

Real estate in the Illinois Valley then and now

By
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IVN Contributing Writer

Real estate sales were booming here in the Illinois Valley in the mid-nighties up until about 2008. At different time periods throughout that decade, there was one real estate office in Selma, one office in O'Brien, and four offices in Cave Junction. There were almost 40 busy Realtors filling those offices, most working full time, to serve the real estate needs of the Illinois Valley.

The picture looks very different today. Only four offices survive, with only a few Realtors in each office.

Becky Newsted with Century 21-Harris and Taylor, who has been a licensed broker for eight years, shared some of her thoughts.

"The last five years have been up and down," she said. "This year, compared to previous years, has been a little better and my hope for the coming year is that it will continue

to improve, with more properties coming on the market that can be financed."

Newsted expects to see both short- and long-term improvements in the local real estate market.

"This is a great place to live; however, without industry bringing jobs and families into the Valley, we mostly depend on retirees to move here," she said. "I am, as always, optimistic."

Newsted's background in real estate started in Nevada where she was in escrow for 28 years and was a senior escrow officer for the last five.

Newsted explained that the commissions earned from the proceeds from sales of local real estate makes a big difference in the amount of money Realtors spend in this valley.

"When sales are up, we local Realtors have more money to spend here in the valley," she said.

Lynn Johnson, the owner and sole proprietor of Illinois Valley Real Estate, says, "I think the real estate market here in the Illinois Valley is back on track and will continue to

see slow growth. The past two years have been excellent. Prior to that, it was a definite struggle from 2008 through 2012."

Johnson first obtained her real estate license in Southern California in 1976. She has been licensed in Oregon since 1980 and has been the principal broker at Illinois Valley Real Estate since 1996.

Doug Stohlman, principle broker and owner of Junction Realty, said, "Just like all areas of our lives, the real estate business has become more and more complicated. When I first started in the business almost 30 years ago, listing a property was pretty simple. A one-page contract. Now, sale files are often an inch thick or more."

Stohlman also says, "A good Realtor can help a person determine the current value today. Not tomorrow and it doesn't matter about the past, it is gone, today is all that matters, unless you have a working crystal ball. It doesn't matter what we want, real estate is still an open auction."

Pat Brown has been in real estate for about

25 years and is a Principal Broker at Junction Realty.

"Over the past five years, real estate has become a buyer's market," said Brown. "We hear through the media that the market is getting better. It is not getting better in the Illinois Valley because there are not a lot of jobs here."

She says that lack of jobs makes it harder for buyers to get loans.

"It is also more difficult to find a home that will appraise at the price buyers and sellers agree on," said Brown.

Debi Buchanan, a real estate broker with Oregon Mountain Real Estate since 1992, and licensed since 1990, says, "Five years ago, it was very difficult to make a living. However, for the last two years, I have stayed extremely busy, even through the winter.

Buchanan continues, "I really expect the market to continue to improve as it has the last two years. Our prices have started going up a little. Folks are still trying to get out of California and we are still making a lot of sales to them."

LBMS students study the salmon life cycle

By
Judy Hoyle
IVN Contributing Writer

Not many sixth-graders get to participate scientific studies, or contribute to real ecological enhancement, but for the past three years, Tim Talty's students at Lorna Byrne Middle School have done just that.

Each October, Talty receives fertilized spring chinook eggs from the Cole M. Rivers Hatchery located on the Rogue River, 30 miles northeast of Medford near Lost Creek Lake.

The facility is used for adult collection, spawning, egg incubation and rearing of spring chinook, coho, summer steelhead, and winter steelhead, and egg incubation and rearing of fall chinook and rainbow trout.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife manages both harvest and conservation programs. Harvest programs operate to enhance or maintain fisheries without impairing naturally reproducing populations. Conservation programs operate to maintain or increase numbers of naturally produced fish without reducing productivity of naturally reproducing populations.

The programs at Cole M. Rivers Hatchery are harvest programs, used to augment fishing and harvesting in the Coos River, and mitigation for habitat loss and migration blockage due to the

presence of dams on the Rogue and Applegate Rivers. The hatchery produces 1,622,000 fry (162,188 pounds) of spring chinook for release into the Rogue River each year.

Hatchery personnel prescribe the required environmental conditions to Talty, and his students closely monitor the water's acid balance and temperature. Students acquire practice with measuring tools and learn about water quality and pollutants including industrial and farm runoff and the effect of toxins such as pharmaceutical drugs, which are often disposed into household drains.

The eggs are kept in the classroom for two months and students also record fish die-off. For example, last year's project was severely impacted by "soft shell disease." The condition, which increases shell permeability and can allow fungi and bacteria to infect the developing eggs, affected the eggs before they were delivered to the classroom.

Students also learn the importance of fish and study the salmon life cycle and the food chain which relies on this iconic species, including other fish, mammals and humans. During the past two months, the classroom stayed in contact with the U.S. Geological Survey in order to replicate the same temperatures occurring in the Rogue River. The purchase of a "chilling unit" has made this task much easier

than in the past when blocks of ice were used for the same purpose, with inconsistent results.

At the end of the project, students are given a narrow time frame in which to release the fish back into the Rogue River. No such programs are in place in the Illinois River, which is restricted to wild populations only.

Last week, a field trip to Baker Park near Grants Pass offered students the opportunity to return the fish to their natural environment. Approximately 185 fry were transported with the class and each student had the opportunity to scoop up two or three inch-long fish in a cup of water and deposit them into the river. The entire sixth-grade

class went on the field trip, and 61 students were available to participate that day.

Following the release, the students were taken to the Crater Rock Museum in Central Point to view displays including a fluorescent mineral display.



(Courtesy photo from The Illinois Valley News)

LBMS students release fingerlings into the Rogue River Dec. 16.

TUESDAY THROUGH SUNDAY
NOON ^{TO} CLOSE

RIB-EYE MADNESS

DEC. 26 @ 5

12235 Redwood Hwy • Wonder, OR
541-476-8990

9	7		5				3
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Traditional
Christmas Dinner

December 25, 2014
A traditional Christmas Dinner
FREE to everyone
Co-hosted by
Illinois Valley Baptist Church
Josephine County Master Food Preserver Volunteers

Noon until 3 pm
The County Building
Corner of Lister and Highway 199
(102 S. Redwood Highway)

Volunteers are always welcome.
Musicians and Donations are still needed.
Please call Jennie at 541-592-0327 to volunteer or donate.

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From
Taylor's
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Sat., Dec. 27, @ 6 p.m.

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