

## Produce: Giveaway is every Friday

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 "(For) a couple dinners a week we get the vegetables here," she said. "It helps out a lot. Everything just seems to go up."

The Doyle family is just one example of many in the community. Flynn said 90 families had stopped by Friday's giveaway little more than halfway through its two-hour window. The numbers range from 70 to 120 families in a typical week, representing about 350 to 450 people.

Creekmore said that was what Varney and Kester had hoped for the program. She said Varney had to step away due to health concerns. Kester, a longtime volunteer in Dallas and Falls City, died suddenly in July. But their vision continues through the work of organizers such as Creekmore and Flynn who have taken the reins in their absence.

"Really we owe everything to Angie Varney and Wayne Kester," Creekmore said.

The success of the program has caught the attention of Marion-Polk Food Share. Creekmore said the organization is studying the successes in Falls City looking for ways to help families in similar rural communities where access to fresh produce is limited.

She said a component she believes is key to success is having organizers and volunteers with a connection to the community and who can create a welcoming environment.

That hasn't been a problem in Falls City, where the weekly giveaway has become something of a social event. Creekmore said she's seen people stop to talk with friends or make new ones after receiving their food.



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

People go through the line at the weekly giveaway.

### Need help?

- The Friday produce giveaway is held at Mountain Gospel Fellowship Church, 303 N. Main St., Falls City.
- For more information: 503-787-8037.

That wasn't an expected outcome, but important nonetheless.

"It's huge," Creekmore said. "That's how you make it successful."

Resident Myron Yancey agreed, saying that is one of the reasons he likes to make the weekly trip to Mountain Gospel. He takes what vegetables and fruit he will use, but sees others who have more of a need for the program — both nutritionally and socially.

"There are some people out here who really depend on it," Yancey said. "I see it as a benefit to the community, probably in more than one way."

Flynn said the program will continue to expand. It's now seeking a grant through the Salem Hospital Foundation to hold cooking classes teaching people how to prepare the produce they receive at the giveaway.

"A lot of the time, we have people asking us, what's this and what do you do with it?" Flynn said.

He said they've put together a cookbook with recipes using some of the more unusual items such as rutabagas and some varieties of squash, but they want to take it a step further.

"It's not enough. Giving somebody a recipe is great, if they know how to cook," Flynn said. "If they still don't know what to do with a rutabaga or bok choy, they won't do anything with it."

He said they sent a preliminary description of what the cooking classes would provide and are waiting to find out if they are invited to submit a full application. If the program is asked to apply, it would find out if it was awarded the grant around the first of the year.

Creekmore said even if the giveaway doesn't receive the grant, it will keep looking for ways to help. The rapid growth of the program — and the response of volunteers willing to lend a hand — is proof the giveaway is desperately needed, she said.

"It's amazing," Creekmore said. "It's blown our minds."

## Fifth-year task force looking for options to keep programs

The group has until February to make a recommendation

By Jolene Guzman  
 The Itemizer-Observer



DALLAS — A task force formed to examine and improve so-called fifth-year programs is working toward a recommendation in hopes of keeping them as an option for students.

There's still plenty of time before the group has to offer its recommendation in February. But Dallas High School Assistant Principal Brian Green fears some in the Oregon legislature have already made up their minds against the programs.

"I can speak for Dallas in that it would be devastating if the fifth-year programs were to go away," Green said.

Fifth-year programs allow students to defer receiving a standard high school diploma to pursue an advanced diploma and attend classes at a community college. Because they are still considered high school students, the state school fund pays for expenses. Dallas' program, Extended Campus, is the largest in Polk County, but Central and Falls City also have programs.

In the last legislative session, a bill aiming to phase out the programs died in committee, but another bill created the task force to offer

high school, they don't hit that 2.5 GPA. It would exclude a fair amount of students who have proven successful at the college level."

Based on this year's enrollment, 24 of the 69 students participating in Extended Campus couldn't be part of Oregon Promise.

"I'm absolutely confident that the majority of those students will be very successful, if not all," Green said.

Another part of Extended Campus that has proved helpful to students is its counseling assistance. That's one of the reasons 80 percent of enrollees continue to their second year in college. Oregon Promise does not offer that, Green said.

"I think that is the biggest part that is left out," he said.

Green said so far, the task force's meetings have been productive, but he hopes that work isn't for nothing.

