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Sheriff Wolfe set to retire

Sgt. Garton may replace him as county's top cop

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — Polk County Sheriff Bob Wolfe has announced he will retire at the end of this year.

His last day on the job will be Dec. 31. "It just became time," he said Monday. "My wife (Gail) and I will retire at the same time."

Wolfe has been in law enforcement for 39 years, all of those years in Polk County with either the Independence Police Department or the sheriff's office.

By the time he steps down, Wolfe will have served as sheriff for 16 years.

"I have surrounded myself with good quality, dedicated people," Wolfe said of his career with Polk County. "That has made my job easy, and maybe made me a better person."

Seeing the county's Polk County public safety levy pass in May made his decision to retire a little easier.

If the levy hadn't been approved, Wolfe said he would have stayed on another year or two to guide the office through potentially more downsizing.

Wolfe said he is going to recommend Detective Sgt. Mark Garton be appointed interim sheriff once he retires.

He said Garton plans to file for the office later this year, and an election will be held next year to fill the post permanently.

Garton started with the sheriff's office as an explorer cadet and later was hired as a part-time records clerk.

He has worked as a jail control room tech and a jail deputy.

See SHERIFF, Page 2A



Wolfe

Let Me Take A Selfie



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

As Dallas High graduates enter Gallaspy Stadium, Tyson Janssen stops to take a selfie before finding his seat on Saturday afternoon. The hot temperatures did little to stem the excitement and celebration of the Class of 2015.

Congratulations Class of 2015

Itemizer-Observer staff report

POLK COUNTY — Seniors from Falls City, Central, Dallas and Perrydale high schools graduated last week, starting with Falls City on Thursday; Central on Friday; and Dallas and Perrydale on Saturday.

The graduates, their family and friends endured some of this year's hottest weather so far, with the high on Saturday getting up to 91 degrees.

Each school's graduation cere-

monies had their own little touches, from speakers to musical numbers.

Take a look through pages 13A through 16A for photos and lists of graduates, and a look back through these students' first 13 years of education.

Morrison Campus Alternative School graduates its seniors at 7 p.m. on Thursday at DHS.

Western Oregon University's Class of 2015 graduates at 11 a.m. on Saturday.

HONOR BOUND

World War II veteran visits memorials in D.C. honoring his service



KAY DIXON/for the Itemizer-Observer

Leonard Lonigan salutes at the statue at the U.S. Air Force memorial during a Honor Flight trip to Washington, D.C. He was on a B-24 bomber crew during World War II.

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

FALLS CITY — In Kay Dixon's experience, if you were to ask World War II veterans if they were heroes, they would say "no."

Dixon — whose father, Leonard Lonigan, is a World War II vet — respectfully disagrees, and she isn't alone.

Lonigan and Dixon returned last week from an emotional Honor Flight trip to see the World War II memorial in Washington, D.C. Honor Flight's mission is to take as many of the war's veterans as possible to see the memorial dedicated to their service.

"The goal of the program is to make these men feel like heroes. The truth of the matter is, none of them feel like heroes. They all, across the board, will say, we were just doing our job," Dixon said.

See FLIGHT, Page 5A

IN YOUR TOWN

DALLAS NEWS

In urgent need of a little something sweet? A Little Donut Therapy has just the thing for you: mini doughnuts.

Don't worry — the tiny pastries still pack plenty of flavor.

"They are kind of addicting. I think they are more addicting than the regular-size doughnuts. They stay softer and they have more flavor to them," said owner Wendi Uselman, adding, "but that is just my personal opinion."

Others may agree.

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FALLS CITY NEWS

The Falls City City Council will consider an ordinance that would allow it to change tax rates charged on marijuana sales at its meeting Thursday.

Now the tax rates are set at 5 percent for medical marijuana sales and 10 percent for recreational sales. Possession and consumption of certain amounts of marijuana will be legal July 1. Falls City set its rates in October 2014, before Oregon voters approved Measure 91 in November.

The problem is that the legislation making recreational use legal contains a prohibition on local jurisdictions taxing sales.

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INDEPENDENCE NEWS

The Experimental Aircraft Association's Young Eagles program will be from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday at the Independence State Airport, EAA Hanger, 4803 Airport Road, Independence.

Young Eagles, launched in 1992, gives interested youths aged 8 to 17 an opportunity to learn about aviation and take a flight in a general aviation airplane.

All Young Eagles receive ground school training, a 15-minute flight, a picture and an official EAA Young Eagles certificate.

Sporty's Pilot Shop will provide all participants with a Young Eagles logbook.

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MONMOUTH NEWS

The city of Monmouth's Urban Renewal District will borrow \$500,000 from Monmouth Power and Light to help pay for the estimated \$1.222 million Main Street Park Amphitheater construction.

The money will be paid back over 10 years with 2.54 percent interest.

Monmouth City Council approved the move at its June 2 meeting, with Councilor Royal Johnson voting no.

Johnson preferred a five-year loan because the 10-year loan will last right until the end of the life of the Urban Renewal District.

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POLK COUNTY NEWS

Heading down to the Willamette River for a day on the water — or maybe just swim or wade?

Take your life jacket — and don't forget to use it. That is the No. 1 water recreation safety tip from state and local officials.

"We encourage people, if they are near the water to use a life jacket," said Dean Bender, Polk County Sheriff's Office Marine Program manager.

Also, if you are planning for a day on the water, don't go alone and always let someone else know about your plans.

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THE NEXT
7
DAYS
PLANNING
FOR YOUR
WEEK



wed
Learn all about hardy succulents at the Master Gardener's monthly chapter meeting tonight in Dallas. 7 p.m. Free.

Sunny
Hi: 80
Lo: 50

thu
Pick up all your fresh fruits, veggies and baked goods at the Polk County Bounty Market in Dallas on the Academy lawn. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Free.

Sunny
Hi: 81
Lo: 51

fri
Stop by Walmart and buy a hand-made paper poppy in honor of veterans from the American Legion Auxiliary. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Donation.

Sunny
Hi: 74
Lo: 49

sat
Attention Young Eagles: youths aged 8 to 17 head to the Independence airport to learn about flying and take a free flight. 8:30 a.m.-noon.Free.

Sunny
Hi: 75
Lo: 49

sun
Flag Day was officially proclaimed by Pres. Woodrow Wilson in 1916. In August 1949, Congress established June 14 as the day.

Sunny
Hi: 74
Lo: 49

mon
Learn about Camp Adair during World War II from history buff Gary Richards at the Independence Civic Center. 7 p.m. Free.

Mostly Sunny
Hi: 72
Lo: 49

tue
Check out the Polk County Coin Club at the Monmouth Senior Center and find out more about the hobby. 7 p.m. Free.

Sunny
Hi: 70
Lo: 49