

Cave Junction City Planner Helen Early at work

By
Cilicia Philemon
IVN Contributing Writer

One of the people who keep things in the city running smoothly is Planning clerk Helen Early at the Cave Junction City Hall.

According to the City of Cave Junction webpage, the City of Cave Junction adopted their first Charter in 1946 and became incorporated in 1948. The 1950 U.S. Census counted 283 residents. In approximately 100 years, this site has been transformed from unexplored wilderness to the second largest of two cities in Josephine County. The population has increased sixfold since incorporation and Cave Junction has become a governmental and commercial service center for the Illinois Valley. Office hours are from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. & 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays (except holidays).

Since 1997, Early has been on duty, helping the citizens of Cave Junction with the many aspects of the planning procedures. She has many and varied duties.

These include explaining the zoning process and receiving applications from property owners who want to build or develop their lots within the city limits of Cave Junction.

Early explains, "Once the application is received, Public Works checks the site to verify setbacks, utilities, and parking compliance with the city code. If they comply with the code, they sign off and I issue an over-the-counter permit.

These permits are needed for fences, sheds, carports, garages, homes, driveways, sidewalks and culverts. If a building permit is required, the applicant takes the permit to Josephine County Building and Safety in Grants Pass."

"I am also a part of a three member staff committee that reviews applications and issues permits for lot-line adjustments and commercial remodels," Early further noted. "New commercial development applications go through the same process above, but may also require a site review by the City Council. Property owners who want to divide their land, change the zoning, or annex their property into the city have to go through a public hearing process with the City Council for approval. I provide applicants with city and state code regulations and explain the hearing process. I notify property owners within 250 feet of the subject parcel, along with government agencies, so that they have a chance to comment about the proposal before the hearing. I also help Dick Converse, our contract planner from Rogue Valley Council of Governments."

In addition to the above, Early's responsibilities also include coordinating the application process for hanging banners over the highway, receiving and issuing new Business License applications, sending out the annual renewal notices, as well as issuing new Business Licenses for the new fiscal year.

Other duties are to receive zoning and nuisance complaints, prepare notice of

compliance letters for the Recorder's and the Mayor's signature, track letters for compliance, and to refer noncompliance letters to the Council for determination.

Early also manages the City's filing system using the Oregon State Archives Retention Schedule. And finally she also supports the Recorder and Utility clerk during absences.

Early says "My favorite part of my job are the people. I love helping property owners through the zoning development process which can be intimidating to them and my goal is to guide them through to final approval. Our City staff are great people to work with, and I love getting to know and working with the staff from other government agencies such as Josephine County Planning, Building Safety and Public Works, the Oregon Department of Transportation, IV Fire District, Department of Land Conservation and Development, and the Department of State Lands.

Early enjoys her job, so while she has thought about retiring, a date hasn't been set yet.

She would like the public to know that for the last year, the City has been working on updating the Transportation System Plan. Early explained, "It's a 20-year plan that describes the City's goals to improve our transportation facilities, such as the location and design of future streets, sidewalks and bicycle routes. Copies are available on our website at: www.cityofcavejunctionoregon.us."



(Photo by Cilicia Philemon, Illinois Valley News)

Planning clerk Helen Early at her desk.

Immanuel United Methodist to host 3 Rivers Chorale

Two free choir concerts are slated to take place at Immanuel United Methodist Church this month and both will be directed by Kate Campbell.

The first, "What Sweeter Music," will feature the 3 Rivers Chorale this Saturday, December 6 at 3 p.m. The concert includes songs representing England, Central and North America, Europe, Russia, Israel and India.

Campbell states, "For the darkest season of the year, we offer music filled with light and beauty; celebrating Christmas with timeless gems, such as Gustav Holst's In the Bleak Midwinter and Morten Lauridsen's hauntingly

lovely O Magnum Mysterium. The addition of cello, flute and piano will complement our vocal journey through songs of Christmas and peace from around the world."

Campbell selected the title from a 17th century poem by Robert Herrick (1592-1674) which was set to music by contemporary British composer, John Rutter, in the 1980's.

"What sweeter music can we bring
Than a carol, for to sing
The birth of this our heav'nly King?
Awake the voice!
Awake the string!"

Celebrated local musician Tim Wallace will be playing flute,

percussion and soprano saxophone in this concert. Cellist Teresa Northcross, who last performed with the group for the Sunrise Mass concert, will also perform.

Two young sopranos from Grants Pass High School's choral ensembles will participate. In addition to singing with the choir, the gifted students will present Christmas solos on several numbers, including Benjamin Britten's Balulalow (from "Ceremony of Carols") and Max Reger's German lullaby, Maria Wiegenlied.

This same concert will also be performed Sunday, December 7 at 7 p.m. at Newman Methodist Church in Grants Pass. Tickets for the

Grants Pass concert will be available at Oregon Books at 150 NE "E" Street in downtown Grants Pass. Prices are \$12 in advance/ \$15 at the door. Youth tickets are \$5.

The 3 Rivers Chorale's presentation in Cave Junction is made possible by a grant from the Illinois River Valley Arts Council, a 501c3 organization dedicated to providing arts education and arts experiences. Donations will be gladly accepted to assist with expenses.

The second free Cave Junction concert, sponsored by Rogue Community College, is slated for Tuesday, December 16 at 7 p.m. Immanuel United Methodist Church

is located at 200 W. Watkins Street. Musical offerings by the RCC Illinois Valley Chorus will include a selection from Amahl and the Night Visitors by Gian Carlo Menotti and several lively spirituals, as well as solos by individual choir members. A reception hosted by the choir will follow this concert. Again, donations will be appreciated to help offset expenses for the use of the church for rehearsals and concerts.

"We hope those who celebrate the coming of the Christmas season with us will be refreshed with our songs' spirit of love, and renewed with hope for peace," Campbell concluded.

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