

# MI TOWN

Looking out the window upon the beginnings of what should be a glorious day of sunshine and blue skies overhead, reality (accompanied by the upcoming weather forecast) tells me that raindrops may be falling all over MI Town before this week's *Itemizer-Observer* hits print.

Whatever the case may be, we've sure had a wonderful break in the usual winter doldrums and many opportunities to think about the days to come.

Seed and plant catalogues are everywhere online and in mailboxes. I saw my first little purple violet along the front walk last week, and the daffodils look ready to burst forth in glorious bright color. Don took advantage of the beautiful day and mowed the lawns, vowing yet again to remove a certain old apple tree that threatens to impede



**PATTY  
TAYLOR  
DUTCHER**  
Columnist

his progress.

Punxsutawney Phil was poked and prodded from his warm and cozy den on Monday for Groundhog Day, and all of those weather gurus speculated whether we have six additional weeks of winter or if an early spring is on the horizon. I'm not in any big hurry to try on the latest in spring and summer fashions quite yet. No matter what Phil's weather friends have to say, we'll have days and weeks of bundling up before we venture outdoors in shorts and T-shirts.

Whether Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow — or not — the best way to warm up this Saturday morning is to enjoy the community breakfast at the Monmouth Senior Center. Servings are generous and are sure to please — pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, and biscuits and gravy are served, along with juice, coffee and tea. The hours are 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., and the cost is \$6 for adults and \$3 for kids under 12. See you there.

MI Town author and my neighbor, Scott McArthur, will speak about "Three Unusual Parts of Monmouth Past" at the Monmouth Senior Center's February potluck lunch on Feb. 13. All seniors (over age 50) are welcome to attend what should be a fun and interesting afternoon. Lasagna will be the main dish. The potluck begins at

noon, followed by the program at 1 p.m. Attendees are asked to bring a salad, bread, veggie or dessert to share.

Graduation statistics for Oregon high schools were recently released by the Department of Education, and while the results show some improvement over last year, there is plenty of room for improvement.

Central High School information showed a graduation rate of 73 percent (last year's stats were 68.7 percent), while Dallas was 66 percent (52 percent last year), Falls City 50 percent (20 percent last year) and Perrydale 87 percent (90 percent last year).

The statewide graduation rate was 73 percent, and included students with modified diplomas as well as those attending a fifth year in order to take advantage of college credits offered.

# BIRTHS

## Arnold

Grant Edward Arnold was born to Jason and Theresa Arnold of Dallas at 5:27 a.m. on Dec. 9 at Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center in Corvallis.

He weighed 10 pounds, 12 ounces, and was 23 inches long.

Grant joins Paige, 22 months.

Grandparents are Jay and Betsy Arnold of Dallas and Marty Warner of Independence.

## Ojeda

Genevieve Millianne Ojeda was born to Salvador and Rachael Ojeda of Independence at 4:43 a.m. on Jan. 12 at Salem Hospital Family Birth Center.

She weighed 7 pounds, 14 ounces, and was 20 inches long.

Genevieve joins Vivianne, 5.

Grandparents are Shane Skinner of Cathlamet, Wash., Dawna Tews of Independence, and Erasmo and Guadalupe Macias of Independence.

## Brown

Myla Zoe Brown was born to Travis and Rachel Brown of Turner at 4:38 p.m. on Jan. 20 at Salem Hospital Family Birth Center.

She weighed 7 pounds, 3 ounces, and was 20 inches long.

Myla joins Lola, 4.

Grandparents are Bob and Paula VanElverdinghe of Dallas, David and Tammy Lantis of Veneta, and Victor and Lynn Brown of Turner.

Great-grandparents are Bob and Gloria VanElverdinghe of Dallas.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

The *Itemizer-Observer* publishes engagement, wedding, anniversary (in five-year increments starting with the 25th), birth, military and milestone birthday (90th, 95th, 100th, etc.) announcements for their community news value. The deadline for items to be submitted is Thursday at 4 p.m. for consideration in the following Wednesday's edition.

Announcement forms are available online at [www.polkio.com](http://www.polkio.com) or by visiting the *Itemizer-Observer* office at 147 SE Court St. in downtown Dallas.

Photographs may accompany engagement, wedding, anniversary and milestone birthday announcements. They should be submitted at the same time as the announcement.

Announcements, like all news printed in the *Itemizer-Observer*, are subject to editing for style, content and length.

Individuals who desire a customized announcement should contact an *Itemizer-Observer* advertising representative at 503-623-2373.

# PEDEE NEWS

Betty Forry celebrated turning 102 on Jan. 19 — Martin Luther King Day — with a drive down Kings Valley Highway to see the wind damage from a previous storm, then on to McGrath's in Corvallis to have a dinner of scallops with her daughter, June Clark.

Then on Jan. 21, a bouquet arrived fresh and moist from Hawaii, including anthuriums, Tropic Fleur Heliconia, gingers, orchids and Hawaiian foliage. She does like to remember the many trips she and her husband



**ARLENE  
KOVASH**  
Columnist

took to Hawaii, land of warmth and beauty.

Dallas High School senior Paige Cochrane, daughter of Mickey and Debbie Cochrane, received the good news that she has been accepted at Willamette Univer-

sity in Salem, where she will possibly study law. She's an outstanding student who was a cheerleader last fall and just finished an internship at West Valley Hospital in Dallas.

