

**EDITORIALS**

**Plan needs safety first**

The Dallas School District needs a plan to address issues facing the grandstands at Gallaspy Stadium — and to address the numerous issues facing all of the district's facilities. There's no question the home bleachers, originally built in the 1960s, brings a sense of pride and character to the high school. But things have changed since they were built. Codes have been updated. What was OK then, simply doesn't cut it now. Not acting quickly and decisively could lead to difficult consequences.

Woodburn knows this all too well, as its grandstands were closed during the entire 2015 football season to bring stairs, aisles and the entrance to the crowd's nest up to code — similar issues Dallas' grandstands face.

An inspection by a state fire marshal forced the issue for Woodburn. Bringing these aspects up to current codes would take time and money, but it is well spent if it prevents an injury or worse.

The bleachers are part of a much larger issue. The district has \$45 million of work needed to be done.

It has \$17 million from a voter-approved bond to address them. We are glad to hear the Citizen's Oversight Committee is working on a plan to tackle these issues, but a revised plan, one that takes into account these pressing issues, needs to be completed quickly.

Once that plan is in place, communication is key. School officials have differing opinions on things like the condition of athletic facilities or how big of a risk a facility is in of getting red-tagged.

This lack of communication leads to confusion. Officials are frustrated because concerns aren't being brought to them. Others are likewise frustrated that their concerns seemingly aren't being addressed.

The result? A fractured school district instead of a united one.

Clearly, the district has its hands full. Choosing what projects to prioritize over others is always difficult.

Inaction is the one course the district cannot take. That can lead to inefficiency, lack of unity and potentially risky environments.

**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 email ([ionews@polkio.com](mailto:ionews@polkio.com)).**

**MONDAY, AUG. 8**

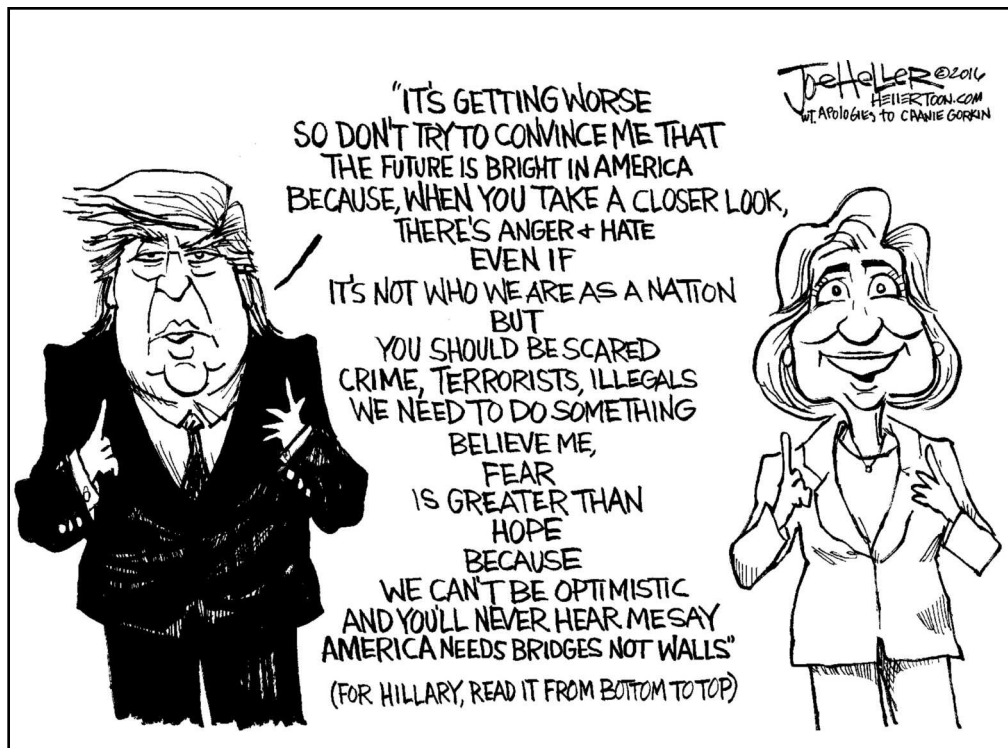
- **Hops and Heritage Festival Commission** — 6 p.m., Independence Elks Lodge, 289 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
- **WIMPEG Board of Directors** — 7 p.m., 150 N. Knox St., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
- **Dallas School Board** — 6:30 p.m., Dallas School District office, 111 SW Ash St., Dallas. 503-623-5594.
- **Southwest Polk Fire Protection District Board** — 7:30 p.m., Rickreall Fire Station, 275 Main St., Rickreall. 503-831-3530.
- **Central School District Board of Directors** — 6:30 p.m., Henry Hill Education Support Center, 750 S. Fifth St., Independence.

**TUESDAY, AUG. 9**

- **Independence City Council** — 7 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
- **Dallas Planning Commission** — 7 p.m., Dallas City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3565.
- **Polk County Board of Commission work session** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, BOC office, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.

