

Obituaries



Josephine “Jo” Sauer, 91, Kerby, died Saturday, Jan. 1, 2022. Jo was born Feb. 27, 1930, in Brownsville, Ore. to Lauren and Mae Woody. She shared the role as the youngest of five with her twin sister, and best friend, Jerry Nelsen. She graduated from Brownsville High School in 1948 and continued on to pursue horticulture at Oregon State University until her family moved to southern Oregon, where she then received a business certificate at Merrick Business School. She later married Jack Sauer in 1960 and was just one week away from their 56th wedding anniversary before Jack’s passing in 2016. Together, they raised three sons, Nick, Gary, and Brad. The family lived on “Sauers Flat” in Kerby, Ore., where Jo would continue to live for the remainder of her years. Jo loved ranching, painting, bird watching, mushroom picking, and spending time with her family. She spent many years as an active leader of the Illinois Valley Livestock 4-H club. She was preceded in death by her husband, Jack; her son, Brad; her mother, Mae; father, Lauren; brother, James; brother, John; and sister, Betty. Survivors include two sons, Nick Sauer and Gary Sauer, and many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren. A celebration of life will be held in summer 2022.

Jeraldine (Jerry) Nelsen, 91, died at home Jan. 3, 2022. She was born

Feb. 27, 1930 in Brownsville, Ore. to Mae Umphress Woody and Lauren Woody. Jerry was the youngest of five children. She lived in the Willamette Valley and when she was 18 spent a year at OSU before moving with her family to Josephine County. She worked on the family Ranch and showed Hereford cattle at the Josephine County Fair. She and her twin sister, Josephine (Jo) were early 4-H leaders in Josephine County. Jerry continued her education with a certificate program at Merritt Business School in Medford. She had a lifelong love of agriculture and had always wanted to be a farmer. In 1959 she married Keith Nelsen and they bought the farm near Kerby. They raised sweet corn, cattle, sheep and pigs for many years. Jerry was again an active 4-H leader, with the Illinois Valley Livestock 4-H club. She also took up painting and was an accomplished artist, involved in a local art group. Growing vegetables and flowers were among her passions and they soon began growing and selling tomatoes and peppers along with the corn. A misspelling while painting sign boards led to the iconic name of Sweet Cron at the Farm driveway. Jerry is survived by her husband, Keith Nelsen, her son, Rhett Nelsen, daughter-in-law, Linda Nelsen and numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, her brothers, James and John, and her sisters Betty and Josephine. A Celebration of Life get-together will be held at the farm sometime early this summer. It will be a joint celebration for the twin sisters who died just 2 days apart. They were together their entire lives. The families will be announcing the date and time when it has been confirmed.

Debra Kay Stefanick, 68, Cave Junction, died Jan. 3, 2022 in Grants Pass. Debra is survived by her husband Larry A. Stefanick; daughter Tanya (Mike); grandsons Isaac and Forrest; granddaughters Christina and Angelica, four great-grandchildren; sister Janet; brothers Michael, Terry, and Jerry; and numerous nieces and nephews. Debra was preceded in death by her parents Norman & Melvina Ridout; brother Patrick; and son Thomas. As per Debra’s wishes, cremation has

taken place and interment will be held at later date. She is whole and strong again; now she knows the secret. She’s happy. Please visit the obituary and sign the family guest book at www.since1928hull.com.

Kevin Janoski, 53, of Cave Junction, died Jan. 13, 2022 at his home. Arrangements with Hull & Hull Funeral Directors.

In loving memory of **Patricia Ann Seagreaves** born June 30, 1941 died Jan. 9, 2022 at 10:40 a.m. at Asante in Medford, Ore. Born in Chambersburg, Penn. to JC and Ruth Lippy. Survived by siblings Bud and Jan Lippy, Charlotte Everitt, Sandra VanWhy and Ron and Donna Lippy. Spouse of Jeffrey Seagreaves. Loved by her children Bud and Wendy Lorentz, Doug and Lori Danweber, Mike and Diane Micolochick, Tracy Biggs, and Peter and Karen Micolochick as well as 13 grandchildren Tom, Chad, Jesse, Jacqui, Justin, Dana, Breanna, Katelynn, Julia, Blair and Nickolas. Preceded in death by Tygrachet, and Christopher. She also had 18 great-grandchildren.

Mark George Miller, 54, of Selma, died Jan. 5, 2022 at Asante Rogue Regional Medical Center. A funeral mass was held Jan. 15, 2022 at St. Patrick of the Forest Catholic Church in Cave Junction with Father Stephen Kenyon officiating. Interment will follow at Deer Creek Cemetery. Arrangements with Hull & Hull Funeral Directors.

Erwin Fredrick Sawall Jr., 89, of Cave Junction, died Jan. 7, 2022. Erwin was born March 15, 1932 to Erwin F. Sawall Sr. and Amelia Sawall of Kerman, California. He was a graduate of Kerman Union High School, class of 1950. The Korean War sent him to Okinawa, where he served in the army with the 29th Infantry Regiment. After returning to the U.S., he attended the University of California Davis where he

