

EDITORIALS

Despite loss, Ducks prove to be winners

Congratulations to head coach Mark Helfrich and everyone associated with the University of Oregon football team. While the Ducks came up short in their bid for the College Football Playoff National Championship — Oregon lost to Ohio State 42-20 at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, on Monday night — the team certainly came up big winners in the eyes of many of its green and yellow-clad Quacker Backers. The attention the national championship game brought to the Ducks' football program, the University of Oregon and the state of Oregon was unprecedented. Many jumped on board the UO bandwagon, including non-football fans who certainly enjoyed the ride. That extra attention will surely pay off in a number of ways, including the potential increase in student enrollment at Oregon from young men and women across the nation, and a boost in tourism to our state. Even in defeat, the Oregon football team made many of its supporters and others proud.

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. 14
• Monmouth Library Advisory 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.
THURSDAY, JAN. 15
• Polk County Fair Board — 8 a.m., Polk County Fairgrounds and Event Center, Main Building (Meeting Room No. 2), 520 S. Pacific Highway (99W), Rickreall. 503-623-3048.
• Dallas Economic Development Commission — Noon, City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.
• Independence Parks and Recreation Board — 6 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
• Monmouth Arts and Culture Commission — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0722.
MONDAY, JAN. 19
• Luckiamute Domestic Water Cooperative Board — 7 p.m., Luckiamute Domestic Water Cooperative business office, 8585 Suver Road, Monmouth. 503-838-2075.
TUESDAY, JAN. 20
• Polk County Board of Commissioners — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
• Independence Historic Preservation Commission — 4 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
• Falls City School Board — 5:30 p.m., Falls City High School resource room, 111 N. Main St., Falls City. 503-787-3521.
• Dallas City Council — 7 p.m., City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.
• Monmouth City Council — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0722.
WEDNESDAY, JAN. 21
• Polk County Board of Commissioners — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
• Polk County Extension Service District Board — 12:30 p.m., Polk County-OSU Extension Service Office, 289 E. Ellendale Ave., Suite 301, Dallas. 503-623-8395.
• Polk County Public Safety Local Option Tax Hearing — 6 p.m., Monmouth Public Library, 168 Ecols St. S., Monmouth. Polk County Board of Commissioners-hosted public forum to discuss proposed countywide public safety levy. 503-623-8173.
• Luckiamute Valley Charter Schools, Bridgeport Campus, 17475 Bridgeport Road, Dallas. 503-623-4837.
• Monmouth Planning Commission — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0722.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Christmas Cheer makes a difference

Our goal every year at Christmas Cheer is to help families in need in our area to have a Merry Christmas by providing them food and, if possible, some gifts. We had good indicators that the number of applicants may be larger than the 286 families we provided for in 2013 — and it was. For 2014, we had 325 families and senior citizens apply for help, and we can say with pure joy that all were provided for. Our goal was met because many people from all walks of life, young to old, stepped up and came together not just on Christmas Eve morning, but months prior to the event. Our schools, local businesses, churches, civic groups and individual volunteers gave goods, dollars and time so the goal could be reached. The reward from all the prior work happens on Christmas Eve morning. Without prompting, from about 5:30 a.m. the volunteers start arriving at La Creole Middle School to sort, shop, pack and deliver the holiday food boxes that fill receiving family's refrigerators and cupboards. The volunteer count this year was estimated at 550. What a great time of reunion and celebration was had by both new and returning volunteers. It is pure joy to see the hands and feet of our community come together to provide to those in need. We hope this letter of thanks gets to all who took the time to help both financially and physically, and also to those who received the gift of food and toys that this act of kindness will be remembered throughout the new year. On behalf of our board of directors, to all the donors and volunteers, again we say "thank you" and look forward to seeing you next year.

