

EDITORIALS

WOU is a valuable community asset

What a weekend in Monmouth, as thousands of fans and student-athletes gathered for the NCAA Division II men's basketball West Regional at Western Oregon University.

The electricity in the air was palpable Monday night when the Wolves took the title, heading to the Elite Eight in the NCAA Division II March Madness tournament in Texas.

Monday's game sold out by lunch; the stadium was packed with community members, students and employees of WOU, all cheering the team.

And what a team!

It's been a long time coming.

When senior Andy Avgi, who was named the tournament's Outstanding Player, first started at WOU, the team wasn't on top. It was a battle for the new coaching staff and players, and they've taken that battle farther than any other men's basketball team in the university's history.

With so many eyes on Western's campus over the weekend, it's nice to remember what a valuable asset the university is to Polk County and to Monmouth year-round.

Western Oregon offers top-rate educational opportunities for students and continuing education for adults.

On campus, you can find quality entertainment throughout the year, whether it be a sporting event, music, dance, theater or cultural opportunities.

Whether it's the Smith Fine Arts Series, or just walking around campus during the summer, catching students practicing an instrument under the shade of a tree, the annual Chinese New Year celebrations, or Abby House demonstrations against domestic violence outside the Werner University Center — WOU always has something going on.

With its own board of trustees and new President Rex Fuller — both in their first year — Western's campus is becoming more and more a community place, bringing people from all over Polk County to one spot.

The college is a large employer — the largest in Monmouth. Because the university is such a large customer of Monmouth's utilities, it helps stabilize the water, sewer and electric bills for residents of the town.

The founders of Monmouth built the college, and the two remain closely tied together.

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, MARCH 16

• **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.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

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

• **Independence Parks and Recreation Board** — 6 p.m., Independence Civic Center, third floor, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

• **Polk County Fair Board** — 8 a.m., Polk County Fairgrounds and Event Center, Main Building, Meeting Room No. 2, 520 S. Pacific Highway (99W), Rickreall. 503-623-3048.

MONDAY, MARCH 21

• **Independence Tourism and Events Commission** — 6:30 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

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

TUESDAY, MARCH 22

• **Independence City Council** — 7:30 a.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

• **Monmouth Senior Advisory Board** — 1 p.m., Monmouth Senior Center, 180 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.

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

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

• **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

Dragon Run benefits body, kids

You don't run? Not a problem. You can still participate by walking. Here is your chance to get out for some good exercise and help the Dallas Education Fund at the same time.

I would like to encourage the adults in our community to show up for the Dragon Run on April 9. Go to www.runsignup.com/DragonRun for all the details and to register.

Let's get out in force and show our kids, grandkids and neighborhood children that we care about them. See you on April 9 — your body and Dallas education will thank you.

*Patty VanWell
Dallas*

Support Dallas' street bond

Dallas was half its current size when I came here more than 40 years ago. Some of the streets look like they

have not been touched since, so I am happy to see that our city council has voted to place a bond issue on the May ballot to begin repairing the residential streets. It's only a down payment, but it's a good beginning. Just as we pay to maintain our homes, we must maintain our shared home. Please join me in voting yes on the street bond and keep Dallas the well-kept city I found so long ago.

*Dale Derouin
Dallas*



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 are due by 10 a.m. on Monday to make it into that Wednesday's paper.

For the complete letters policy, see online www.polkio.com.

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