

EDITORIALS

Pokemon Go unites people

Regardless of whether you're Republican or Democrat, there is one thing that has been uniting people: Pokemon. The app "Pokemon Go" was made available on July 6, and has done for playing outdoors what Harry Potter did for reading.

People are outside. They are meeting face to face. It is a social media game that has managed to accomplish what other games haven't: it has re-invigorated the society to be social.

Granted, we have all heard reports about criminals taking advantage of Pokemon spawns to rob people; others have walked into traffic or off cliffs.

We have seen the footage of people swarming Central Park in New York City hoping to capture a rare Pokemon.

On the other hand, we have heard reports of people discovering dead bodies and guns. We have heard of communities gathering in the park, supporting local businesses, mingling with homeless and each other.

We have heard about children wanting to go for more bike rides, adults taking more walks — all in the name of Pokemon.

The game has meshed real life with fantasy, allowing people a chance to catch Pokemon — little imaginary monsters — on their cellphones. The creatures could appear anywhere, so people are on the lookout to "catch 'em all."

We aren't sure how long the craze will last. The app's creator says advertisements are coming soon, which may make the game less fun for some.

But we are happy to see people talking to each other in real life again, sharing a common interest.

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, JULY 20

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.

Chemeketa Community College Board — 4:30 p.m. workshop; 5:30 p.m. executive session; 7 p.m. regular session, Chemeketa Polk Center, 1340 Holman Ave., Dallas. 503-399-2517.

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

THURSDAY, JULY 21

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.

Glenn-Gibson Watershed Council — 5:30 p.m., Salemtowne Breezeway Room, West Salem. 503-623-9680.

FRIDAY, JULY 22

Polk County Health Advisory Board — Noon, Academy Building, room 212, 182 SW Academy St., Dallas. 503-623-8175 ext. 2112.

MONDAY, JULY 25

Independence Library Board — 4 p.m., Independence Public Library, 175 Monmouth St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

Dallas School Board — 6:30 p.m., Dallas School District office, 111 SW Ash St., Dallas. 503-623-5594.

TUESDAY, JULY 26

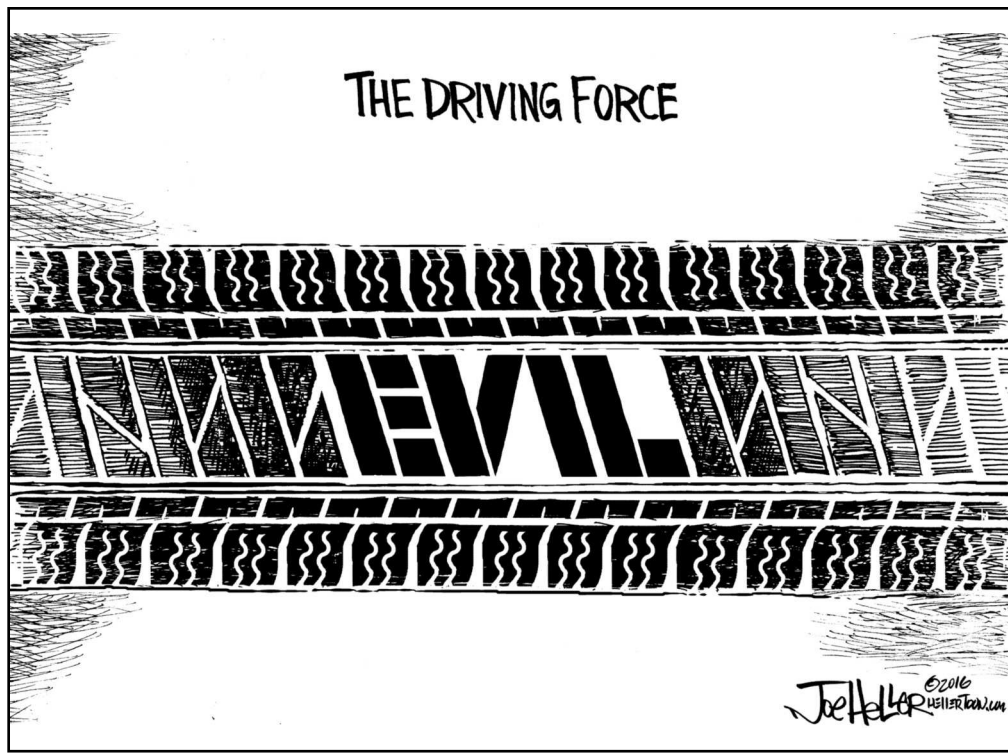
Independence City Council — 7:30 a.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

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, JULY 27

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

Great work on football field

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the volunteers who showed up this past week to work on the irrigation system at LaCreole football field.

