

EDITORIALS

**Kitzhaber ultimately
was blinded by love**

John Kitzhaber has made a number of good decisions during his tenure as governor of Oregon. He also has made a number of bad decisions.

His worst — not acknowledging the conflict of interest between his office and the work of his fiancée — has now cost him his job.

Kitzhaber announced Friday that he was resigning as Oregon governor effective Wednesday (today), just weeks into his fourth term in office. It was clearly the right decision for him to make.

Investigations and allegations into possible ethics violations and corruption by Kitzhaber and Sylvia Hayes had reached a point where the governor could no longer lead the state. Oregonians as a whole had lost trust in him, including members of his own party. Several Democratic Party leaders had asked Kitzhaber to resign.

The recent uncovering of this State Capitol mess seemed to faze Kitzhaber in ways previously unseen. It was like the governor had become dazed and confused. He made no effort to answer the concerns raised during early questioning. He summoned Secretary of State Kate Brown, who will now serve as governor until an election in 2016, back to Oregon from a conference she was attending in Washington, D.C. When she arrived in Salem for her meeting with him, Kitzhaber asked her why she had come back early. Seriously?

Kitzhaber, considered a champion for health care and for jobs, got lost somewhere.

What may be most disappointing is the governor had to be known what was going on, yet continued his re-election bid last year.

Kitzhaber noted in his resignation statement that he was troubled that he could be “charged, tried, convicted and sentenced by the media” without an independent verification of the allegations brought forth.

But what are we supposed to think when he requests public documents be destroyed? We’re glad newsrooms still had the staffing to examine his — and her — records.

We hope that now that he has resigned, the state will continue its investigation to determine just what was going on. Oregonians deserve it and this simply can’t be swept under a rug.

In the end, Kitzhaber was blinded by love and it affected his ability to govern. And now, the level of trust in Oregon government has taken another hit. It’s unfortunate he didn’t love his state as much as he loved his companion.

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, FEB. 18

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

THURSDAY, FEB. 19

- **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 Committee** — 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, FEB. 23

- **Dallas School Board** — 2:45 p.m., Whitworth Elementary School, 1151 SE Miller Ave., Dallas. 503-623-9664, ext. 2334.
- **Independence Library Board** — 4 p.m., Independence Public Library, 175 Monmouth St., Independence. 503-838-1811.

TUESDAY, FEB. 24

- **Independence City Council** — 7:30 a.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
- **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 25

- **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Event's volunteers
make a difference**

The fourth annual Polk Community Connect on Jan. 28 was a success.

The planning committee and leadership team would like to recognize and thank all of the many partners and community members that helped make the day a success. More than 300 individuals were served with access to direct services and resources including dental, haircuts, pet care, clothing, bike repair and more.

The planning team would like to thank Valley Life Center for generously opening its doors and hosting the event; James2 Community Kitchen and Marion-Polk Food Share for providing and preparing the 500-plus meals served; Salem-Keizer Transit for providing free-ride rides to and from the event; Medical Teams International and local dentists for serving guests with dental needs; Salt Creek Baptist Church clothing ministry; to the 50-plus service providers who provided resource information and access to services; and to the more than 100 volunteers that helped make the day a big success.

The planning team is grateful to serve alongside supportive and community-minded churches, organizations and community members.

*Michelle Bornfleth
Dallas*

**Business steps up
for Falls City library**

Over the winter months, the Wagner Community Library has been on the receiving end of a plethora of donations, including toys, art, books and volunteer time.

The most recent contribution deserves special mention.

That “thank you” goes out to House of Floors, 680 Main St., Dallas. When House of Floors learned that the Wagner Community Library children’s area desper-

ately required updating, its staff was quick with a response. The quality Berber carpet with multi colors is expected to endure for many seasons.

It will be put to the initial test on Feb. 28 between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., when the library celebrates Dr. Seuss’ birthday. Come on out to the library to admire the cozy children’s section.

*Cynthia Hovind, director
Wagner Community Library
Falls City*

**Legal marijuana
isn’t the problem**

Regarding the letter headlined “Marijuana won’t be good for Dallas” (Feb. 11 *Itemizer-ObsERVER*), it’s like “Refer Madness” revisited in Dallas.

Presumably, the reason Josephine County is without police protection and their citizens need to arm themselves is legal medical marijuana. Josephine County is influenced by the Tea Party. They don’t agree with taxation and love guns.

To insinuate seasonal farm workers are abusing Oregon Trail cards smacks of the 1930s that used blacks, Puerto Ricans and Asians as similar scapegoats.

*Mike Neufeldt
Dallas*

**Tired of repeated
tax levy requests**

Why vote “no” on another county tax levy?

Maybe we’re tired of the old song. “We need more money. It’s only a cup of coffee a day more.” Voting “no” is the only way to send our message — our only hope of trying to make government take notice and change what they do. We resoundingly voted “no” more than a year ago. Is that not a valid voter decision? It’s always ask for more.

We are at our limit. We want government to recognize that and live within its means. Don’t ignore our

votes. Remember, you work for us.

*Charles Krogman
Dallas*

**Local businesses
value customers**

It was two years ago I bought a pair of comfortable and durable shoes from the folks at Rugged Wear in Dallas.

Wouldn’t you know it — my shoelaces started looking like they might not make it much longer. I went back to Rugged Wear.

I told ‘em I need some new shoelaces, “Could you sell me some?” The answer was “no.” And they continued, “We’ll give you some. Since you bought your shoes here, it seems like the right thing for us to keep you in laces, doesn’t it?”

Now that’s why I like shopping at home — in Dallas I’m a valued customer and person.

*Dave Weston
Dallas*

**Behavior of young
men was refreshing**

While having lunch at a local eatery Friday, we observed a group of young men having a meal. I want to compliment their parents and their coach.

They were polite to the server (I heard a lot of “thank yous”), paid attention to others around them so they were all able to enjoy a quiet wonderful meal.

It seems that the ones who make the most noise and create problems are the ones who make the newspapers. I just want to encourage them to continue on the path that they are on because it looks like they have a good start.

Again, please pass this on to any young person that you think might have been there. You are indeed on the right path. Kudos to your parents.

*Shelly Thornicroft
Dallas*

WANT TO WRITE A LETTER?

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

Election-related letters of all types are limited to 100 words. Writers are limited to one election-related letter per election

season. Election letters from writers outside of Polk County are not accepted.

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

Letters, like all editorial material submitted to the newspaper,

are edited for length, grammar and content.

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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