

Sheriff: Garton, Whitlow face off

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 He said his responsibility is to seek out that information in a number of formats, such as attending city council and community meetings and taking the advice of his recently formed Sheriff's Advisory Committee.
 "If I don't go out and ask questions of people, or people (don't) have access to me to give me advice, then I won't know what service to deliver," Garton said.
 Whitlow, a patrol sergeant, has worked for the Yamhill County Sheriff's Office for 16 years, first as a reserve and then full-time starting in 2001.
 Whitlow, 50, currently oversees patrols in the four cities that contract with Yamhill County for police service: Sheridan, Willamina, Lafayette and Dayton.

He leads a team of 10 deputies.
 He said wants to use the skills he's developed in that role and as a detective for the benefit of Polk County.
 "I have good leadership skills," he said. "It would be a good challenge to come down here and spend a couple of terms and be comfortable here and get everybody going and leave a little bit of a legacy behind."
 He sees the role of sheriff as that of a "servant leader" that is responsive to the different needs of communities within the office's jurisdiction.
 "We are here to serve everybody else, and it's not about us," he said. "It's not about cop egos. It's about the people."
 Of his priorities, Whitlow said establishing or strengthening partnerships

with neighboring agencies is key, including all the city police departments in the county. He said communities are better served when agencies have strong working relationships because issues tend to bleed over jurisdictional lines.
 "Customer service is kind of a broad topic, but it comes down to relationships, partnerships, taking ones that have been strained and making them better," he said. "Taking ones that didn't exist and creating them, making them the best they can be."
 Another component of his leadership strategy is taking care of his employees and listening to their suggestions and opinions about how to better serve citizens.
 "Without them, the sheriff's office is not going to

function," he said.
 Garton said he decided to seek the sheriff's position partly with his children's future in mind.
 He wanted to make sure they had the same opportunities he did.
 "And I want the community they grow up in to be good," he said. "I want to leave it better than I found it."
 Whitlow said the first priority of a sheriff should be making sure the public's needs are met.
 "Making sure everybody under his command is providing the best service they can to the citizens of the community, because we work for them," he said. "It truly is about customer service."
 To see the answers to the questionnaires sent by the *Itemizer-Observer*: polkio.com.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Call Monmouth P&L for LED bulbs

MONMOUTH — Monmouth Power and Light is participating in a light bulb exchange.
 All Monmouth Power residential customers qualify. Personnel will install LED bulbs in homes, replacing incandescent bulbs. Customers are eligible to replace up to 16 bulbs per household. This program requires an exchange of one incandescent light bulb for one LED bulb. Available while supplies last. To schedule an appointment: 503-838-3526.

Have coffee with a cop on Friday

MONMOUTH — The Monmouth Police Department will host a Coffee with a Cop at Burgerville, 615 Main St. E., from 7 to 9 a.m. on Friday. Join neighbors and officers for conversation and coffee — no agenda or speeches, just a chance to ask questions, voice concerns, and get to know the officers in your neighborhood.
 For more information: 503-838-1109, or email ihaines@ci.monmouth.or.us.

Marquis helps make wishes come true

INDEPENDENCE — Marquis Spa is helping make wishes come true for kids battling life-threatening medical conditions.
 During the last week of September, Marquis donated six of the Wish model hot tubs in six days to Make-A-Wish chapters across America to use for wish-granting or fundraising.
 The six hot tubs were made available by the Spirit of a Wish promotion, where Marquis offered to donate a Wish hot tub for every three Swim Spa Aquatic Training Vessels purchased in April. For more information: www.marquisspas.com.

Moser: Libraries are heart of community

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 If they didn't, they would put the note back on the pile with the courier to the next library.
 "We didn't know if we were getting it or not," Moser said. "Now, you can not only look and see if that stuff is there, but you can put holds on it at home."
 Even better, checking out items through e-readers means instant gratification.
 "Not too long ago, I was reading a series of books, and I finished the second book in the series," Moser said. "I looked and saw our copy's checked out. I went to our Libraries To Go (app) and, sure enough, there was an e-copy available. Ten minutes later and I'm reading the third book on my Kindle. It's pretty amazing."
 Moser, always a voracious reader, said spending 30 years working at the library was a fluke.
 "I thought I was going to be a teacher," she said.
 Moser had taken classes to be a teacher, and ran a day care from her home before looking for part time work.
 That's when she saw the library was hiring — just 25 hours a month — but it was a welcome break from raising six

children — all younger than 9.
 She wouldn't have it any other way.
 "I get to work somewhere and see all the books," she said. "I have to tell you, it's still like Christmas when the books come."
 Moser's experience with her own children — some eager to read, and others reluctant — has helped her make suggestions for library patrons who struggle with reading. Her strong belief in literacy fuels her passion for books and libraries.
 "I've found ways to encourage the ones who are reluctant to read, and I felt like learning that here has helped me help them (my children)," Moser said.
 One important tool has been audio books. Just because a kid struggles with reading doesn't mean they want to read about Dick and Jane, Moser said. Audio books can help.
 "It's really helpful for kids to read along while they're listening to it," she said. "They listen to it; they see it and touch it all at the same time. Put the headphones on, and he can follow along, and pretty soon he's reading what his friends are reading."
 Libraries have become a family affair for the Mosers, with all of her children

having volunteered at some point — and her oldest daughter was just named the director of the state public library.
 "Our love of libraries has continued to the next generation," she said.
 Moser coordinates the 50 volunteers, as well as repairs and catalogs materials and takes care of all the logistics of library programs — are there enough volunteers? Do we have supplies for the program? Do we need more toilet paper?
 Her favorite part of her job is working with the materials.
 "I like working on the books, repairing the books," Moser said. "I like handling the materials, and when you look and have this big pile done, it's very concrete."
 If that were the only part of her job, she would miss the library's patrons.
 "Libraries are the heart of every community," Moser said. "Yesterday, not only did we have the kids come, but a lot of the dads came."
 "The dads had a great time building Legos with their kids, and that kind of stuff, where you're building memories with your family — that stuff is all really important."

Team: Goal is to treat mental health issues

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 Leonard worked on a similar team in Yamhill County for four years, and said the teams' goal is to break the cycle of repeated incarceration for people with mental health issues.
 "I see a tremendous need, and there are many factors that contribute to someone needing crisis response to address the mental health aspect," she said.
 Yamhill and Marion counties have had teams patrolling for a few years, and LaCombe said they are seeing success in achieving that goal. The hope is they will experience the same in Polk.
 "I wish we could have had it sooner," said Polk County Sheriff Mark Garton. "They are streamlining services."
 LaCombe said providing help to someone in crisis can take time, so having the teams available allows deputies and officers to respond to other calls.
 The teams' calls will be tracked their first year to see if the need is great enough to keep them rolling, LaCombe said.
 "We are just getting started in Polk County, so we are trying to establish our position here and our relationships with the different agencies," LaCombe said. "I think throughout the next year, our call load will increase and we will get an idea of what the need here in Polk County is. We will also keep track of the contacts we have as well, so there will be some numbers to access."
 Garton anticipates those statistics will provide proof that the teams are necessary in Polk County.

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