

EDITORIALS

Minet board should reconsider options

The board of directors of Monmouth Independence Networks (Minet) decided Thursday to indefinitely table an idea of the telecommunications company providing free WiFi access to residents and visitors of both cities in exchange for possible debt relief from the two cities.

Board president Scott McClure said he didn't want Minet Executive Director Don Patten to put any more time into looking at the details: how much it would cost Minet, how much debt relief they would request from the cities, or how much time and manpower it would take, or whether grants are available to help build the system.

He implied that it would be a waste of Patten's time to continue to look into it, comparing it to if he suggested to the Monmouth City Council that they sell Main Street Park.

His reasoning didn't seem to come from the debt forgiveness, but from a fear that people would drop their Internet services from Minet and just use free WiFi.

It's great for using a cellphone or other devices, because it can help you save on data. It's also great for accessing the Internet in the park or at a coffee shop. But it's generally spotty. It's not secure. It's no replacement for secure data access.

As for the debt forgiveness Patten suggests in exchange for providing such a service, this is a matter that should be discussed by the councils and, more importantly, the citizens — and it should be something Minet's board, who should be working on behalf of the company, is interested in.

Ratepayers of Monmouth and Independence already contribute to the debt that was incurred to help build Minet. The two cities are the ones who took out the money to build the company, and it is the cities' responsibilities to pay it back.

We realize that the idea was that Minet would one day be able to afford its operating costs and pay back the \$25 million in debt, but the fact is that that isn't happening. In December, the two cities covered 80 percent of Minet's debt payment.

That means the power customers in Monmouth and the water customers in Independence paid 80 percent of Minet's debt in December.

We think it is worth investigating. We think the board of Minet should pass this one over to the people and the city councils and let them decide: is free WiFi worth taking some of the pressure off Minet to repay the millions of dollars the cities took out to build them?

It has been a long time — roughly a decade — since anyone has asked the public what they think about Minet. The least they could do is ask now.

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, 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.
- MONDAY, FEB. 8**
- **Hops and Heritage Festival Commission** — 6 p.m., Independence Elks Lodge, 289 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
 - **WIMPEG Board of Directors** — 7 p.m., 150 N. Knox St., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
 - **Dallas School Board** — 6:30 p.m., Dallas School District office, 111 SW Ash St., Dallas. 503-623-5594.
 - **Southwest Polk Fire Protection District Board** — 7:30 p.m., Rickreall Fire Station, 275 Main St., Rickreall. 503-831-3530.
- TUESDAY, FEB. 9**
- **Independence City Council** — 7 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
 - **Polk County Board of Commission work session** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, BOC office, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
- WEDNESDAY, FEB. 10**
- **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

Help promote live music in the area

My name is Bob Rause; I am a member of a musical group called Parish Gap. I would like to help promote live music in Dallas.

We are probably the longest continuously performing band in the state of Oregon. The band has swapped out a few musicians over the years, but the line-up of bass, guitar, keys, vocalists and percussionist hasn't changed in several decades. We have worked across America and Canada.

On Saturday, we will be playing at Tony's in Dallas at 9 p.m.

I am on a personal crusade to get live music happening again in our area. I remember a time when there were a lot of places having live music, everything from country to jazz regularly. I miss those days and would like to see them happen again.

We have been having phenomenal crowd reactions at every place we have played in the past couple of

years with many people making a point to tell us that we really put on a great show and gave them a really special evening of entertainment. Our history is long, storied, and we believe a great human interest story as well as a testament to dedication to great musical art.

We have two full-length albums to our credit and are constantly adding to our own music legacy catalog.

Your consideration and help would be greatly appreciated, and we feel your own reading public would enjoy hearing our story. It has been a fun, and often heartwarming ride.

Bob Rause
Albany

Watch out for your rights this season

Dangerous bills are being introduced.

These are dangerous bills that remove your constitutional rights without due process. If the Legislature can do it here, they can do it to all other rights. Even if

you don't own firearms, your other rights are at risk.

Article 1 Section 27: The people shall have the right to bear arms for defense of themselves and the State ...

Senate Bill 1551: Under this bill, a person with no mental health credentials, who may have never even met you, can take away your right to acquire a firearm with an anonymous call to the state police. The state police are not allowed to inform you that your rights are gone, not allowed to reveal who made the accusation and are not allowed to reveal how long your rights are suspended.

House Bill 4147: This bill prohibits transfer of a firearm without the approval of the Oregon State Police. Currently a dealer may transfer a firearm to a buyer after three days if the state police issues a delay. This bill will prohibit that and allow the OSP to delay you literally forever.

Stand up for your rights or lose them.

Gary Weis
Dallas

Today is National Day the Music Died Day

The Day the Music Died Day is always observed on Feb. 3. This day we remember the unfortunate and untimely death of singers 22-year-old Buddy Holly, 17-year-old Richie Valens, and 28-year-old J. P. Richardson, aka: "The Big Bopper." These three singers died in an airplane accident on Feb. 3, 1959, near Clear Lake, Iowa. Their pilot, Roger Peterson, also died in the crash.

The Day the Music Died was dubbed so by Don McLean's song "American Pie."

Buddy Holly's band was on tour and had played at the Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake. They were headed to their next destination in Moorhead, Minnesota. For this leg of their journey, they decided take a charter plane rather than go with their tour bus. Richardson "The Big Bopper," had swapped places with Waylon Jennings, taking the latter's

place on the plane and Tommy Allsup had lost his place to Ritchie Valens in a coin toss.

Not long after takeoff, they were no longer able to be reached by radio and they did not reach their destination.

The aircraft was reported missing. The next day, the wreckage was found less than 6 miles northwest of the airport in a cornfield. Poor weather conditions and pilot error were determined, during investigation, to have been the cause of the pilot losing control of the plane.

This event has echoed through history for over 50 years. Visitors still make the pilgrimage each year to Clear Lake, the resort town about 110 miles north of Des Moines, as this was the point of their last concert before the fatal accident.

— Source: NationalDayCalendar.com

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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