



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Steven Hurst and Jack Dollarhide discuss their haul during the Community Back to School Basic Clothing Excursion.

Getting ready for the big day

Polk County youths shop for first day of school with Salvation Army's help

By Lukas Eggen
The Itemizer-Observer

SALEM — Steven Hurst had a big decision to make Aug. 19. Upon reaching the checkout stand at Shopko, Steven, 9, had reached his \$150 limit and he had to make a choice — keep a cool pair of shorts or a shirt.

Steven ponders his decision before pointing.

"I want the shorts," he proclaims, and the cashier adds the shorts to his bag.

Steven was one of more than 40 Polk County students to take part in the Community Back to School Basic Clothing Excursion.

"This is my favorite event that we put on," Salvation Army Director of Social Services Melissa Baurer said. "It seems like we hear different stories every year and that gives me motivation."



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Walter Mosley decides whether to pick up a new shirt during the clothing excursion at Shopko on Aug. 19.

The Salvation Army received money from the United Way and worked with local organizations in Polk and Marion counties to se-

lect more than 100 kids to take part in the program. The Salvation Army coordinated the event, which began by taking kids and

volunteers to the Kroc Center in Salem for lunch and a swim.

Upon arriving at Shopko, students were paired with a shopping buddy who helped them shop for new clothes for the school year.

Each student received a \$150 Shopko gift card at the cash register to cover expenses.

Thanks in part to the United Way, which sponsored about 70 percent of the event, Baurer said the event took more than 100 kids, which were split over two days.

More than 30 volunteers came out to be shopping buddies.

"In the past, we struggled to find volunteers," Baurer said. "This year, they came out really strong. It's really a community effort out here."

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Indy hopes to foster tech ed

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — Students in second grade may end up filling jobs that haven't even been invented yet, said Independence Economic Development Director Shawn Irvine.

"How do you train kids to be adaptable, to be problem solvers, to be critical thinkers, which is basically what you need to be to have the skills for a job that you don't even know what it's going to be," Irvine said.

Enter the Innovate Oregon initiative by the Technology Association of Oregon Foundation. The foundation designated the city of Independence as an Innovate Oregon city, which will help bring training and resources for educators to foster an environment of hands-on, critical thinking learning — using technology.

Teachers become more like mentors, helping groups of students come up with a real-world problem, Irvine said.

"They break into teams and research the problem, propose some potential solutions, discuss which ones make sense, which ones are feasible, which ones aren't," Irvine said. Then, students design a prototype solution.

"They do this focused on learning coding as well," he said. "Obviously, tech companies are trying to train future tech workers. The reality of our society is it's becoming more and more tech. It's never going to be a bad thing to know a little coding and how coding works."

The learning model isn't going to be right for every classroom, particularly because it is more problem-based, not test-based, Irvine said.

"A lot of what (the foundation) is talking about is after-school programs," he noted. "After-school programs, they can do anything they want. You don't have to have performance criteria and all that."

For more information: www.techoregon.org.

SCHOOL NOTES

Long named principal of MVCA

MONMOUTH — Mid-Valley Christian Academy announced the appointment of Miranda Long to the principal position, effective immediately.

Gaye Stewart will serve as superintendent for the 2015-16 school year.

Mid-Valley Christian Academy is a nationally accredited school through the Northwest Accreditation Commission and AvancEd.

Registration for the upcoming school year is available through the school office from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

CHS registration due on Friday

INDEPENDENCE — Registration for the 2015-16 school year at Central High School is due Friday.

Registration packets were mailed out on July 30 and forms may be mailed to the school or dropped off during business hours, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The school is located at 1530 Monmouth St., Independence.

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