must be cut if 66/67 don't pass. We'll lose plenty of jobs including peace officers and teachers in Illinois Valley if 66/67 don't pass.

6) The first thing the Legislature did this year was cut spending to lower the budget deficit from \$4 billion to \$2 billion; 66/67 would cover only a part of the remaining deficit.

For more information, visit oregonbudget.gov or www.VoteYesOregon.org. Don't believe the lies.

out and mail it. You can even register if you're only 17, although you won't actually receive a ballot until after you turn 18.

Only 77 percent of Oregon's eligible voters are registered, leaving a half million of us with no voice in the workings of the state. I am committed to finding more and better ways to register eligible Oregon voters safely and securely and encouraging them to vote.

The 2009 Legislature got us off to a good start by passing a bill that will expand registration while ensuring its security. On March 1, Oregon will join the small handful of states allowing online voter registration. It will be accurate, secure and cost-effective, and I'm sure that it will be popular with voters.

This will help Oregonians who are housebound, members of the military overseas, and young people, who spend so much of their lives in the digital world. Arizona saw its cost-per-registration transaction drop enormously through the online system. Washington state has enrolled hundreds of thousands of voters online with high voter satisfaction and no resulting prob-

lems. Utah initiated a similar program in 2009.

Voters will have to swear that the information in the application is true, just as with a print application. And just like with a print application, lying online about residency, citizenship or any other qualifications is a Class C felony with a penalty of up to five years in prison, a \$125,000 fine and deportation for violators.

The Pew Center on the States recently completed a study of Oregon's voter registration system and found that the system cost more than \$9.7 million in 2008. The study looked at printing, maintenance and, the biggest cost, personnel to operate a system based on printed forms.

Online registration won't be Oregon's first step in modernizing the system and probably won't be the last. Oregon voters can already check their registration status online, make sure their registration is up to date and find out if they're registered in a political party holding a primary election. (Go to Oregonvotes.org and click on Voter Registration.) Making these functions available online saves staff time.

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NELSON R. MALER

Second Vice President-Wealth Management
Investment Management Specialist
Financial Planning Specialist

1867 Williams Highway, Suite 209
Grants Pass, OR 97527
(541) 244-2609
fa.smithbarney.com/nelsonmaler
nelson.r.maler@smithbarney.com

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