

Letters to the Editor

Illinois Valley News welcomes Letters to the Editor. Please e-mail them to dan@illinois-valley-news.com

POLICY ON LETTERS:

'Illinois Valley News' encourages letters to the editor provided they are legible and not libelous or scurrilous. All letters must be signed, including name, address and telephone number. The letter need not be published, but will be used to verify authenticity. The "News" reserves the right to edit letters. Letters are used at the discretion of the publisher.

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

Reader responds to GMO

Annette McGee Rasch's recent article on GMOs reads like an opinion piece rather than a responsible job of reporting. In reality, the GMO issue is not as cut and dried as her article would make it seem.

For instance, an August 2013 article by David H. Freedman in respected science journal, the *Scientific American*, pointed out that "the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Medical Association and the National Academy of Sciences have all unreservedly backed GM[O] crops. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration, along with its counterparts in several other countries, has repeatedly reviewed large bodies of research and concluded that GM crops pose no unique health threats. Dozens of review studies carried out by academic researchers have backed that view."

The article also quotes David Zilberman, a U.C. Berkeley agricultural and environmental economist, pointing out that he is "one of the few researchers considered credible by both agricultural chemical companies and their critics. Zilberman argues that 'the benefits of GM crops greatly outweigh the health risks, which so far remain theoretical. The use of GM crops 'has lowered the price of

food. It has increased farmer safety by allowing them to use less pesticide. It has raised the output of corn, cotton and soy by 20 to 30 percent, allowing some people to survive who would not have without it."

The article does point out that, "Many moderate voices call for continuing the distribution of GM foods while maintaining or even stepping up safety testing on new GM crops." And it quotes Greg Jaffee of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, who says that all crops could use more testing. "We should be doing a better job with food oversight altogether."

The GMO question is undeniably a complex one, and this short letter of mine cannot address all of the issues that merit impartial and thoughtful examination. The full text of the Scientific American article can easily be found online, for those who would like to check it out for themselves. And should McGee Rasch desire, I would be most happy to point her toward some other respected -- and balanced -- sources of information.

Sincerely, Anita R. Savio
Cave Junction

Reader asks who will win

Most people I know believe in basic fairness. Bullying and using brute strength to overcome what is decent and true, makes most folks angry.

Our tendency to root for the underdog comes from our history as an upstart nation that won its independence from the rule of the distant but powerful British. The British had the huge advantages of money, an infrastructure for control, and the most powerful military on earth. Colonists had to cobble together their resistance to an unfair system of outside domination, which included the imposition of monopoly by one of the first multi-national corporations over an important

part of Americans' diets, tea.

There are many parallels with our local contest over Measure 17-58. A small group of local volunteers drafted the measure to protect their own food choices and champion local control. They are defending their farming and gardening neighbors from the attempt of greedy corporations to impose an effective monopoly, using corporate muscle: armies of lawyers to sue farmers, vast money for campaigns of misinformation, and encroaching techniques to contaminate local competitors.

The wider implications of Monsanto, Syngenta, and other giants gaining control of the world's food supply are frightening; more herbicides, more super bugs and super weeds, less seed saving and more farmers being sued by these multi-national bullies.

Josephine county volunteers have designed a system that has proven in other counties to have no enforcement costs. They finance their campaign for basic justice by passing the hat.

Who will win, local volunteers and farmers or corporate bullies? You'll decide when you vote.

Barry Snitkin
Cave Junction

Reader gives his two cents

Often elections are decided by voters that do not follow the news everyday & frequently depend on sources such as Bill Maher, David Letterman, & other dedicated liberal/progressives in the major media. Many folks carry over prejudices from their parents or far left teachers as well as college instructors. (90 percent of which are liberal/progressives) It's ironic that many of the "finer" Universities where a free exchange of ideas, views, & experiences have leftists student groups and instructors that demonstrate if a speaker is

a conservative, especially if the speaker is a woman or a black or the worse of all worlds for the left, a black woman. Perhaps the left are afraid of open minded students being drawn from their sphere of influence toward the conservative principles of free speech and debate. Haven't we been told over and over that Democrats/liberals/progressives are the "Party of tolerance"?

