

# BOOK DRIVE

Community asked to share literacy through donated books

By Emily Mentzer  
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH/INDEPENDENCE — A book drive is underway to help children in Central School District by increasing their home libraries.

"The goal is ... to coordinate with some of the local teachers," said Arturo Vargas, community impact and engagement director of the United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley. "They are already working directly with families and young children. As soon as they get the books, they're going to be delivered to those kids and families."

Reading has been an indicator of success in education, Vargas said.

"Unfortunately, many families in our region do not have the means to purchase enough books for their children," he said. "Consequently, a large percentage of young students enter school with a high deficit in reading and are not able to perform well in school."

People may donate new or gently used children's picture or chapter books, which will be distributed through the Fostering Hope Initiative among the area's youth and to local free little libraries in the area, Vargas said.

The book drive is a combined effort of the United Way through the Reading for All initiative, Roth's Fresh Markets, the Fostering Hope Initiative, and local college volunteers, Vargas said.

Bilingual books are of particular importance, Vargas said.

"As you know, 38 percent of the population in Independence has a Latino background," he said. "They speak Spanish at home, so it



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer  
**Little Free Libraries, like this one in front of the Monmouth Montessori School, could pop up in more places.**

would be a plus if they had bilingual books so parents can read to their kids in their own language."

Learning to read in any language is important, and increasing fluency in more than one language can be beneficial, Vargas said.

"Knowing two or three different languages definitely gives us a different outlook on life and the capacity of the brain," he said.

Because reading is so critical to learning, it is crucial for community members to get involved in ways to help kids become readers, Vargas said.

"Get involved in local schools or create your own reading club," he said. "If we had one of those little libraries on every corner, or every other corner, of every neighborhood in Polk County, that would be fantastic. It

## Spread love of reading

**What:** United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley Book Drive.

**When:** Now through March 31.

**Where:** Drop-off locations are: Central Community Resource Center, 1610 Monmouth St., Independence; Independence City Hall, 555 S. Main St.; Roth's Fresh Markets, 1410 Monmouth Ave., Independence; Western Oregon University, Werner University Center, 345 Monmouth Ave. N., Monmouth.

**Of note:** Right now, no drop-off locations are available in Dallas. If you would like to serve as a drop-off location for Dallas, email Arturo Vargas at [avargas@unitedwaymwv.org](mailto:avargas@unitedwaymwv.org). All books donated go to children in that location. Books should be new or gently used and may be age-appropriate for infants through middle school. Cash donations also will be accepted.

**For more information:** [unitedwaymwv.org/childrens-book-drive-2016](http://unitedwaymwv.org/childrens-book-drive-2016).

would be great having families come together and saying, 'Yes, we would like to have a little house outside of our property.'"

In addition to donating gently used or new books to the book drive, people can donate to local United Way education projects, become a reader for Start Making a Reader Today at local elementary schools, or build a little library in your neighborhood.

## SCHOOL NOTES

### CSD superintendent to host tours

MONMOUTH/INDEPENDENCE — Central School District Superintendent Buzz Brazeau will hold school walk-throughs for the community.

The events are meant to give community members a peak into classrooms throughout the district.

To participate in a tour, contact the district office at 503-606-2251.

The schedule is: Monmouth Elementary School, 9 to 10:30 a.m. on March 31; Independence Elementary School, 1 to 2:30 p.m. on April 5; Talmadge Middle School, 9 to 10:30 a.m. on April 7; and Central High School from 1 to 2:30 p.m. on April 14.

### Bond committee to host public forums

MONMOUTH/INDEPENDENCE — Central School District board member Steve Moser said the bond exploratory committee has made visits to all the buildings in the school district.

Moser said that, in addition to previous concerns about facilities, the committee was told that boilers at Ash Creek Elementary School were at the end of their life. He compared the boilers and other parts used to build the school to car parts.

"When you talk about car parts, it's good, better and best," Moser told the board at its March 7 meeting. "We put in good. We should have been looking at best. So unfortunately, we have to fix it."

The school board will host a community forum before making a decision in May on whether or not to pursue a facilities bond. If a bond were to be placed on the ballot, it would be in November.

### Hofferber is Distinguished Educator



Hofferber

DALLAS — Lyle Elementary School first-grade teacher Stephanie Hofferber is Dallas School District's February Distinguished Educator.

Andrew Woolsey, parent of a former student, nominated Hofferber. He said she "played a critical role in helping my son make measurable academic gains."

"Her dedication to her students and genuine care for their well-being will change the lives of many of our future generations," Woolsey added.

Her students said: "She had kindness" and "She cares for us."

The Distinguished Educator Program recognizes "excellence in teaching and learning" in Dallas School District schools.

### Dallas High Choir Cabaret is Friday

DALLAS — The Dallas High School choir is putting on Cabaret Friday at the high school, 1250 SE Holman Ave.

The show, a fundraiser for the program, will begin with the choir singing a few songs as a group. After that, singers will perform solo or in small ensembles singing music of their choice.

Cabaret begins at 7 p.m. and admission is \$3 for students and seniors and \$5 general. Tickets are available at the door.

For more information: 503-623-8336.

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