

EDITORIALS

Charitable giving
a year-round affair

Another Christmas has come and gone. Thanks to the hard work of a number of groups and individuals in and around Polk County, the holiday was a little more joyous for those less fortunate in our communities.

But Christmastime makes up just a small part of the 365 days on the calendar, and the need for assistance by members of our communities doesn't magically disappear after the holidays are over at the snap of a finger.

Just because the local school isn't conducting a food drive or you don't see a Salvation Army bellringer outside your favorite store doesn't mean the demand for help has ended.

By nature, people seem most charitable during the Christmas holiday season or following a natural disaster. But it shouldn't take a holiday or a catastrophic event to bring out the best in people. The need exists throughout the year.

Please do your part and donate food, clothing or make a monetary contribution to those agencies who help our neighbors in need. And if you cannot afford to help in those ways, consider a donation of your time. A number of groups are looking for volunteers to help meet their demands.

Your help will be greatly appreciated.

PUBLIC AGENDA

Public Agenda is a listing of upcoming meetings for governmental and nongovernmental agencies in Polk County. To submit a meeting, send it at least two weeks before the actual meeting date to the *Itemizer-Observer* via fax (503-623-2395) or email (kholland@polkio.com).

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 7

- **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
- **Monmouth Historic Commission** — 6 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0722.
- **Monmouth Planning Commission** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0722.

THURSDAY, JAN. 8

- **Polk County Fire District No. 1 Board** — 6 p.m., Central Station 90, 1800 Monmouth St., Independence. 503-838-1510.
- **Polk County Public Safety Local Option Tax Hearing** — 6 p.m., Grand Ronde Community Center, 9615 Grand Ronde Road, Grand Ronde. Polk County Board of Commissioners-hosted public forum to discuss proposed countywide public safety levy. 503-623-8173.
- **Luckiamute Watershed Council** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-837-0237.
- **Falls City City Council** — 7:30 p.m., Falls City Community Center, 320 N. Main St., Falls City. 503-787-3631.

MONDAY, JAN. 12

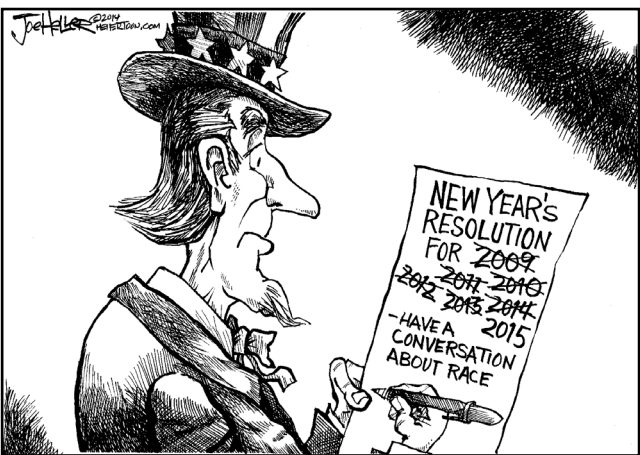
- **Dallas School Board** — 3 p.m., Dallas High School, 1250 SE Holman Ave., Dallas. 503-623-9664, ext. 2334.
- **Luckiamute Domestic Water Cooperative Board** — 7 p.m., Luckiamute Domestic Water Cooperative business office, 8585 Suver Road, Monmouth. 503-838-2075.
- **Perrydale School Board** — 7 p.m., Perrydale School, 7445 Perrydale Road, Amity. 503-623-2040.

TUESDAY, JAN. 13

- **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
- **Central School District Board of Directors** — 6:30 p.m., Henry Hill Education Support Center, 750 S. Fifth St., Independence. 503-838-0030.
- **Dallas Planning Commission** — 7 p.m., City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.
- **Kings Valley Charter School Board** — 7 p.m., Kings Valley Charter School, 38840 Kings Valley Highway, Kings Valley. 541-929-2134.
- **Independence City Council** — 7:30 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 14

- **Monmouth Library Board** — 7 a.m., Monmouth Public Library meeting room, 168 S. Ecols St., Monmouth. 503-838-0722.
- **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
- **Polk County Public Safety Local Option Tax Hearing** — 6 p.m., Dallas Civic Center, 945 SE Jefferson St., Dallas. Polk County Board of Commissioners-hosted public forum to discuss proposed countywide public safety levy. 503-623-8173.
- **Polk Soil and Water Conservation District Board** — 6 p.m., USDA Service Center, 580 Main St., Suite A, Dallas. 503-623-9680.
- **Monmouth Park and Recreation Board** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0722.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Political correctness
spoiling Christmas

With the beauty of the Christmas season we just enjoyed, I wanted to comment on some things that I observed this year, along with a revisiting of Christmases in Dallas of years gone by.

