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**Hoffman
Road
project
would be
costly**

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — After a bicyclist died after being hit from behind on Hoffman Road, some in Monmouth have requested that the city do something to prevent future deaths.

John Shapely, of Independence, was killed on Dec. 30 in the 9000 block of Hoffman Road while traveling on his bicycle. Sheriff Mark Garton said Shapely was wearing dark clothing and no helmet. He said that area of Hoffman Road is unlit, and the road is very narrow with no bike lanes or sidewalks.

Monmouth City Councilman Marshall Guthrie said Monmouth should make more of an effort to increase bicycle safety, including rejecting any new plans that do not include bike lanes; outfitting current streets with high bicycle and vehicle traffic with "sharrow" markings; and taking an inventory of street lights to make sure visibility is sufficient for cyclists and pedestrians on every city street.

The area in question is outside the jurisdiction of the city, City Manager Scott McClure said.

Todd Whitaker, Polk County Public Works director, said it would be very costly to do a road-widening project on Hoffman. "What would probably be more practical, but still very expensive, is to widen for bike lanes" but not for sidewalks, Whitaker said.

The project would likely cost between \$2 million and \$3 million, at a very rough estimate, Whitaker said.

"The right way to go about that would be to go through federal or state grants for an enhanced project, something like that," he said.

That stretch of road is within the Monmouth urban growth boundary, so will likely be part of the city of Monmouth eventually, and traffic is likely to increase because of housing developments in that area, Whitaker said.

"I think there is an increasing need there, but we lack the resources in our budget to make that change," he said.

At the same time, he said the county would entertain the idea if Monmouth put a grant application together to widen the road.

"You don't just snap your fingers and solve that problem," Whitaker said. "It takes years to develop."



Polk County Sheriff's Office Deputy Thomas Hutchinson starts up his computer before his third field training shift.

JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

MORE DEPUTIES

Sheriff's office returns to 20-hour patrols, months ahead of schedule

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — The Polk County Sheriff's Office moved to 20 hours of patrol Sunday, increasing coverage hours ahead of schedule.

Sheriff Mark Garton said the unexpected outcome is the result of being able to hire five officers who were already certified to fill spots provided for with the voter-approved public safety levy.

Certified officers still have to go through field training before they can patrol solo, but don't have to attend the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training 16-week program for new officers.

On Jan. 1, the office had enough deputies who had completed training to add



Deputy Mike Stevenson is one of several new deputies.

JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

another 10-hour shift.

Garton said the timeline often quoted during the levy campaign of 18 months to recruit and train a new

deputy for duty was realistic.

"Those five certified deputies are really what changed that dynamic," he said. "We didn't expect to get

that many. We expected maybe one or two. But five? That's great. If we didn't get those, we wouldn't be talking about this now. We've been fortunate."

Garton said restoring patrol hours has required planning — and finding the right people to do the job.

The hiring process itself can take months, and if a recruit passes written testing and interviews, but fails a background check, the process has to start over again with a new recruit, Garton said. Only after that is complete can a deputy begin training.

"We can't minimize the training or rush through it," Garton said. "We owe the citizen's a high level of service and we can't just settle."

See SHERIFF, Page 5A

PCL makes progress in employment for all

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — It no longer matters if you have an intellectual or developmental disability when it comes to finding gainful employment.

Action on a 2008 governor's executive order, "Employment First," has started, and so far, Partnerships in Community Living Inc. has helped find jobs for 45 of its clients.

The order was part of a settlement in a class-action lawsuit between people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and Gov. Kate Brown, brought about because of sheltered workshops, where those with disabilities would go to work for subminimum wages.

It took a couple of years to get the programs rolling because the state system wasn't ready to handle the changes, said Erica Brown, director of employment at PCL.

She called it a civil rights movement. "It's the last population of people who were expected to work in a place that they pay subminimum wage," Brown said. "Some people have worked



Jeff dusts displays at Independence Heritage Museum.

Photo courtesy of Partnerships in Community Living Inc.

for as little as \$10 a month, and go to work every day."

It hasn't been necessarily easy, but Brown said PCL has been successful in finding employment for its clients by

finding out where their strengths and weaknesses are, as well as helping employers find out what they need help with.

See WORK, Page 5A

**IN
YOUR
TOWN**

DALLAS

Dallas Fire & EMS gets grant to buy equipment that lends firefighters "helping hand."

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FALLS CITY

Falls City City Council to hold public hearing on raising utility reserve fee.

»Page 5A

INDEPENDENCE

Golden Horse Cafe is latest gem of a restaurant in downtown Independence.

»Page 3A

MONMOUTH

Monmouth City Council debates extending waterline to property outside city limits.

»Page 2A

**Marijuana
processing plant
hosts town hall**

INDEPENDENCE — More than 65 people attended a town hall meeting on Monday to discuss a potential cannabis processing facility on Stryker Road in Independence.

The area is zoned for heavy industrial.

Mark Jennings, President of Pure Botanicals, a consulting firm, was on-hand to discuss the plans.

The company is interested in buying 1.2 acres to build a 5,000- to 7,000-square-foot building that will extract CBD oil from plants and put into gel capsules for medical purposes.

The facility would not grow its own plants, instead receiving raw product.

Jennings said there would not be heavy traffic, with small box trucks bringing in raw product one every few weeks or once a month.

The company plans for eight to 10 employees to be at the facility.

"We want to make a minimal impact to the community," Jennings said. "We want to be just another industrial building on the side of the road. We like this area because it's away and quiet. We can be on our own instead of in the hustle and bustle of Portland. We're not here to make a ruckus."

Nearly all comments from the public spoke against having the facility.

For more on this story, see the *Itemizer-Observer* website: www.polkio.com.

THE NEXT 7 DAYS PLANNING FOR YOUR WEEK

wed Monmouth and Independence mayors will update citizens on the "State of the Cities" tonight at Western Oregon. 6:30 p.m. Free.	thu Young professionals will gather to network at Veal Bike's Plus. The after-hours social event is for those aged 21-45. 5:30 p.m. Free.	fri The Smith Fine Arts Series continues tonight with Ten Strings and A Goat Skin at Rice Auditorium at WOU. 7:30 p.m. \$11-\$28	sat "Ant-man" is the movie on tap for teens at the Dallas Public Library this afternoon, complete with snacks. 5:20 p.m. Free.	sun Try flying without the risk with Dallas Wingdingers RC Flying Club, which meets monthly at Whitworth school. 1-3 p.m. Free.	mon Happy Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Our office is open, but many government and school offices are closed in honor of the day.	tue It's Lego Mania at Independence Public Library today, part of the winter fun club, featuring activities all season. 4 p.m. Free.
Rain Hi: 45 Lo: 38	Rain Hi: 43 Lo: 34	Partly cloudy Hi: 46 Lo: 38	Rain Hi: 48 Lo: 36	Rain Hi: 47 Lo: 36	Rain Hi: 46 Lo: 38	Rain Hi: 47 Lo: 35

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