Warren and Sue Lamb  
Dallas Christmas Cheer

Community should support levy idea

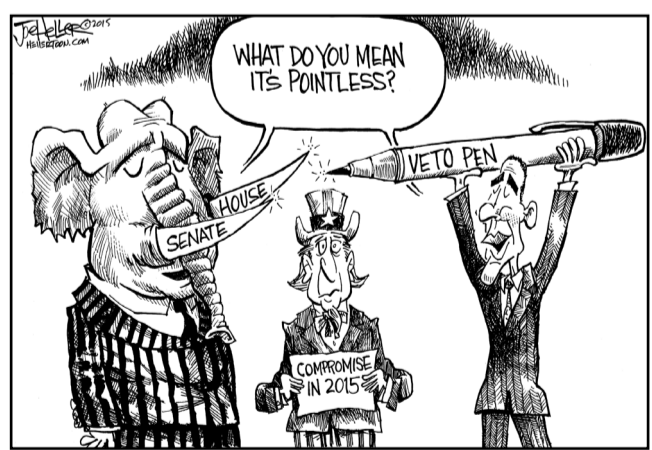
Currently, the Polk County commissioners are conducting a series of meetings around the county to gather public input on a new public safety levy. I recognize the challenges the commissioners face. It is hard to ask for new taxes when the voter base doesn't have a sincere belief in the value of the services to be supported. I know the dedication, work and energy required to get voters to support and fund public services. Twice, as a city councilor, I asked Monmouth voters for money. I campaigned to secure passage of the Monmouth police station bond and worked with Polk Fire District No. 1 to gain approval of the recent bond and levy measures. These measures passed because voters came to understand the community value of the requests. More than ever, those of you who voted for Commissioners Pope, Ainsworth and Wheeler should stand with them and show support for their difficult decision in asking you for additional taxes. Let them know that, not only will you vote "yes" for this levy, but that you will support their leadership in this challenge to make Polk County safer by helping the commissioners get out the vote. Polk County cannot wait for someone else to make us financially whole. Call, email or drop by the commissioner's office to let them know you voted for their leadership and still support their financial leadership. Steve Milligan  
Monmouth

Volunteers are key to tourney success

The third annual Brunner Invitational, a Dallas High School wrestling tournament named after Janet Brunner, who ran the event for 20 years, was an exciting event yet again. This year, there was a total of seven teams competing on five mats in two gyms at Dallas High on Saturday. The tournament consisted of 378 matches with 125 student-athletes participating. Huge kudos to the many volunteers that assisted. The tournament would not be possible without you. Special thanks to Liz Dunagan, who has run an outstanding concessions for many years, and Betty Jordan, who headed up the hospitality room. We are fortunate to live in a generous community such as Dallas. DHS wrestling very much appreciates our many sponsors: Thrifty Market, Lime Berry, Rite Aid, Mira Mar, Courthouse Café, Ugo's Pizza and North Dallas Bar & Grill. All admissions and concessions receipts will help fund the wrestling program. Thank you for your continued support, and we hope to see you next year. Alice Bibler  
Dallas

Learn how public safety system works

U.S. CONGRESS  
Sen. Ron Wyden (Dem.)  
221 Dirksen SOB  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
Phone: 202-224-5244  
Fax: 202-228-2717  
Salem office: 707 13th St. SE, Suite 285, Salem, OR 97301  
Phone: 503-589-4555  
Email: via website, www.wyden.senate.gov  
Sen. Jeff Merkley (Dem.)  
313 Hart SOB  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
Phone: 202-224-3753  
Fax: 202-228-3997  
Salem office: 495 State St. SE, Suite 330, Salem, OR 97301  
Phone: 503-362-8102  
Email: via website, www.merkley.senate.gov  
Rep. Kurt Schrader (Dem.)  
108 Cannon HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
Phone: 202-225-5711  
Fax: 202-225-5699  
Salem office: 544 Ferry St. SE, Suite 2, Salem, OR 97301  
Phone: 503-588-9100  
Fax: 503-588-5517  
Email: via website, www.schrader.house.gov  
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www.co.polk.or.us  
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Dallas, OR 97338  
503-623-2338  
www.ci.dallas.or.us  
Falls City  
299 Mill St.  
Falls City, OR 97344  
503-787-3631  
www.fallscityoregon.gov  
Independence  
555 S. Main St.  
Independence, OR 97351  
503-838-1212  
www.ci.independence.or.us  
Monmouth  
151 W. Main St.  
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503-838-0722  
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