First, I'd like to say a huge "thank you" to Janice and Judy for displaying the nativity scene we have seen in the window of Guy's Gifts and then, more recently, Plain and Fancy. Even though the business is gone now, you two gals put in extra time and energy to set this lovely scene up for those of us who have enjoyed it over the years.

As a person who was born and raised in Dallas, I have many great memories of past Christmases. Other folks I have visited with recall seeing the nativity scene that was placed on the Polk County Courthouse lawn during the month of December. I miss this, too, and have wondered whatever happened to this special set and who made the decision to take it away. Another observation was the replacement of wishing the community a "Merry Christmas" on the school signs.

I feel we have become so sensitive to political correctness that we are missing out on the most important areas of positive joy that could be ours as a community.

*Jerry Thiessen
Dallas*

Homeowners should
attend city meeting

All residents and homeowners of Independence are invited to attend our Jan. 13 city council meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Civic Center.

At the December meeting,

questions were raised about homeowners required to pay water base rate and sewer fees that average \$85 per month on a vacant home. This means any home that sits empty between tenants or for months, possibly years, waiting to be sold is still required to pay this monthly expense for unused services.

Where is this money going? David Clyne, city manager, will report on questions that were asked. A letter has also been submitted to the mayor asking for all documentation as to when, why and how the decision to charge these extreme rates were made and implemented.

Who can afford to pay an average of \$85 per month on a vacant home that is not bringing any revenue? It is imperative that every homeowner who has experienced this expense on a vacant home or may in the future attend this meeting and get some answers.

If you wonder what this money is paying for since no water/sewer services are being used at a vacant property, this would be a great way to find out. Don't sit idle; attend this meeting and express your concerns by being present or stand up and say what you feel. If you have any information relative to this issue, you may want to address them at this meeting.

As homeowners and taxpayers of the city of Independence, we have a right to know how this money is being used and why we have to pay for utilities at a vacant property. Most cities do not charge a non-use fee, especially to this extreme. We must stand together to be heard. We urge you to attend.

*Larry and Victoria Kruljac
Independence*

Public responsible
for crime in area

The evening of Dec. 19, an employee at North Dallas Bar & Grill had her Toyota pickup stolen. The same night, not far away, another Toyota pickup was stolen.

If these were kids out joy riding and they are caught, they need to be punished, not just a slap on the wrists. The parents need to take responsibility for the actions of their children and be punished as well.

Rehabilitation is to make them never want to go through this again, not send them to a camp or doctor to talk out their problems. Put their pictures and names in the paper. Make their punishment very public.

If this was done by professionals, then it is the fault of the community for not paying attention to what is going on. You voted down a levy to raise money for the sheriff so he could have coverage 24/7. Sheriff Bob Wolfe is a dedicated law enforcement officer who is paid less than the police chiefs of Independence, Monmouth and Dallas.

It is time that the residents of Polk County step forward and pay attention to what is going on in Polk County. The county gives more money to social programs that should go to the sheriff's office. With a staffed sheriff's office, we will not need the social programs.

Remember the next time you need the sheriff's department and they aren't available. If you didn't vote for the levy it is your fault, as well as all the others that did not vote the levy in.

Parents, you are responsible for what your children do. Do not count on the village or a baby sitter to take care of them.

*Ted Campbell
West Salem*

WANT TO WRITE A LETTER?

Letters to the editor are limited to 300 words. Longer letters will be edited.

Each writer is restricted to one letter per 30-day period.

Letters that are libelous, obscene or in bad taste will not be printed. Attacks by name on businesses or individuals will not be printed.

Letters to the editor that are obvious promotions for a business, products or services will not be printed.

The *Itemizer-Observer* does not guarantee the accuracy of facts presented by letter writers; dissenters are welcome to respond.

Letter writers who disagree with other published letter writers should maintain a civil discourse and address the subject, not the author.

Letters, like all editorial material submitted to the newspaper, are edited for length, grammar and content.

Letters must include the author's name, address and telephone number. This includes letters submitted via the *I-O's* website. Names and cities of residence are published; street addresses and telephone numbers are used for verification purposes only.

Letters must be submitted from individuals, not organizations, and must be original submissions to the *I-O*, not copies of letters sent to other media.

Letters of thanks to businesses, individuals and organizations are limited to 10 names. The deadline for letters to the editor is Monday at 10 a.m.

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