"If they have their minds made up that they are going to do away with these programs, I'm not so sure how much our input is going to be taken into consideration," he said. "I'm hopeful that they are going to look into our recommendation and be thoughtful when deciding whether or not to do away with fifth-year programs."

solutions about concerns for financing and equity.

Green is on the committee and said there are legitimate concerns about financing — and ways to address those problems, such as tapping into federal grants and limiting them only to students who truly have financial need.

He also sees issues with one of the options for replacing fifth-year programs, the Oregon Promise. That program offers free community college to students, but one of the requirements is students have to earn at least a 2.5 GPA.

"One of the concerns I have about the minimum GPA is that we have certain students who are not very successful their freshman and sophomore years," Green said. "They are able to turn it around and do really well but because of their freshman year, how they started their

## State report cards released

Itemizer-Observer staff report

SALEM — The Oregon Department of Education released report cards on schools and districts statewide last week.

This year the annual report will be missing an overall ranking for schools due to switching to new Smarter Balanced state assessments last spring.

Overall rankings will be brought back next year after the second year of testing provides year-to-year comparison scores

and data.

The multiple-page reports provide plenty of information about student demographics, test scores, academic programs, enrollment levels, class size, per pupil spending, and graduation rates. A message from the superintendent is included with each report.

As a method of comparison, this year's report cards show how schools and districts performed on state assessments alongside

those of similar size and demographics.

"Student learning is about so much more than a single test score, and these report cards help to paint a more complete picture about the work our schools are doing to support student success," said state Deputy Superintendent Salam Noor.

For more information or to access school and district report cards online: <http://www.ode.state.or.us/data/reportcard/reports>.

### Got News?

The Itemizer-Observer is always looking for unique story ideas in the areas of general news, education, features, personality profiles, sports and business from throughout Polk County.

Share your idea by calling us at 503-623-2373; drop a note to us at P.O. Box 108, Dallas, OR 97338; or send an email to [ionews@polkio.com](mailto:ionews@polkio.com).

West Valley Housing Authority will hold their Work Session Meeting on Wednesday, October 28, 2015 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at 204 SW Walnut in Dallas, Oregon. The Regular Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 28, 2015 at 12:30 p.m. at 204 SW Walnut in Dallas, Oregon. An Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660 will be held immediately following the Regular Meeting.

Agenda for the meeting is posted on the Housing Authority website at [www.wvpha.org](http://www.wvpha.org). The location for the meeting is handicapped accessible. Please advise the West Valley Housing Authority if you need any special accommodations to attend the meeting. For information, please call 503-623-8387, TDD 1-800-735-2900.

## Planning a Holiday Bazaar?

We can help!

The Itemizer-Observer will be publishing a comprehensive list of all the holiday bazaars and art & crafts sales in Polk County on Wednesday, October 28th. This feature will be designed for our readers to keep throughout the holiday season. We will publish the information for your event at no charge.

If you wish to have your bazaar published any other time during the holiday season you must purchase an advertisement. **Deadline to submit your event information is Friday, October 16th.** So hurry and get your bazaar information to our office today!

Event organizers who want more exposure than will be provided in the October 28th issue are encouraged to call one of our advertising representatives at 503-623-2373.



Contact: Dawn Ohren  
 503-623-2373  
 or e-mail:  
[dohren@polkio.com](mailto:dohren@polkio.com)

Itemizer-Observer

147 SE Court St., Dallas

**Solution on Page 5A**

	4		8		6		
9			5	2		7	4
	6				3		1
7	5			6	1		2
			2		4		
6			7	5			4
	1		9				3
4		5		3	7		9
		9		1			5

**Sudoku**  
 Difficulty: ★☆☆☆☆

Row →

4	3	2	8	1	6	7	5	9
5	6	9	3	7	4	2	1	8
1	7	8	9	5	2	4	6	3
3	4	7	2	8	5	6	9	1
2	1	6	7	4	9	3	8	5
9	8	5	1	6	3	2	7	4
7	9	1	4	3	8	5	2	6
8	5	3	6	2	1	7	4	9
6	2	4	5	9	7	1	3	8

Three-by-three square →

Column ↓

**How to do Sudoku**  
 Fill in the grid so the numbers 1 through 9 appear just once in every column, row, and three-by-three square. See example above.

The Christian Science Monitor

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