

EDITORIALS

Another great show for the Fourth of July

Even the threat of historically high temperatures didn't keep the spectators or participants away from the Fourth of July festivities last weekend.

Thousands of people took to the streets throughout the county to enjoy parades, carnivals, festivals, barbecues — and of course, fireworks.

It takes a lot of people to make this event happen, from the volunteers who plan all year to the members of the Monmouth Independence Rotary Club — sponsors each year of the grand parade.

It's surprising the more you pause and look around. You see the nearly 100 Polk County Emergency Response Team volunteers on corners directing spectators and managing crowds.

So many people worked all day in the heat of the weekend so that others could celebrate.

First responders were out in force, with many faces from Dallas, Monmouth and Independence police departments as well as from the Polk County Sheriff's Office all around Monmouth and Independence — where the population at least doubles during the Fourth of July weekend.

It was great to see deputies and Dallas officers helping out their neighbors with patrols, setting up or directing traffic — whatever was needed to keep the public safe and secure while having a good time. We know many first responders would rather have a holiday with their families, and appreciate the sacrifice they and their families make.

We think some who work in our local government offices could take some notes from how well our law enforcement and first responder agencies work together.

As the dust settles on the Fourth of July weekend festivities, the momentum is really picking up for Dallas' Summerfest. In between that, Cycle Oregon will be visiting the Monmouth-Independence area. Summer in Polk County is definitely at full throttle.

As you plan your vacations and events, remember the volunteers that make it happen. Say thank you and be respectful.

Better yet, ask them how you can help. Getting involved in organizing or executing these events is a great way to not only help your community, but seeing the satisfaction of everyone enjoying your hard work is priceless.

There is always need of volunteers for these events — and year-round.

The best part is: more hands make for light work.

To find ideas of where to volunteer, check our website and search volunteer listings at www.polkio.com, or the websites for the cities of Dallas, Independence or Monmouth.

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 (ionews@polkio.com).

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8

• **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.

• **Monmouth Park and Recreation Board** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth, 503-838-0722.

• **Polk Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors** — 6 p.m., USDA Service Center, 580 Main St., Suite A, Dallas, 503-623-9680, ext. 5.

THURSDAY, JULY 9

• **Polk County Fire District No. 1 Board** — 6 p.m., Central Station 90, 1800 Monmouth St., Independence, 503-838-1510.

• **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.

TUESDAY, JULY 14

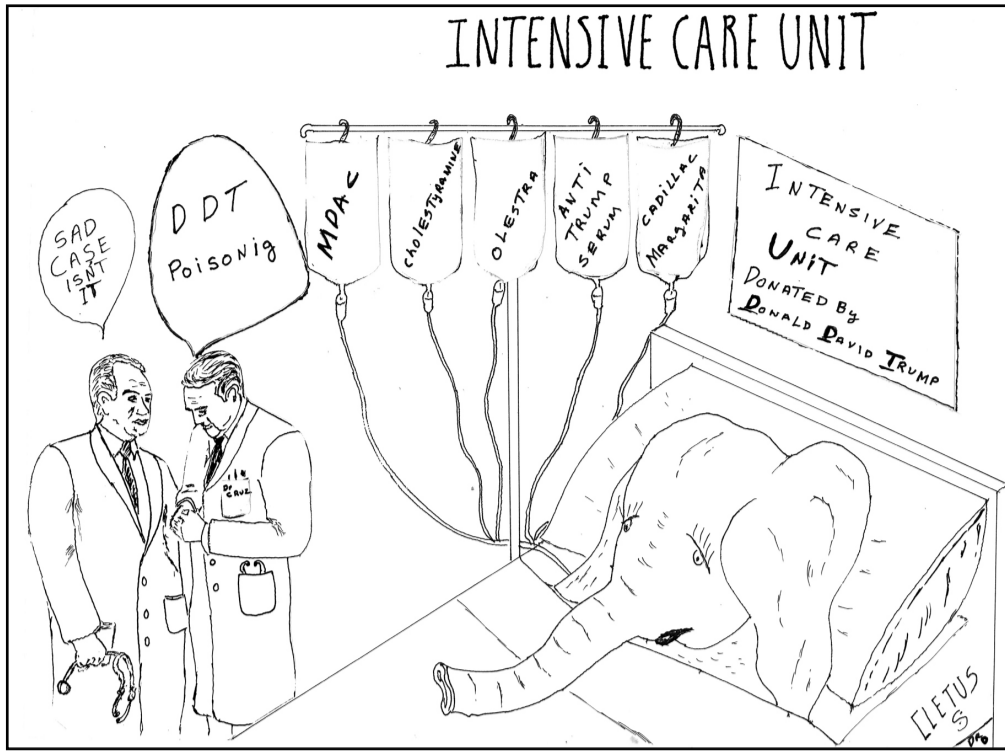
• **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, 850 Main St., Dallas, 503-623-8173.

