

Blazing the New Year's Trail

Dusty Dodson, Dave Dodson, Samantha Young and Tracy Young, left to right, hit the trail on Saturday morning for the Polk County Saddle-ites' annual New Year's Ride in Pedee. With freezing temperatures gone, the ice had melted and turned to mud for much of the trail through the hills. Neither the horses nor riders seemed to mind. About 25 riders came from throughout the Willamette Valley to participate in the annual event, which includes a chili feed and bonfire to warm up after the one-and-a-half hour ride.



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer

Ducks: Ainsworth is optimistic

Continued from Page 1A

Those dark days are over — a point the Ducks drove home with a 59-20 pummeling of defending national champion Florida State on Thursday.

"I thought it would be really tight," Ainsworth said of his thoughts before the semifinal game. "I thought that we could score on them, but they could also score on us. But our defense has really played well the latter part of the season, especially the last four games."

The score was tight, 18-13 in favor of the Ducks, at half-time, giving Oregon fans anxiety with FSU quarterback Jameis Winston and Co.'s "second-half team" reputation. The Ducks defense had an answer for that, starting with linebacker Derrick Malone Jr.'s strip of FSU star freshman running back Dalvin Cook during the Seminoles' opening posses-

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—Mike Ainsworth

sion of the second half.

"It seemed like it was Katy bar the door then," Ainsworth said. "The dam had broken."

A flood of Oregon scoring followed — 27 points in the third quarter alone.

"I knew it was over when (linebacker) Tony Washington picked that ball up and ran it in for a touchdown," Ainsworth said, referring to Winston's now-infamous "stumble fumble." "The people in our section were just going crazy. It really makes the trip worthwhile when you win."

Actually, the Rose Bowl was the cap on a fantastic two-day stretch for the Ainsworths.

The day before the Rose Bowl, they were showing their Panther Pride as they cheered for Central graduate Grant Hedrick, who quarterbacked the Boise State Broncos to victory at the Fiesta Bowl.

"He's a great athlete, but he's a better person than he is an athlete," Ainsworth said. "We should have been saying Hedrick for Heisman."

Well, Ainsworth isn't in the least disappointed college football's highest individual honor went to Oregon quarterback Marcus Mariota.

And Ainsworth is hoping — nay, is confident — the Ducks will keep that roll going Monday night. He isn't

overlooking the 'Bama-tested Buckeyes, though.

"It's going to be tough. I would venture to say that Ohio State is the hottest team in the country," he said. "They are just phenomenal, but so are the Ducks. We have the best college football player in Marcus Mariota."

"I'm not going down there to watch them get beat," Ainsworth added.

In addition to the chance to win the team's first national championship, there is a little revenge on the line for the Ducks. Oregon is 0-8 against Ohio State, the last defeat coming in the 2009 Rose Bowl. Oregon — and its fans — would love to erase that memory.

"You've got to get that monkey off your back at some point, so I think this is the perfect time," Ainsworth said. "I think we match up well with them."

Nonprofit status granted to FCFD

Decision will benefit community

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

FALLS CITY — The Falls City Fire Department has been granted nonprofit status by the Internal Revenue Service, allowing the agency and its firefighters to continue a long tradition of donating to community causes.

For decades, firefighters with the Falls City department have donated their "points" money to charitable causes, such as Falls City High School, fire victims, or to pay for community Halloween or Christmas parties.

However, about a year ago the practice that allowed for money to be collected and donated came under fire in Falls City and at all other fire departments across the country.

The IRS has a strict definition of volunteer — meaning they cannot be paid anything, including a very minimal stipend for responding to emergency calls and attending training. The practice was originally meant to cover expenses, such as gas, incurred when volunteers respond to calls.

In Falls City, the amount firefighters were given credit for was based on a point system — with each call or training session assigned a point value. Firefighters were then "paid" based on how many points they had at the end of each month.

Those payments had to come to an end everywhere, but Falls City Fire Chief Bob



Young said the Falls City Fire Association decided to continue to support local charities until the city and the IRS could work out an agreement for nonprofit status.

That took an unexpectedly long time — about six months — before the city received notice in December the status was granted.

"We had to pull about \$4,000 out of savings to keep things going like they had been," Young said.

But now that the fire department is officially a nonprofit, it can take a monthly donation from the city to cover what would have been firefighter "points" in the past and continue to support community causes. The arrangement is to be finalized in an agreement between the department and the city on Thursday.

"We are going to put this as more of a community contribution than anything else," said Jon Hanken, Falls City's interim city manager. "That gets us away from the IRS' concerns and everything should be moving forward."

Young said he's glad to see the situation resolved, but added the nonprofit application process cost the department about \$1,100 and didn't change how the system operated.

"The only one that really benefitted from this whole thing is the IRS," he said.



Young

Dallas council OKs enterprise zone

Itemizer-Observer staff report

DALLAS — The Dallas City Council unanimously approved an expansion of the Dallas-Independence-Monmouth Enterprise Zone Monday.

The addition is in Independence and will add 7.22 acres to the area within the city's boundaries in an area

called "central business district" off Monmouth Street. All zone sponsors — which include Dallas, Monmouth, and Independence — must approve a resolution supporting the expansion for it to take effect. Polk County also must approve the expansion.

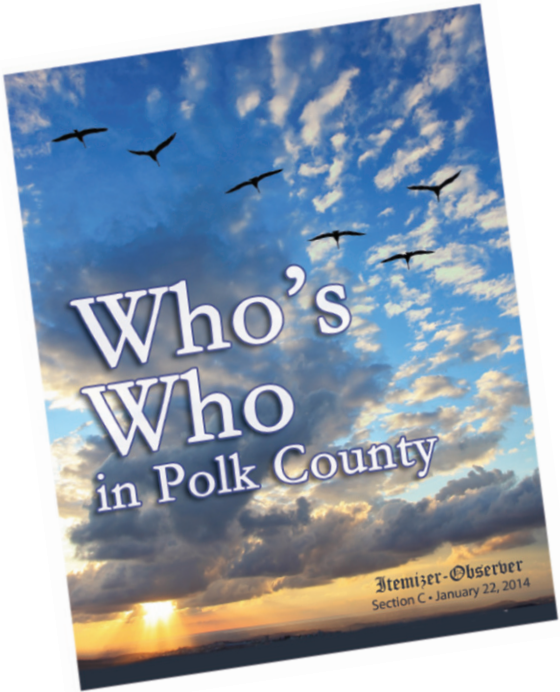
The enterprise zone offers

businesses that locate or expand within it a three- to five-year property tax exemption on capital investment in a plant or equipment.

The zone was originally created in 2009. In 2013, it received a supplemental designation as an "electronic commerce zone."

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		2		4		6	9
		1					
4			3				2
6		5				9	
	9		7	4			
	2		9	3	1	5	
							5
5				7	6		4
			1			2	7

Sudoku

Difficulty: ★★★★★☆

Row →	4	3	2	8	1	6	7	5	9
	5	6	9	3	7	4	8	1	2
	1	7	8	9	5	2	4	6	3
Three-by-three square →	3	4	7	2	8	5	6	9	1
	2	1	6	7	4	9	3	5	8
	9	8	5	1	6	3	2	7	4
	7	9	1	4	3	8	5	2	6
	8	5	3	6	2	1	7	4	9
	6	2	4	5	9	7	1	3	8

How to do Sudoku

Fill in the grid so the numbers 1 through 9 appear just once in every column, row, and three-by-three square. See example above.

By Ben Arnoldy

The Christian Science Monitor