These low information voters & shallow thinkers are further handicapped in their decision making in the voting booth by the major media, which the past couple of decades or so act as a megaphone to carry far left messages from their liberal/progressive friends. Of course if the news is unfavorable to Obama or other leftists, they simply don't cover it in their news because they don't want people voting against their favored ones.

Examples: 1. When Mitt Romney debated Obama and said in answer to a moderators question that a major geopolitical problem in the future would be with Russia. Obama scoffed at that answer saying the Cold War was over years ago. Of course today our major geopolitical problem IS RUSSIA, demonstrating a good executive is way ahead of most of us in their analysis rather than "leading from behind". 2. Fast & Furious is the name of a failed program under cry baby General Holder AG which allowed a couple thousand weapons to be smuggled to the cartels in Mexico which resulted in the killing of a U.S. agent, Brian Terry. Several hundred Mexicans have been killed by these weapons as well. Obama declared "executive privilege" to prevent investigation into this terrible idea, and our major media says nothing because it reflects bad presidential decisions. 3. Benghazi is the name of a city in Libya where we lost Ambassador Stevens and three other Americans in an

attack on our consulate even though for months Stevens had requested more security. Our Secretary of State failed to respond, resulting in the deaths. Again the major media is largely absent.

Greg Anderson, Cave Junction, OR

Reader discusses GMO's

There has been much discussion by the opposition to measure 17-58, stating that it will cost the county large amounts of money should it pass. First, there is zero evidence that this is true; in fact, since GMO crops can only be grown with a contract, the odds of someone growing them illegally are nil. Other West Coast counties with similar ordinances have incurred minimal costs.

But of perhaps greater importance, the economic benefits of having a GMO-free zone for our farmers is huge. GMOs are not saleable in many markets, both in the US and abroad, and farms that can provide proven non-GMO crops, feed and seeds will have an advantage. For example, Marin County in California has a similar ordinance and their agricultural revenues have gone up by 700% in the past decade. In the words of an administrative aide there, "If you're thinking about economic development, it (GMO ban) has been a lifesaver. It's been critical in sustaining our agricultural industry."

Our farmers will be able to grow high value crops in our county and to continue developing our valley nationwide as a premier vegetable seed growing region, providing local jobs and contributing to our local economy. New farmers will be drawn to this area, knowing their crops will not be tainted by GMOs.

The long-term economic benefits of keeping our farmland GMO-free will be im-

mense. We owe it to our farms, our children and our community to stand up and vote YES on measure 17-58.

Vince Alionis
Grants Pass,

Reader says yes to levy

Two years ago I moved from western Nebraska to Grants Pass with my husband and three boys. On a personal level, adjusting to this new community has not been as easy as I planned, but I persevere in looking at the good things that Grants Pass and Southern Oregon has to offer, like its pleasant weather and inviting outdoors. But the one thing that continues to concern me is the lack of funding for county emergency and safety services.

It is promising to see the Josephine County Jail and Juvenile Justice levy back on the ballot, this time by citizens determined to make our community safe while keeping public concerns about responsible spending in mind. The levy will cost \$1.19 per \$1,000 of property assessed value, which is half of a market value. It is a five year levy that can be extended only with a vote of the people, and funds raised by the levy are restricted under Oregon law to be used for jail/juvenile justice services only. Under these safeguards, we will benefit from the levy increasing the number of jail beds and re-opening the juvenile justice center to treat/detain/shelter juveniles. And, it will increase patrols on our roads: If the levy passes, county funding currently used for reduced jail services will be re-directed to increase the Sheriff's patrol.

Please join me in bringing security back to Josephine County and vote yes on proposition 17-59.

Kerry Michele-Buller
Grants Pass

Obituaries

Bob Armstrong, 76, of Cave Junction, died Sunday, April 13, 2014 at his home.

No services are planned. Illinois Valley Funeral Directors are in

charge of arrangements.

Bob was born January 24, 1938 in Beaumont, California. For 53 years he worked as an aircraft mechanic for Alaskan Airlines. In 2002

he moved from Anchorage, Alaska to Cave Junction.

Bob especially enjoyed designing and building small-scale replica models of ships from simply observ-

ing ships during his travels.