**WEDNESDAY, AUG. 10**

- **Independence Heritage Museum Commission** — 4 p.m., Independence Heritage Museum, 112 S. Third St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
- **Monmouth Library Advisory Board** — 7 a.m., Monmouth Public Library, 168 Ecols St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
- **Monmouth Parks and Recreation Board** — 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.
- **Polk Soil and Water Conservation District** — 6 p.m., USDA Service Center, 580 Main St., Suite A, Dallas. 503-623-9680.



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Ellendale traffic causes headaches**

Have you noticed the increase in traffic in Dallas? Especially on Ellendale.

There is an increase in traffic accidents and slow downs on this narrow, two-lane road, most of which doesn't have curbs or sidewalks.

Why you may ask. It is because of the huge residential subdivisions that are being built, bringing in hundreds of new residents to our small town. For years the city knew and planned for this growth, but made no attempt to put in place the street infrastructure that is needed to accommodate such an influx of cars, trucks, and huge construction vehicles into Dallas.

The roads should have been put in and widened and upgraded with lights, curbs and gutters, etc., first. You don't put the cart before the horse. This huge increase in traffic causes dangerous situations. I see the city failing its residents with a lack of foresight in this.

*Ali Rion  
Dallas*

**Duck Race helps vision, hearing**

Saturday, the last of the 2,000 ducks were gathered by 4:38 p.m., ending the eighth annual Dallas Lions Club Duck Race.

This is a thank you to our wonderful community. The first 162 numbered ducks to cross the finish line have won prizes for the purchasers of corresponding Duck Tickets. Dallas sponsors — what an amazing display of support and generosity. Beyond all the fun and cheering, it is important for you to know this: each of you who bought a ticket, provided a prize, publicized the event or helped in sales are directly responsible for elementary school vision screening (nearly 1,200 children were screened last year), the gift of sight for someone who needed eye-

glasses, the purchase of hearing aids for someone who struggled to hear, student scholarships, Bikes for Reading programs and much more.

100 percent of our proceeds are committed back to our community. Special thanks to the Dallas Chamber for hosting Summerfest, Polk *Itemizer-Observer* for special coverage of the Duck Race and finally, the fabulous Boy Scout Troop 288 who set up channels, pursued and herded the waterfowl through perilous whirlpools and unpredictable undercurrents along that slippery creek, and gathered the weary ducks as they reached their final destination. What a fabulous community we live in. Thank you Dallas.

*Dallas Lions Club  
Susan Gartland  
Dallas*

**Thank you from Dallas Fire & EMS**

Mahalo Dallas! On behalf of the men and women of Dallas Fire & EMS, we wanted to thank the Dallas Area Chamber of Commerce for selecting our organization to serve as the grand marshals for the 2016 Summerfest Parade.

We are fortunate to have a group of dedicated volunteers who leave their dinner table, miss their child's ball game, or leave the theater on date night with their spouse when the pager goes off to answer an emergency call in Dallas and beyond. Dallas is a great community, and the continued support we receive from our residents, businesses, and elected officials is never taken for granted and always appreciated.

Sincere thanks to all who braved some warm temperatures on Friday night to attend our annual hydro cart races. This was followed by our open house on Saturday morning, which was a huge success. We thank all who visited the fire station to see the equipment, meet our members, ask about volun-

teer opportunities, and learn how to save a life through hands-only CPR. We would be remiss if we didn't thank two local businesses, Limeberry and Domino's Pizza, who provided coupons for those who learned hands-only CPR. We also would like to recognize Graphic Latitude for the amazing Dallas Fire & EMS "Hawaiian Luau" themed T-shirts that were a hit with all.

Our doors are always open to community members interested in joining our team. If you are interested in being a part of an exciting organization, please fill out an application. Training and equipment is provided free of charge, and while you won't receive a paycheck, you will have the satisfaction knowing you helped a neighbor in need.

*Renee Wilson  
Vice President  
Dallas Volunteer Firefighters Association  
Dallas*

**Dallas residents: Pick up your trash**

Following the parade on Saturday I was dismayed to see all the trash left behind. The sidewalk and streets had so much trash left.

Then we went down to the Ian Tawney park to see cigarette butts all over the place. The lack of pride was amazing. Do the people of Dallas have so little respect for our city that they can't be bothered to help keep it clean? Lastly to the guy in the jacked up truck who couldn't park it between the lines. It was not my problem that you couldn't get out. I wasn't impressed when you pounded on my window even though you were wearing a Dallas Fire & EMS hat. I would like to think you just happened to have that hat, that you aren't actually one. You and you're shiny Ford. If you can't park it, don't drive it. You clearly can't.

*Valerie Grice  
Dallas*

**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.

The *Itemizer-Observer* does not guarantee the accuracy of facts

presented by letter writers; dis-senters are welcome to respond.

For the complete Letters policy, see [www.polkio.com](http://www.polkio.com), opinion, letters. For questions: [ionews@polkio.com](mailto:ionews@polkio.com) or call Editor Emily Mentzer, 503-623-2373 ext. 117.

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