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Weather Watch

Cave Junction

**Thursday, Sept 8**
Clear
High -- 81 Low -- 54

**Friday, Sept 9**
Clear
High -- 91 Low -- 57

**Saturday, Sept 10**
Clear
High -- 92 Low -- 57

**Sunday, Sept 11**
Partly Cloudy
High -- 81 Low -- 53

**Monday, Sept 12**
Clear
High -- 82 Low -- 54

**Tuesday, Sept 13**
Clear
High -- 84 Low -- 54

**Wednesday, Sept 14**
Clear
High -- 85 Low -- 58

Following are the high & low temperatures, and rainfall recorded at The End of the Road in O'Brien by Cheryl & Harry Johnson:

August	High	Low
26	99.1	49.6
27	95.6	49.8
28	90.9	49.9
29	85.4	46.2
30	78.2	51.0
31	83.3	43.4
9/1	78.3	55.5

Aug. Rain: 0" YTD Rain: 60.90"
Average Yearly Rain Total: 89.11"

The town with no rules:

by Dan Klapheke

That's what I called the small, conservative, wild town in the corner of Oregon known as Cave Junction. No police, no rain, plenty of pot. Quaint and quiet, yet loud and in your face. There's no way to fully describe the place, and I'd just go off rambling if I tried.

I landed in Cave Junction after 60 hours on a Greyhound bus, sharing seats with former and current drug addicts, the homeless, the bizarre, the purposeless and everyone in between. I came in with a lot of expectations and far more questions, and the experience ended up being everything I'd thought it'd be, but also completely opposite.

My indecision on how to describe it all is probably the most accurate description available.

My first impressions of Cave Junction came from two articles: one from an online source highlighting "America's Greatest Newspaper Crime Blotter," which gave me ideas of the lunacy that might go on, and the other from a Los Angeles Times article on the area called "Trump Nation," which gave me ideas of the people.

All the impressions I got before arriving were spot on and way off. Yes, there were a lot of Trump supporters in Cave Junction, but also plenty of Obama and Clinton supporters--not to mention a hoard of authentic, straight out of Woodstock, grassroot hippies. There was also a gray area of people who were both hippies and trump supporters, which I'll never understand.

Journalistically, I didn't learn much, and my publisher and editors Dan and Laura Mancuso often acknowledged that. Instead, I took the opportunity to hone and craft my skills 3,000 miles away from everything I knew. The modern reporter isn't just a writer, and the same goes for the weekly mom and pop papers still out to make a living and inform their communities. I reported, wrote, photographed and designed my way through two months of intense summer heat, and no two endeavors were the same.

What I did learn, however, was the business of newspapers. It's ever more important today as the industry is evolving and warping, and every publisher and editor should ask

themselves before sending copy off to the press: what's going to sell this newspaper?

No matter what generation or how people share their memories, grandma's always going to get all giddy over seeing little Timmy's teeball photo in the sports section. People want to see themselves in the public eye. They want to read what they already know about their neighbors. They want a gossip source, and to know what's going on down the street.

I also learned you're going to piss off plenty of people, no matter what you do. I upset a local with one word in one of my last stories before I left. A woman came storming into the office one day because she didn't like that her friend was in the police blotter for theft. I certainly made a few enemies highlighting the rise in auto thefts and abandoned vehicles throughout the area. But you're not there to make everyone happy; you're there to inform.

The morning of my second day at work, Dan and I had a conversation about why I wanted to be a journalist on the way to the office--actually, first to the coffee shop, then the office, just like every morning. I answered that I want to tell people's stories. He returned that, no that was wrong, and there's only one reason I should want to be a journalist.

"It's essential to democracy," he said, or at least something like that, and likely more heated and long winded.

But he was right--I can love telling stories and writing about real people as much as I want, and that's what drives me and makes me happy, but the world would keep spinning without it. What ensures that our public officials are doing their jobs that the public can be informed on the issues at hand, is journalists who care about keeping it all in balance.

But back to telling stories, the world of legalized pot is one to tell that isn't getting enough light. We hear of new legislations and studies on the issue every week, but no one's getting down to the nitty gritty and observing how this radical, trickling change is happening. There are people dropping their lives to rush out west and get in the business somehow, somehow. Some carve out space on steep mountainsides

(Photo by Laura Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)
Dan Klapheke (left) and World War II veteran Marvin Haney at Sportsman Tavern June 11.

to grow what they can, others plot massive operations for full recreational productions. Guerilla is the name of the game.

It's the new prohibition and the new gold rush--or green gold rush, as the locals call it--and what history lovers far in the future will want to read about once the nation figures it all out. Some say it's just a phase, others as the new way of life. Whichever it may be, there's no doubt in my mind that stories will be told of this strange time we're in; the limbo of state vs. federal law that so many people are so tuned-in to.

With all that said, I walked into Cave Junction alone and a bit apprehensive and walked out with a whole new family and feeling like I'd always belonged there. There's something about that rugged, weird town, and no one should waste time figuring out what it is. It draws you in and hooks you, and you'll find your way back once you leave.

Here's to wine-soaked nights and fiery political debates, and another to names, dates and headlines. Thank you Illinois Valley News, thank you Mancuso family and thank you Cave Junction. I'm forever changed.



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— Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce



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