Pedee Church just padded their pews — which makes a lot of people happy. They're a deep purple to complement the carpeting. On Jan. 25, several members and friends of the church gathered to plan Thursday night events, as that time has been very popular to get together, have

a meal and participate in various activities such as jamming, learning new skills like crochet and quilting, and visiting. Prayer time is at 5 p.m., dinner is at 6 and most activities start at 7. I haven't made it before 7, but did learn to crochet. Coming up is a class about selling on eBay.

Sam Guida's funeral will be March 7 at 11 a.m. at Pedee Church, with a potluck lunch following. Check out his obituary in the Jan. 28 *Itemizer-Observer* if you missed it.

# Location key when choosing spot for houseplants

Gardeners hear it often enough: right plant, right place.

It's a fundamental rule of gardening, said Heather Stoven, a horticulturist with Oregon State University's Extension Service, and one that applies to houseplants just as much as outdoor ones.

"Make sure you buy for location," she said. "That will help solve many problems that can come down the road."

In Stoven's office, a tropical-looking anthurium thrives in a south-facing spot with bright but indirect light, where it gets very warm in summer. Across the room, a peace lily looks just fine in a cooler, darker spot. Both are where they do best.

If they weren't, problems could range from burned or yellowed foliage, dropped leaves and death. Environ-



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Your  
Garden

mental stress sets a plant up for aggravation from pests and diseases. Keep it healthy with appropriate light exposure, watering schedule and temperature, Stoven said, and insects and pathogens are less likely to attack.

Figuring out what is what when it comes to lighting can give a person fits. Usually, you can rely on directional clues. A window facing south receives the most intense sun, west and east exposures rank in the middle and a north-facing window is considered low light.

Be cautious not to put

plants too close to or touching a window, where temperature variations and cold drafts can damage leaves. Heating vents and fireplaces, should be avoided, too.

In winter, Stoven recommends plants be watered lightly only when the potting mix is dry. Check by sticking your finger into the soil up to the second knuckle. Or pick the pot up; if it's light, the plant needs water. Be sure to use containers with drain holes in the bottom, otherwise water will settle at the bottom and cause root rot. Over-watering kills more plants than under-watering, she noted.

"There's very little to do once a plant gets root rot," Stoven said. "Unless it's a well-loved plant, it could be better to put up the white flag."

Plants can do without fer-

tilizer from November through March when the plant isn't actively growing, she said. In other times of the year, feed in moderation with a slow-release fertilizer in granules, tablets or stakes, which will last two or three months, or a liquid version every other week or according to directions.

If you notice burning on the tips of leaves or a white crust on top of the potting soil, you're most likely fertilizing too much.

Indoor plants can get pests and diseases just like any other plant, Stoven said. The dreaded three are aphids, mealy bugs and mites. Aphids are most familiar with their little green bodies and usually congregate on the undersides of leaves. The white wax covering their body and egg sacs that give them a cottony ap-

pearance distinguish mealy bugs. Mites, of course, will be quite small and are often hard to see with the naked eye, but speckles left from their feeding can give the plant a bronzed or yellow look. In the worst-case scenario, you'll see webbing on leaves.

If pests invade, snipping off infested stems and leaves can help control the spread of insects. Then wash plants off with a spray of water. Be sure to spray undersides of leaves as well. Stoven doesn't recommend using most chemicals for indoor plants, but said horticultural oils or soaps are a good option if you follow the directions. You can also target pests directly with a wipe of alcohol on a cotton swab and then rinse with water.

But prevention is always the soundest policy.

"The best thing to do to manage any pest," she said, "is not to bring them into your home in the first place. Check plants carefully when you buy them. And, if you take them outside during the growing season, when you bring them back in, check again."

Stoven suggests these houseplants for use in different lighting situations:

- Low light: pothos\*, snake plant, lucky bamboo.
- Low to medium light: peace lily\*, dracaena\*.
- Medium light: weeping fig or ficus, African violet, Boston fern, dumb cane\*.
- Bright, indirect light: anthurium\*, spider plant, palm.
- Bright light: schefflera, rubber tree, succulents, cacti.

\* — If you have kids or pets, pass on these poisonous plants or keep out of reach.

## BABIES OF 2014 in Full Color!

Showcase your little one with his or her photo, birthdate and names of proud parents.

Only babies born in 2014 are candidates for **BABIES OF 2014**. All babies submitted will appear in a special full color section of the *Itemizer Observer* on February 25, 2015.

Please mail or drop off the form at right, a photo and \$25.00 to our office by February 19th prior to 2:00 p.m. (The photo may be picked up after publication). If you have any questions, please call Dawn at 503-623-2373.



**Gemma Hawkins**  
Born Sept. 17, 2014

Mom! Dad! Grandparents! Bring in a photo!

All babies will be entered into a drawing for **FREE PRIZES** from area merchants!

CLIP THIS FORM

Baby's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print clearly.)  
Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_  
Birth Place \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

*Remember to bring in a photo! Cost is only \$25.00*

*All photos will be published in color!*

**DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 19**  
**PUBLISH: FEBRUARY 25**

**Itemizer-Observer**

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