

EDITORIALS

New resource center to open near CHS

It took a lot of cooperation between local, county and state governmental agencies and organizations, but the Central Community Resource Center will finally open its doors Thursday.

The center has been in the works since the Central Health and Wellness Center opened in June 2015, but has taken longer than thought to get going.

Based in the former Central School District office buildings across the street from the high school, it gives residents of Monmouth and Independence centralized access to social services. With 32.8 percent of Independence's population below poverty level — and 28.3 percent in Monmouth — according to the United States Census Bureau, help with rent, utilities, child care and food supplements are definitely needed.

The Polk County Family and Community Outreach and public health have already had success in its model at the Academy Building with the service integration model.

Having so many organizations and agencies in one place makes it easier for those who need help to only ask once rather than fill out forms for multiple agencies and get the runaround while they get referred to this or that.

Extending that model to a location in Independence opens up access to more people in Polk County.

So often, families that struggle financially only have one car — at least one car that is reliable.

And, as County Commissioner Mike Ainsworth noted, the question comes down to, "do we eat supper and feed the family, or put gas in the car to drive to Dallas and ask for help?"

Now, those in need could walk or ride a bike easily to the center and get the help they need.

The Central resource center is a great investment in the county and in the Independence and Monmouth communities.

While the center will be open just one day a week at first, hours will expand as the need does.

Coleen Bradford, Department of Human Services self-sufficiency manager, said DHS used to have offices in Independence, where the health center is now located, but had to consolidate when the budget got tight.

"I know the need is here," she said. We think she is right.

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, JAN. 27

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

Thursday, Jan. 28
• **Monmouth Independence Networks (Minet) Board of Directors** — 7:30 a.m., Henry Hill Education Support Center, 750 S. Fifth St., Independence. 503-580-8525.

MONDAY, FEB. 1

• **Central School District Board of Directors** — 6:30 p.m., Henry Hill Education Support Center, 750 S. Fifth St., Independence.

• **Independence Planning Commission** — 7 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

• **Dallas City Council work session** — 5:30 p.m., Dallas City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.

• **Dallas City Council** — 7 p.m., Dallas City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.

TUESDAY, FEB. 2

• **Monmouth City Council** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.

• **Dallas Urban Renewal Advisory Committee** — 5:30 p.m., Dallas City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3565.

• **Polk County Board of Commission work session** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, BOC office, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 3

• **Monmouth Historic Commission** — 6 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.

• **Monmouth Planning Commission** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.

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



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks for Adopt-a-Family success

Dallas Adopt a Family, a long-standing program, provides families with gifts and food through gracious community donors who "adopt" families for Christmas.

This previous year, we are happy to announce that 189 families applied, and all were adopted. This achievement would not have been possible without the help of an entire community who

came together and rose to the occasion once again. Our churches, local businesses, schools, civic groups, and volunteers opened their hearts by donating financial resources and giving their time.

On Dec. 14-15, families arrived to the Evangelical Bible Church to pick up their gifts and food. Their smiles, gratitude, and in some cases tears, reminded us all that the long days of planning and preparation

paid off, but most importantly it reminded us all that we are all connected.

We hope that everybody involved knows how much we thank their continued hard work and kindness over the years. Our hope is that together we continue to serve our community for many years to come. We sincerely thank you, and look forward to 2016.

*Jim and Candace Fowler
Dallas Adopt a Family Committee*



Happy National Chocolate Cake Day

Do we need a birthday, wedding or anniversary to have chocolate cake? Not today (Jan. 27), because it's National Chocolate Cake Day.

In America, chocolate was consumed primarily as a beverage until the 1830s or '40s. Chocolate cakes, as we think of them today, mostly did not exist then. According to the Dover Post, chocolate cake was born in 1765, when

a doctor and a chocolate maker teamed up in an old mill. They ground up cocoa beans between huge millstones to make thick syrup. The liquid was poured into molds shaped like cakes, which were meant to be transformed into a beverage.

A popular Philadelphia cookbook author, Eliza Leslie, published the earliest chocolate cake recipe in 1847

in *The Lady's Receipt Book*. Unlike chocolate cakes we know today, this recipe used chopped chocolate. Other cooks of the time made contributions to the development of the chocolate cake.

The first boxed cake mix was created by a company called O. Duff and Sons in the late 1920s. Betty Crocker released their first dry cake mixes in 1947.

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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