

**EDITORIALS**

**Prepare now for more PE**

Kids in fourth grade will have a couple years to get used to it, but by the time they enter middle school, new physical education requirements will ask them to be active for at least 45 minutes a day, Monday through Friday.

Right now, they are getting between 15 to 18 minutes a day, depending on if they are in Central or Dallas schools.

We're not talking marathon training, but that's a lot of extra time spent moving if you're not used to it.

The new regulations are from House Bill 3141, passed in 2007 by the Oregon Legislature. As is typical, no additional money was provided to K-12 schools to figure out how to increase the physical education programs.

New PE teachers will need to be hired and trained. Gym space is cramped throughout elementary and middle schools. How will it affect the entire school day?

We're not just talking lengthening the time of recess, where kids may stand in line more than actually play a sport, but increasing physical education.

Districts are scrambling to figure out how to meet the needs of these requirements, which will go into effect for the 2017-18 school year.

During the 2016 short session, the Legislature passed 323 measures, but none of them dealt with the pending budget dilemma the new PE requirements will present to schools. It's an example of how disconnected the state Capitol is when it comes to policy and budget.

On the bright side, the Department of Revenue collected nearly \$3.5 million in taxes from recreational marijuana, with 40 percent of that slated for schools. Perhaps there will be some help for the issue there?

Meanwhile, get your kids ready to move more by making it a family affair. When was the last time you got out for 45 minutes of exercise each day for a week? If it's been a while, set the example for your children and get moving yourself.

The communities in Polk County have excellent trail systems through parks, by creeks and rivers. Explore them and see spring flowers popping up. Bring binoculars and download an app on a smartphone or tablet to identify local birds.

Sign up for swim lessons with your family. Playing in the pool is good exercise, and knowing how to swim could save a life.

Get out in the garden and start pulling those weeds before the ground gets too hard. Prepare the beds for new flowers and a vegetable garden, something that can bring joy all spring and summer long.

Keep track of days you accomplished your 45 minutes of exercise with a sticker on the calendar or some other fun reward.

It will help your kids be ready for the increase in time, even if the schools are not.

**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).

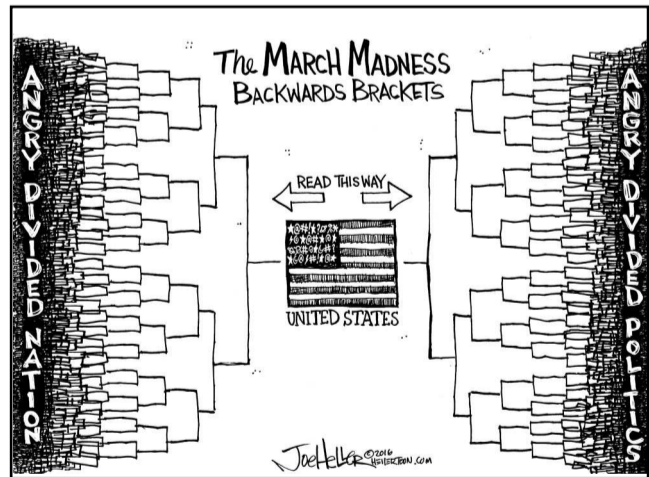
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23**  
• **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, first floor conference room, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.

**THURSDAY, MARCH 24**  
• **Monmouth-Independence Networks Board of Directors** — 7:30 a.m., Henry Hill Education Support Center, 750 S. Fifth St., Independence. 503-837-0700.

**MONDAY, MARCH 28**  
• **Independence Library Board** — 4 p.m., Independence Public Library, 175 Monmouth St., Independence. 503-838-1212.  
• **Dallas School Board** — 3:15 p.m., LaCreole Middle School, 701 SE LaCreole Drive, Dallas. 503-623-5594.

**TUESDAY, MARCH 29**  
• **Polk County Board of Commission work session** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, BOC office, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30**  
• **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, first floor conference room, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.  
• **Rickreall Watershed Council** — 2 p.m., Delbert Hunter Arboretum House, Dallas City Park. 503-623-9680, ext. 104.



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Bird cannons could be thing of past**

An earlier letter (2-17-16) asked if there was a solution to bird cannons (i.e. agriculture cannons) blasting neighbors day and night. There is an answer, but it will probably take a judge to provide it.

I was in the House of Representatives when Senator Meekers' Right to Farm bill was going through the process, and a constituent asked if the bill would override objections of his neighbors if he used a cannon to keep birds out of his vineyard. I referred the question to legislative counsel, which replied back that nothing in the bill permits trespass.

Therefore it becomes a question of whether the noise is trespass and will ultimately, I believe, be settled in the courts.

Aside from that, the problem may resolve itself. I live in a rural area surrounded by grass seed fields and vineyards and have noticed considerably less use of cannons in very recent years. As one grape grower told me, "The birds don't pay attention to them anymore."

