



Polk County



The 20-acre lot on the Willamette River, owned by the city of Independence, is ready for development by Tokola Properties.

Old Valley Concrete site will become a Tokola Properties development

By Emily Mentzer

The Itemizer-Observer

INDEPENDENCE — Tokola Properties, of Gresham, have been selected to develop the land formerly occupied by Valley Concrete, said Shawn Irvine, economic development director for Independence.

"They've worked on several successful public-private partnerships in the last several years," he said. "Tokola is primarily a developer of higher-density, residential and mixed-use units, but sees the opportunity for lodging on this site, and will be partnering with a hotel developer for the project."

Now that the developer and for how much. has been chosen, work can



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer file

The city of Independence invested roughly \$400,000 into the \$800,000 property to grade it, survey it, and do other things required for development.

begin on the details of how this point, with so many dethe land will be developed cisions to be made by both Irvine said. teams, to forecast an accu-"It is very premature at rate construction start date," gether with Tokola in the said.

Irvine said. "Doing it right is first phase of this project to far more important than doing it quickly."

The company was selected from three who submitted requests for qualifications, a method the city used to attract a developer who would align with the city's vision for the 20-acre plot of

The city bought the land from Valley Concrete for \$800,000 in October 2014, and invested roughly \$400,000 in grading, surveys and otherwise preparing the land to be "shovel-ready."

The reason for that was to make sure it was developed to its maximum potential,

fine tune the plan for this project by the creation of a master plan and the appropriate land use and zoning," Irvine said. "Identification of an acceptable hotel partner will also be essential to early success as well."

Getting those things defined, as well as financing, will be broadly identified in an exclusive negotiating agreement over the next couple of months, Irvine

"From there, we'll negotiate a development and disposition agreement, which will have all the nuts and bolts about how the proper-"We will be working to- who pays for what, etc.," he

DALLAS

Year-end donations at Goodwill expected to be strong.

»Page 7A

FALLS CITY

City considers how to help legislation that would pay for a fulltime law officer.

»Page 6A

MONMOUTH

Nicholas Indra is turning his 3-D printer into a full-time busi-

»Page 3A

SPORTS

Sports editor Lukas Eggen spells out his athletic goals for 2016, which include tennis, golf, basketball and a triathlon.

»Page 12A

EDUCATION

Attendance reports are in for school districts around the county, but what do they really say about how well Polk County students attend?

»Page 14A

FAREWELL, 2015; HELLO 2016

The Itemizer-Observer takes a look at the top stories of each month, and a few notables. Happy New Year!

Itemizer-Observer staff report POLK COUNTY — It has

been a busy year with some things getting completed and others just getting started. Take a look back through

the *Itemizer-Observer's* top stories of 2015. January

Jan. 7: "Delirious Ducks;

Football's championship game run gives locals 'Ducks Fever'" — Longtime Oregon Duck's fan and Polk County Commissioner was thrilled to travel to Arlington, Texas, to watch the football team compete in the inaugural College Football Playoff National Championship Game. The Ducks lost the game to Ohio State.

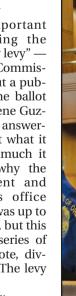
January notables:

Jan. 14: "Rookie representative" — Polk County elected two new representatives to the state Legislature: Paul Evans and Mike Nearman.

Jan. 28: "Death raises questions" — a young man dies when medics cannot safely reach him because of **February**

Feb. 4: "10 important questions regarding the county public safety levy" — When Polk County Commissioners agreed to put a public safety levy on the ballot in May, reporter Jolene Guzman went to work answering questions about what it would mean, how much it would cost, and why the sheriff's department and district attorney's office needed the help. It was up to the public to decide, but this story kicked off a series of stories Guzman wrote, diving into the topics. The levy passed in May.

March



February notables: Feb. 18: "No place to call home; Issues of homelessness a hidden problem in Polk County" — Homelessness can affect anyone, and not much help is available in Polk County.



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer file

In January, Rep. Paul Evans was one of two rookie representatives from Polk County to be elected to the Oregon Legislature's House of Representatives.

Dallas School District's new perience, but Michelle John-March 4: "Who will be superintendent are intro-Dallas' new schools duced to the community. All an undermanned sheriff's leader?" — Three finalists for three prove to have the ex-

offered the job a week later. March notables:

dental, medical, infant-toddler care to be available" -

March 18: "Center will in- Construction begins on the stone shines through and is crease health access; Full Central Health and Wellness Center.

See REVIEW, Page 5A



wed

Feeling tense? Head over to Rogue Farms for some free yoga in the hopyards, the last Wednesday of each month. 6 p.m. Free.

Sunny Hi: 40 Lo: 26

Sunny

As you make plans

to ring in the New

Year, remember to

nated driver: Be one

include a desig-

or find one, and

have a safe one.

Hi: 39 Lo: 25

Happy New Year! To

celebrate the arrival of 2016, our office is closed today. May your year be a blessed and happy one.



Sunny Hi: 39 Lo: 26

sat **Monmouth Senior**

Center will host its monthly all-youcan-eat breakfast fundraiser this morning.

8:30-10:30 a.m. \$3-6.

Sunny Hi: 40 Lo: 26

1:30-3 p.m. Free.

sun

Is learning to sing

on your list of reso-

lutions? From the

Heart Community

Sing is open to all

ages.

Sunny Hi: 39 Lo: 26

for those adults looking for music. 6:30 p.m. \$25/month

mon

Dust off that instru-

ment and join oth-

Horizons Orchestra

ers in the New

Mostly cloudy Hi: 38 Lo: 29

tue

Got a new e-reader? The Independence **Public Library will** host a workshop to help you get to know your device. 6-8 p.m. Free.



Lo: 29

Partly cloudy Hi: 41