• **Independence City Council** — 7:30 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence, 503-838-1212.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15

• **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.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Efforts to maintain Ballston noticed

I wish to thank "Polk County Parks" for the good care they take of the Ballston Park. I grew up in Ballston and every year, there is a "Back to Ballston Picnic" on the last Sunday in June.

The little church looks so small now. That's where we went to Sunday school. I don't remember when they moved it to the park. At one time it was a school.

Alice Down
Dallas

Dallas High not named after KKK

Last week's letter to the editor, "Dallas High should change mascot," by James Allgood, brought up the "urban legend" that Dallas High's mascot, the Dragon, was named after the KKK's Grand Dragon. During the 1930s, schools were choosing mascots for their schools. Dallas High teams were first called the Orangemen because of their school colors, orange and black.

Opposing teams called them the Prunepickers because of the many prune orchards around Dallas. The school wanted to shed the name, and it should start with a "D." Dolphins was briefly considered, but this name was not tough enough. The school became the Dallas Dragons in 1938.

The myth is that Dallas is, or was, a command center for the Ku Klux Klan. The KKK was active and visible in Polk County, and there was a chapter (Klavern) for a brief time in the 1920s in Dallas. It did nothing but hold a few rallies and a parade down Main Street in

1923 or 1924. The Klavern died out in 1922 or 1923 in Dallas and never returned.

The Klan peaked in 1922 in Oregon. It had enough followers to pressure Congress to pass the Compulsory Education Bill of 1922. This bill required all Oregon children to attend public schools, and while it made all private schools illegal for children to attend, it was aimed mostly at Catholic schools.

The major objective of the Klan in Oregon was "Down with the Pope and the Catholic Church! Clean the state of the Baptists!"

Yet the KKK myth came about 50 years after the Klavern died out. The reason is unknown. The KKK is a terrorist group and the lack of activity should be proof the Klan has not existed in Dallas after it died out in 1920s.

Sue Rohde
Dallas

Thank you for cleaning up grass

A big shout out thank you to whoever it was that cut the grass/weeds on the downhill side of Oakdale on the S-curve this past weekend in the hot weather. It makes it so much easier to come out of our driveways and to be able to see downhill is wonderful. Thank you.

Sally Broadwater
Dallas

BOLI commish blocking speech

Brad Avakian, elected Commissioner of Bureau of Labor and Industries of the State of Oregon, blocked free speech guaranteed by the First Amendment. In a recent ruling, Avakian placed a gag order on the

Kleins, ordering them to "cease and desist" from speaking publicly about not wanting to bake cakes for same-sex weddings based on their Christian beliefs.

This state bureaucrat oversteps his powers by blocking a citizen's right to free speech. The First Amendment states no official may abridge freedom of speech. Mr. Avakian should be recalled for abusing the power of his office. His actions effectively strip residents of Oregon of the freedom of religion and speech.

George Irving
Dallas

Pay attention to road while driving

Thursday, I went for a jog from Main Street in Monmouth across the highway (99W) and all the way down to Main Street in Independence. Along the way, I was shocked at how many distracted motorists I saw. Most of them were texting and driving, a few were talking on their cellphones, and one woman was actually writing on a pad she had propped up on her steering wheel as she traveled down the road.

I realize the speed limits along this route are relatively slow, but come on people. What the heck are you thinking? I cannot imagine what you felt was so important that you had to risk your safety and that of others by paying less than your full attention to that several ton vehicle you were operating. Please put those things away and pay attention to what you are doing. We are better than this. And it is against the law.

Robert McKee
Monmouth

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 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 10 a.m. Monday. Letters submitted may not be retractable after this deadline.

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