

## 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 The latter need not be published, but will be used to verify authenticity.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.

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

### Is our Democracy in serious trouble?

Let's have a serious, civil and constructive conversation about the state of our democracy. For example, here is just one significant issue to focus on today: Is our election system working as it should?

This question encourages us to think about how can the average American afford to run for political office? Why do less than 50 percent of Americans vote? How is gerrymandering rigging the election sys-

tem? Is it fair, reasonable and just for us not to elect the president by the national popular vote?

Dear concerned citizens, please consider attending the nonpartisan, "Democracy at Risk: Panel discussion at Illinois Valley High School Commons, Sunday, Nov. 5, 4 p.m. The table discussions that follow will give all of us an opportunity to focus on four crucial topics (in addition to the one mentioned above) regarding the state of our democracy. Together, let's figure out what we need to do to fix the problems.

**Gary Eby, MSW (retired)**  
Cave Junction

### Dear friends,

Like probably most of you, I have been frustrated, confused, and scared by current trends in politics and government. To cope, I joined Illinois Valley Indivisible, where I met a fine group of citizens who have bolstered my spirits and helped me work to promote positive change. I feel better!

The last election indicated to me that Americans need to talk with people within their communities, but across the political divides. I think we'd benefit by finding common ground and broad-based solu-

tions, rather than focusing on our differences or being bludgeoned into passivity. So our group developed a nonpartisan panel discussion and public dialogue we call "Democracy at Risk." It will be held November 5, from 4 to 6 p.m., at Illinois Valley High School in Cave Junction. It will address these concerns:

A. Is our Election System—our two-party choices, our right to vote, majority rule—working as it should? How well do our representatives actually represent us?

B. Are there signs we might lose our democracy, to something closer to dictatorship? What are the signs of authoritarianism? Are our Constitutional protections against abuses of power, like separation of powers, checks and balances, and our First Amendment freedoms working as they should?

C. What is gerrymandering? How much does it distort election results and polarize our politics? How big a problem is our polarization?

D. What are some positive solutions to our problems that citizens can propose and insist upon?

We have an excellent panel. I'll give an introduction. We have a scary video on tyranny. The second half of the program will be smaller discussion groups, each centered on

a different topic.

I hope to see you there, and that everyone who comes feels uplifted.

**Jack Dwyer**  
Selma

### Get active

This is an amazing community. Everywhere I turn there are active involved people spending their unpaid (or paid) time working to make our valley a better place. A few years ago, the Ford Family Foundation invested in our valley to support a learning process for community partnering. During and after that process, dozens of people, from many different walks of life, met and worked on projects together. I worked with people whose names I had known but with whom I had never spent any time. It was exhilarating to feel a part of the larger community. Then the IVCDO sponsored a community wide strategic planning process. They reached out extensively to get input from diverse groups for creating a better future here. The project spawned numerous ongoing action groups as well. Currently there are several opportunities for us, as community, to come together to enhance our ability to communicate with each other, to solve problems together and

to continue our valley-owned process of creating a better community.

Here are a couple, but check out the new Illinois Valley Web for dozens more opportunities to get to know your neighbors and do something good as well!

KXCJ Community Radio – Did you know we have our very own LOCAL radio station? They are always interested in community volunteers, new programming and community events.

Democracy at Risk: A Nonpartisan Panel & Community Dialogue takes place Nov. 5 at the high school at 4 p.m. This is a community event for addressing the challenging issues of our democracy, right here in river-city!

There simply are no problems too large for a group of dedicated individuals working together. Our local issues are not really separate from national issues. I for one would like to work harder right here, in our town, to learn to communicate with my neighbors, share ideas and nurture our diversity – politically, culturally and other ways – because I know that that diversity makes us stronger and more resilient. Together we stand. :)

**Patty Downing**  
O'Brien



Jane Goodall

## Even Mother Nature has an agent.

### STEWARDSHIP

Pass It On.

VALUES.COM THE FOUNDATION FOR A BETTER LIFE

## Obituaries

### Eileen Ethel McLean Feb. 4, 1939 – Oct. 22, 2017

Eileen Ethel McLean died, Oct. 22, 2017, at her home in Cave Junction, surrounded by her loving family. She is survived by her husband of 60 years, Walter (Mick) McLean; brother, Clayton Maxam; son, Reverend Mark (Theresa) McLean; daughters, Pamala (Edward) Yapple and Janice (Dennis) Martinez; 12 grandchildren; and 19 great-grandchildren.