graduated in three years with a degree in plant pathology, and a minor in agronomy. He spent several months in Liberia, Africa working at Firestone Rubber before enrolling in a PhD program at Davis. With his new bride, Diana, Erwin moved back to Kerman after the death of his grandfather. He farmed the home acreage of grapes, and worked for Melville E. Wilson. Subsequently, he worked for many years as a research biologist for both the Insect Advisory Business and the University of California. Some important research included using ladybugs and lacewings for aphid control. Later, he would work for Western Farm Service as a pest control advisor, where he was an invaluable resource to farmers throughout the San Joaquin Valley. After moving to Cave Junction, Oregon, Erwin worked as a realtor in his semi-retirement years. As a lifelong conservationist, he was involved with the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy as well as the Oregon Water Trust. Erwin was an intellectual with a broad understanding of many topics, and could talk with anyone about virtually anything. His gift of gab and storytelling was unsurpassed, as was his collection of tools and anything that looked remotely useful. He loved tinkering in his shop, gardening, ham radio, books, and a host of other interests. Erwin enjoyed good music, especially the blues, and loved dancing. His mind was sharp till the end, regaling stories with historical accuracy. Erwin had loyal friends from around the world and was immensely proud of his family. He is survived by his wife Diana Sawall; sister Mary Ann (Norman) Pretzer; daughter Erica (Mike) Fica; sons Curt (Lisa) Sawall and Erin (Jane) Sawall; grandchildren Natasha, Jenn, Nikalie, Isiac, Elrik, Ariel, Lyndsy, Cory, Haley and four great grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his father Erwin F. Sawall, Sr; mother Amelia Sawall; Sister Beverly Douglas Tait; and son Eric Sawall. No service is scheduled at this time but to make a contribution in Erwin’s memory, please consider one of the following organizations that were important to him. The Dome School (www.domeschool.org) of Takilma, Oregon, or the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy (www.landconserve.org) of Ashland, Oregon.

Letters to the editor

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

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Reader explains ordinance
This is a request to the residents of Josephine County to read and understand Ordinance 2021-002; which amended JoCo Title 19 code enforcement provisions to address the very serious illegal Cannabis grows problem here. There has been so much misinformation on this issue that to understand it, you need to read it. Consequently, I have attached the link of Title 19, which shows the “before & after” versions via

mark-ups. I think that any rational person reviewing this would see the safeguards that have been added to address potential rights violations. This is a common sense tool to address our huge illegal grows problem, and yet Sen Robinson, who allegedly represents the majority of us, has done nothing to help solve this problem & everything to ignite a firestorm amongst us. He continues to bellow his “I will defend the Constitutional rights of my constituents” BS when the press is around, but then he goes silent and has offered no solutions. Please ignore his misinformation and read Title 19, before and after, before drawing any conclusions. **Here is a section of Title 19:**
19. 19. 020 Complaint driven violations; civil actions permissive.
A. The code enforcement process in Josephine County is strictly complaint driven. The Planning Department shall not devote resources to independently seek out violations of the Josephine County Code.
B. Except as outline in JCC 19.99.80, the discovery of a code violation by the

Planning Department shall not result in immediate legal action by way of an infraction citation or a lawsuit.
C. The initiation of any enforcement actions by Josephine County, including issuing infraction citations and initiating lawsuits, is permissive and not mandatory. Decisions not to initiate any civil actions are discretionary in nature and shall be made upon consideration of the severity of the alleged violation, the property owner’s cooperation, and County staff, time and resources necessary. **The following is a link to read the entire Title:** <http://www.co.josephine.or.us/Files/Ordinance%20No.%202021-002.pdf>.
Brad Vincent O’Brien
Reader responds to bank closing
Dear Mr. Elmer, As a MEMBER of First Community Credit Union, I am troubled that First Community is closing their branch in Cave Junction, and I would like you to consider the following and keep your bank open. My objections are listed

below. **Objection #1.** A financial institution closing its doors undermines all that is being done to better the town. The business owners in CJ are working on improving the appearance of the town and the efficacy of their actions in regards to the obstacles they face. But when a bank leaves town, a huge blow is dealt to all current actions. **Objection #2 –** The use of cash, especially when Banks could help change the laws, should not dictate if the bank stays or goes. I heard First Community is leaving because of a high rate of cash use. Because banks are powerful when it comes to money, this seems an opportunity. For the amount of money/time your board members earn and work, they could use their connections to make Cannabis federally legal so that cash COULD be deposited into a bank, strengthening YOUR bottom line! **Objection #3 –** First Community has not done due diligence where community outreach is concerned. Another reason for leaving, cited by First Community, was the lack of loan activity. More community involvement by

the bank could translate into more loans, i.e. interest on the loans i.e. money for the bank! If the bank invested some time and energy in the town, and businesses became prosperous and lucrative, there would be more loan activity! To be truly “First, Community”, as your name implies, the question “How can we help”? should be part of the bank’s mission. Build a performing arts center with your name on it, or remodel your CJ branch like you did in Grants Pass, or help the library with their remodel project! The rest will follow. **Objection #4-** Online is not always the answer. Those making this decision to leave CJ are no doubt thinking we can do our banking online. Many times that’s a correct assumption. But it can be problematic in rural settings. A winter storm or a forest fire will cause a tree to take down phone and power lines i.e. no internet. Banking online is wonderful as far as it goes, but many times, one just needs to go to the bank in person! It’s safer and more effective if you don’t have to drive 50 miles on a dangerous road to get to there. **Objection #5 –** First Community is not acting

in good faith and within the purview of its Mission Statement when you close the doors on a community. I have my car loan and accounts with First Community. But I am disappointed when I see that your Mission Statement is “TO BUILD LASTING FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH PERSONALIZED BANKING”. Closing this branch is exactly the opposite of your mission statement. The website is www.yfirstccu.org: it doesn’t feel like MY First CCU. It feels like the corporation has made its money and it’s taking the spoils and moving on. I would like to urge you to invest in the community where your bank has done business for so many years. Keep your branch open and truly become “First, Community Credit Union”. Thank you so much for taking the time to read my letter, **Michelle Le Comte Selma, OR 97538**

MORE LETTERS ON A-6

See Save the date on A-3

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