*John Schoon  
Former State Representative  
Rickreall*

**Wheeler honest hard-worker**

I support the re-election of Jennifer Wheeler for Polk County Commissioner. A hard worker, she is honest and brings to the job integrity and knowledge of Polk County government. She is open and accessible. She grew up in Polk County and respects and understands the needs of Polk County. She is willing to make decisions in the best interests of our citizens. She has a thoughtful understanding of the local planning and land use laws that protect our environment. Jennifer Wheeler deserves support from a wide range of voters in the county.

*Tremaine Arkley  
Independence*

**American Legion numbers soar**

We would like to let readers know that our American Legion Post 20 has achieved a record high membership of 154 members. This is the highest number we've recorded during the 21st century. The last time we had more members was way back in the 1920s. When our ladies Auxiliary members read this you may pat yourself on the back for renewing your membership and for recruiting new



members into our post.

The America Legion Post 20 meets each month (except for August) on the second Wednesday at 7 p.m. The Auxiliary meets the third Thursday of each month also at 7 p.m. Both meetings are held in the Academy Building, Room 108. Veterans are invited to attend.

*Al Ratzlaff  
Post 20 Adjutant  
Dallas*

**Foundation's donation valued**

A big thank you to Dallas Community Foundation (DCF) for granting Bambinos with \$1,000 to use toward diapers in 2016. Our community is greatly benefited by DCF, and they can be trusted to prudently administer your donations.

*Beth Jones, Bambinos  
Director  
Dallas*

**Yes on bond; fix Dallas city streets**

How did the Dallas city streets get so bad?

The city has federal and state funding to pay for minor street repairs. However, there is not enough to repair all streets.

The city council has had to repair only arterial and collector streets that carry the most and the heaviest vehicles. Residential streets have been allowed to wear to the large cracks, alligatoring, and potholes found on our streets today.

It is time to fix our streets now. Please join me by voting yes on the street bond measure in May.

*Sue Rohde  
Dallas*

**Ford program benefits community**

The Ford Institute Leadership Program's Dallas/Falls City Cohort 2 would

like to extend a big thanks to everyone that came out to celebrate our installation of the interpretive/way-finding signs on the Rickreall Creek Trail System on Friday.

We had a great turnout, and the weather cooperated nicely.

The signs were funded, designed and erected by the Ford Institute Leadership Program's Dallas/Falls City Cohort 2.

The Ford Institute Leadership Program, funded by The Ford Family Foundation and administered by Rural Development Initiatives Inc., teaches groups of motivated community members how to lead. In return, the groups promise to complete a project benefiting their respective communities, with the opportunity to earn financial support from The Ford Family Foundation by raising matching funds.

The Dallas/Falls City Cohort 2 chose a project that enhances outdoor recreation opportunities in Dallas and Falls City by improving safety, lighting and electrical service at Falls City's Faye Wilson Memorial Park; and by adding three interpretive/way-finding signs to the Rickreall Creek Trail System in Dallas.

These are turn-key projects that are designed to be scalable, easy to maintain and reasonably priced; and have the full support of leaders in both communities.

For the Dallas project, we decided on the signs because there was an obvious need for them — to draw attention to the wonderful trail system and to provide way-finding and local historical facts for visitors and trail users.

The signs are located where the trail crosses Main Street, Southwest Levens Street and Southeast LaCreole Drive in Dallas. Please get out and take a

walk on the trail — your trail — and check out the new signs. Thank You.

*Joe Koubek  
Dallas*

**Vote Wheeler for Polk County**

I support Jennifer Wheeler for Polk County Commissioner. I have known Jennifer for a number of years and she is an honest, trustworthy, integrity-based woman who cares greatly for her community and improving that community for all. She works tirelessly in support of many projects: public safety, domestic violence, and promoting businesses. Her most attractive asset, in my opinion, is the fact that she is responsive to her constituents; she actually listens and responds with compassion and common sense, a trait horribly lacking in our elected officials. I urge you to vote for Jennifer Wheeler.

*Tina Musshorn  
Dallas*

**Wheeler qualified for commish job**

Jennifer Wheeler's background and experience makes her an outstanding Polk County commissioner.

She has infinite knowledge of Polk County's needs because of her 20-plus years of service for the citizens of Polk County.

She worked in the District Attorney's Office for three years and as secretary for the board of commissioners for 13 years, and for the past five years as a commissioner.

Jennifer is readily available to us and welcomes our concerns and input.

As a resident of Polk County since 1966, please join me in re-electing Jennifer Wheeler to the board of commissioners.

*Don Milligan  
West Salem*

**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 pro-

motions for a business, products or services will not be printed.

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.

Reach us at:  
**Mail:** Editor, *Polk County Itemizer-ObsERVER*, P.O. Box 108, Dallas, OR 97338.  
**Fax:** 503-623-2395.  
**Email:** ionews@polkio.com.

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