Eileen graduated from Grants Pass High and married the love of her life June 5, 1957. Her achievements were monumental. Her passions were boundless. She was the first female licensed real estate broker in the Illinois Valley and sold real estate with her husband for many years. Later she became an investment officer at U.S. Bank in Grants Pass retiring in 1994.

Eileen was gracious and generous, a loyal

friend, mother and wife. She had a talent for making people smile. She loved camping, travel, her church, crafting and spending time with her family. She will be missed for the joy she shared with all who knew her.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later time.

# ILLINOIS VALLEY FUNERAL DIRECTORS

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541-592-4110

## Save the date

### Nov. 1.

Boys soccer playoff game Wednesday Nov. 1, against Western Mennonite will be played at Salem Academy, 942 Lancaster Dr NE in Salem. The game will start at 3 p.m. Ticket Prices: \$6 adults \$4 students

### Nov. 3 & 4

IVHS Speech/Debate Varsity Invitation at Ashland High School, Time to be determined.

### Nov. 4

Rummage Sale at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (across from high school), Saturday, Nov. 4 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

### Nov. 5

Democracy at Risk: A Nonpartisan Panel and Community Dialogue Sunday, November 5, 4 - 6 p.m. in the Illinois Valley High School Commons

Is America's Election System working as it should? Are our First Amendment freedoms at risk from abuses of power? Is political polarization tearing our democracy apart? What are some positive solutions that we, as citizens, can propose to maintain our core democratic values?

The event is free and open to all concerned citizens, and will include music and light refreshments. Participants are encouraged to bring finger foods to share. We hope you will join in the discussion of these important issues and work with us to find common ground.

For more information call 541-727-8312 or email qlcoach2@yahoo.com.

### Continuing

Your public library has activities happening every week! New Storytime reader, Melanie, has crafts and stories for kids of all ages Saturdays at noon. Families at Play baby-parent group is for pre-walking babies Wednesdays from 1-2 p.m. Early literacy skills are taught within a thirty-minute storytime of songs, bounces, and reading, followed by a half-hour of play and chat time. For more information contact Roberta Lee at 541-592-4770. I.V. Branch, Josephine Community Libraries, 209 W Palmer St, CJ.

\*Illinois Valley Community Watch Meeting every Monday from 5 - 6 p.m. at Wild River Pizza, 249 Redwood Hwy. – Cave Junction. A Public Safety Outreach Campaign ef-

fort with all I.V. Neighborhood Watch Groups – representatives, including businesses and churches, and support for anyone wishing to start a neighborhood watch. Includes a 2-way hand held radio program briefing from 4:20 - 4:50 p.m. Contact Guenter - 541-415-1929 / iwwatch541@gmail.com.

\*The I.V. Senior Thrift Store: Join the crew and make new friends. You don't need to be a senior citizen to volunteer at the store. Call us at 541-592-6630. Open Monday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

\*The Sheriff's Office Substation in Cave Junction is now open on Mondays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Volunteers are still needed to staff additional days. Applications are available at the substation or on line at <http://www.co.josephine.or.us/Files/Volunteer%20Application.Mar%202014.pdf>.

\*Cave Junction Patrol, LLC is looking for volunteers. CJ Patrol is a private citizen volunteer organization dedicated to effectively addressing heretofore-unchecked property crime in our city and neighborhoods. The primary mission of CJ Patrol is to prevent, in-

terrupt, report and decrease property crime in the city of Cave Junction. Call 541-592-9665 or visit [cjp patrol.org](http://cjp patrol.org).

\*Committee Meeting STATE OF JEFFERSON Josephine County 1st Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. Black Forest Restaurant, Grants Pass and 3rd Thursday of each month at 6 p.m., Wild River Pizza in Cave Junction.

\*Come join the Cave Junction Lions Club at River Valley Restaurant, at 6 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. We are a co-ed club and are always looking for community minded people that are dedicated, hard working, whether physically limited or not and most of all, like to have fun. Come by and see what we do or give us a call, 541-592-9243 Nina Horsley, president.

\*Second and fourth Mondays of the month, 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 222 W. Lister Street, Cave Junction, Oregon, the Common Council of the City of Cave Junction will meet in a regular session.

# Illinois Valley News

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**4 P.M. FRIDAYS**

AP AP EXCHANGE

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