

Chamber director steps down

By Jolene Guzman
 The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — The Dallas Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center will soon have a new executive director.

Bob Brannigan, a chamber board member, said the board is in negotiations with a candidate for the job, but will not announce who until the deal is final.

“We are out looking for, and may have found, our next executive director,” he said Monday.

Current Executive Director Chelsea Metcalfe, who has been in the post for 12 years, will stay with the visitors center to focus on event planning.

“This is something that I have been working towards the last several years,” she said Friday following the chamber’s announcement that she would step down. “The timing is right now. I’m not going anywhere.”

She said the decision, made with the board, was both personal and professional.

“The jobs have grown so much. It’s really not fair to have one person to fill both of those,” she said. “It was just time.”

Metcalfe said she needed to re-evaluate her responsibilities and find a better balance between work and personal life.

“I’m refocusing before I miss it,” she said.

In event planning, Metcalfe will work the part of the job that she enjoys the most.

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EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer
Loren Depping and Brent DeMoe unload furniture for the new Family and Community Outreach Donation Center.

HELP ‘FILL THE HOME’

New donation center to provide household goods to those in need

By Emily Mentzer
 The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — Your first apartment probably didn’t contain half the stuff your home does now, but you likely had some things to sit on or a bed to sleep in. Maybe you inherited an old

microwave or broom, or picked up an old couch off the side of the road.

Imagine if you were fleeing an abusive partner or had been sleeping in Wallace Park — homeless — and had nothing but a black trash bag with a few mismatched clothes.

“Oftentimes, the folks that we’re serving are people who are getting a housing voucher for the first time,” said Loren Depping, Polk County Family and Community Outreach family resource navigator. “They’ve been living in a situation where the furniture they’re using isn’t

theirs, so they don’t have anything.”

Each year, about 5,000 people come through the doors at one of the Polk County resource centers needing help, said Brent DeMoe, director of Family and Community Outreach.

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Fire chaplain moves on after 29 years

By Jolene Guzman
 The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Dave Pederson makes a darn good burger — so delicious are his famous football game grill creations, that they’ve earned him a spot in the Dallas High School Athletic Hall of Fame.

“That was very nice of them, but silly too,” Pederson said with a chuckle.

Serious cheeseburger fans may disagree.

For 15 years, Pederson, the pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, served his “ultimate burger” at Dallas home football games. He puts so much cheese on it that it spills off the burger and melts on the grill, adding some crispy cheese for good measure to grilled onions and other toppings.

“I hate going to a football game and getting the same bad food,” he said. “I wanted to have real popcorn with real butter, and then I wanted to have spe-

cial stuff, hamburgers. I try to use the best ingredients and just make it special. I hope that happened.”

Pederson’s service in a different arena, the Dallas Fire Department, may be hall-of-fame worthy, too.

This month will end more than 29 years of serving as a department chaplain. Pederson and his wife, Karen, are moving to Colorado following his last service at Trinity Lutheran on Oct. 23.

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 Highburger helps Western Oregon football find some attitude.
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Brazeau to retire in June

Itemizer-Observer staff report
INDEPENDENCE — Central School District Superintendent and Central High School Principal Buzz Brazeau will retire at the end of the school year. For more, see next week’s issue of the *Itemizer-Observer*.

Most property taxes to go up for 2016

Itemizer-Observer staff report
 POLK COUNTY — Property tax bills will be coming your way soon, and most owners will see an increase in their taxes once statements arrive this month.

Polk County Assessor Doug Schmidt said the total amount of taxes, special assessments, fees and charges to be collected for all districts in Polk County is approximately \$87.5 million for the 2016 tax year, an increase of 3.4 percent compared to the \$84.5 million in 2015.

The primary contributing factors are the 3 percent increase allowed under Measure 50, and collecting for bond repayment, and new value to properties added through construction, Schmidt said.

Property tax statements will be mailed by Oct. 25 and taxes are due Nov. 15.

Schmidt said the real market value — the amount the assessor believes a property would sell for if placed on the market on Jan. 1 — increased in the county by 7 percent to \$8.12 billion. Assessed value (the value property taxes are based on) grew by approximately 4.9 percent to \$5.62 billion.

Schmidt noted that while assessed value may have increased by 3 percent or more, property taxes may have changed by a different percentage.

In Dallas, a city bond repayment decreased by 15 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, and a Dallas School District bond decreased by 6 cents per \$1,000. In West Salem, a Salem-Keizer Schools bond decreased by 65 cents per \$1,000.

The opposite happened in Monmouth and Inde-

2016-17 Polk County Property Tax Averages

Note: The values shown below are for demonstration purposes and may not reflect the actual Average Assessed Value for that city.

	Average Assessed Value	Tax Rate Percentage	Average Yearly Taxes	Change from 2015-16
Dallas	\$152,751	14.7988	\$2,261	1.4%
Falls City	\$86,332	12.3206	\$1,064	2.9%
Independence	\$123,114	19.8680	\$2,446	4.1%
Monmouth	\$147,144	18.2330	\$2,683	4.6%
West Salem	\$199,751	17.6568	\$3,557	-0.8%
Willamina	\$84,574	15.2059	\$1,286	2.1%

Source: Polk County Assessor

pendence, where taxes may have grown more than the increase in assessed value because Central School District’s bond repayment grew by 35

cents per \$1,000.

The cities of Dallas, Independence, Monmouth and Salem have active urban renewal districts, which will generate ap-

proximately \$2.89 million for those districts this year.

In Dallas, the URD will receive \$158,162; Independence will receive \$500,889; Monmouth will

receive \$273,310; and the remainder, \$1.95 million, will go to Salem.

Restrictions under Measure 50, which limits property taxes to \$10 per \$1,000 of real market value, caused the loss of \$417,403 in collections for districts in the county.

Schmidt encourages people to review their tax statements for accuracy of information. If changes are needed, call the assessor’s office at 503-623-8391.

If you wish to have your value reviewed, that can be done free of charge. Those still not agreeing with their real market value can file for an appeal. Instructions for filing an appeal are on the back of tax statements.

If you have questions about where or how to pay your taxes, call the Tax Office at 503-623-9264.

THE NEXT 7 DAYS PLANNING FOR YOUR WEEK

wed

Get involved in promoting tourism in Polk County at a networking event at Left Coast Cellars tonight. 5-7:30 p.m. Free.

Mostly cloudy
 Hi: 63
 Lo: 51

thu

Hear candidates for Polk County sheriff, House District 20, and Senate District 12 in a debate at the Dallas Civic Center. 7-8:30 p.m. Free.

Rain and wind
 Hi: 60
 Lo: 52

fri

Rock out or enjoy the music at the Guthrie Park Acoustic Music Jam Session. 6:30 p.m. Free (donations accepted).

Showers
 Hi: 60
 Lo: 51

sat

Discover a new talent — and a new use for pine needles — at River Gallery’s pine needle baskets class. 11:30 a.m. \$40.

Rain and wind
 Hi: 59
 Lo: 51

sun

Increase your vocabulary by checking out a new word or two to celebrate National Dictionary Day.

Showers
 Hi: 60
 Lo: 50

mon

Dallas Chamber of Commerce luncheon works double as a forum on measures 97 and 98. RSVP by Friday. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. \$12.

Showers
 Hi: 60
 Lo: 49

tue

Show off your jump rope skills at Rope Busters at Whitworth Elementary School on Tuesdays and Thursdays. 2:30 p.m. \$30.

Showers
 Hi: 58
 Lo: 48