Survivors include his wife, Patricia Armstrong of Cave Junction, Oregon; two daughters, Deborah Allen of Fontana, California and Sheri

Hitchcock of Cave Junction, Oregon; six grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by a daughter, Reva Hayes in 2012.

ILLINOIS VALLEY FUNERAL DIRECTORS
WWW.SINCE1928HULL.COM 541-592-4110

Save The Date

April 24

Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce Meeting will be held April 24, at 12 noon. Come join our guest speaker IV Fire Chief Dennis Hoke.

ALL CHAMBER MEMBERS and guests are invited

Wild River Brewery and Pizza Company.

April 25

Upcoming blood donation opportunity in Cave Junction:

Thursday, April 24: 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Illinois Valley Senior Center, 520 East River St., Cave Junction

April 25 and 26

The 2014 Gem & Mineral Show will be held at the Josephine County Fairgrounds in Grants Pass: 9 - 5 p.m. April 25 and 26 and 9 - 4 p.m. April 27; with free admission for children 11 and under. Free admission for adults Friday and \$1 Sat. and Sun.. The event also features a silent auction, demonstrations, kids games, door prizes and a snack bar.

April 26

The Pregnancy Center Tea Event that was

scheduled for Saturday, April 26, 2014, has been cancelled.

April 26

Lorna Byrne Middle School Yard & Bake Sale Fund-raiser Saturday, April 26 @ Lorna Byrne Middle School 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Rain or Shine. We are accepting donations for the yard sale Tuesdays & Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at A+ Storage in Cave Junction. To arrange Saturday pick up or drop off please contact Heather McLanahan 541-450-0946. All funds raised will go toward the 8th grade moving up ceremony and field trip.

*Items accepted- gently worn clothing, books, toys & games, furniture (please call ahead if donating big/heavy furniture) home décor & art work, small household appliances & electronics, dvds & cds, collectibles.

*Please no large appliances, mattresses or box springs, bedding or broken items.

April 26

Rusk Ranch Nature Center (RRNC) will sponsor a free workshop 11 a.m. Saturday, April 26 at the Josephine County Building, corner of Lister and 199. Learn about Monarch Butterflies and how to make milkweed seed-balls from Tom Landis, US Forest Service (retired).

Landis is dedicated to using his nursery training to propagate milkweeds and nectar plants to bring monarchs back to the Rogue Valley. RRNC also has flats of local milkweed starts for non-spray properties, \$10 suggested donation to support the Butterfly Flyway Project. Call 541-287-2164. RRNC will be open 10 to 5 Tuesday - Sunday, May 24 through November.

May 3

Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Meeting and Auction will be held Saturday, May 3 from 2 to 5 p.m. at Wild River Brewing and Pizza. Its Derby Day so wear your big hats and come celebrate our Business and Citizen of the year.

May 5

The Josephine County Board of Commissioners will be hosting a Town Hall Community meeting on Medical Marijuana Dispensaries in the Illinois Valley. The meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 5, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

Cave Junction County Building, 102 South Redwood Hwy., Cave Junction, Oregon. All County residents are invited to attend.

May 10

Bridgeview Winery presents "The Bistro at Bridgeview" 4 to 7 p.m. Saturday, May 10. The fundraiser for the 2014 IVHS Safe and Sober Grad Night will include live entertainment, a silent auction and gourmet dinner of pork roast (donated by Taylors), au gratin potatoes (donated by McGrews), green salad and dessert. Vegetarian entrée also available. Tickets are \$25 per person or \$40 for two, available at IVHS, Taylor's Country Store and First Community Credit Union. Sponsored in part by the Jo. Co. Local Alcohol and Drug Planning Committee.

May 10

Cave Junction Lions Club Saturday, May 10th will host its annual Mommy's Day Bingo event.

Doors open at 5 p.m. First game at 6 p.m. 50/50 Drawing, Door Prize for Mommys, Special game: Last person standing; Dobbbers for sale, or bring your dobbbers.

Snacks, and drinks will be available for purchase.

For more information: call Cori at 541-592-4301. IV Senior Center, 520 E. River St. Cave Junction. 50¢ Cards, Half Cash Payout, 15 Game Program.

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