It's wonderful to see the community come together for the betterment of our complexes for kids. It didn't go unnoticed.

*Mike and Renee Sunday
Dallas*

Marijuana grow is right in backyard

We have lived in Polk County for 38 years raising our family in a wonderful, safe, family oriented neighborhood.

We are now perplexed, for over our back fences, there is a marijuana growing operation run by two corporations that are leasing the property behind us. They have brought in two blue shipping containers to be used as offices.

We wondered if they had a license and legal permits for their business. The Polk County Sheriff's Department and the land use office referred us to the OLCC in Salem, who told us that the information was confidential and they couldn't tell us.

The land behind us that they are leasing has access off of Lee Road, but they choose to trespass across our private road to put in their barbed wire fences and electric gates, deliveries of water tanks, plumbing, rock, etc. Everything seems to be a big secret and our government will tell us nothing. Who do we turn to?

We want to thank our commissioner, Mike Ainsworth, for voting against this activity. Shame on our other two commissioners for voting this into our backyards and neighborhoods where children are present.

*Jim and Kathy Bobeda
Dallas*

Country living comes with noises

I am quite familiar with the rural area in which a local resident recently received an anonymous letter about noise. My family home of 40 years is there. This is not a residential

area or a gated community with its laws, by-laws and ordinances. This is an area of randomly placed houses along a country road, surrounded by farmland and separated one from another by acreage.

It is a storybook fantasy that a rural countryside is quiet and peaceful.

In spring, we hear the repetitive booms of the waterfowl guns, a system devised to prevent birds from damaging vulnerable crops. We hear the loud banging of the machine shop across the way, the humming of the pump in the river.

The smell of the local dairy greets our senses, as well as the whirring and grinding of farm machinery. Dust settles indiscriminately over lawns, shrubs and porches. These things are familiar, comfortable; this is home.

Life in rural America will carry on, as will the generational behaviors of the residents.

Anyone troubled by the uncustomary noise could easily say so, since communication is open between neighbors here.

Two weeks ago, a local family gathered to celebrate the graduation of two young men home on leave. These men have endured intense physical and academic training. Who can blame them for kicking up the dust with some target practice? I say, "Congratulations, men!"

A complaint in the form of an anonymous hate letter attacking this family is downright un-neighborly. It is out of character and outside of the country ethics.

I have one question of our poisonous pen pal: "Y'ain't from here, are ya?"

*Karin McKinny
Independence*

Dallas firefighters seek volunteers

Over the past several weeks, the *Itemizer* has done a great job keeping its readers informed on activities at Dallas Fire & EMS. You have read about the external evaluation, response times, and the two new seasonal firefighters who will bolster daytime response over the summer months.

The Dallas area has been served by a professional volunteer fire department since 1878. Dedicated men and

women have freely given their time to help their neighbors. Dallas is the largest city in the state to still be served by a volunteer fire department (EMS is staffed by a paid crew of four 24/7) covering approximately 33,000 residents within a 125-square-mile response area.

We are fortunate to have visionary leadership, excellent training, quality equipment, and great community support from both residents and the city's elected officials. You may not know that Dallas Fire is dispatched to more than 1,000 calls each year.

We are part of the community health care system as 60 percent of the fire department incidents today are assisting our EMS crews or providing initial medical assistance when both Dallas medic units are on calls and an ambulance from a neighboring community arrives to transport the patient. The call volume for the fire department has increased by 40 percent over the last five years. Dallas EMS call volume has also increased to more than 3,200 incidents last year.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated group of volunteers, but our numbers are smaller than years past and our demand for service continues to increase as the size of Dallas grows and our population ages.

Our doors are always open to community members interested in joining our team. You won't receive a pay check, but you will have the satisfaction knowing you helped.

*Eriks Gablits
President
Dallas Volunteer Firefighters Association*

WANT TO WRITE A LETTER?

Letters to the editor are limited to 300 words. Longer letters will be edited.

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.

For the full letters policy, see www.polkio.com.

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