



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Doug and Renee Pierce, of Dallas, took over ownership at Courtyard Coffeehouse & Deli.

# Settling into food service

## New owners of Courtyard Coffeehouse keep old favorites

By Jolene Guzman  
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Doug and Renee Pierce, of Dallas, got married in June and wanted to find a way to spend more time together.

Doug worked 25 years as a truck driver and wanted to end his days on the road.

"I wanted to downsize a little," he said. "Not be gone as much."

Their solution? Taking over Courtyard Coffeehouse & Deli in downtown Dallas.

Renee said the move seems perfect.

"We are going to be together all the time," she said with a laugh.

Doug worked in restaurants decades ago before he joined the U.S. Navy, where he was worked as a cook.

"He fed everyone on the ship," Renee said.

She said she's leaving that responsibility to Doug at Courtyard.



### Check it out

**What:** Courtyard Coffeehouse & Deli.  
**Where:** 156 SE Mill St, Dallas.  
**New Hours:** 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday; 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.  
**Contact:** 503-623-9686.

"He's the cook," she said. "I'm the cashier."

The operation is a family affair, with Doug's daughter, Jamie Pierce, and Renee's mom, Connie Ames, working behind the counter, too.

While the coffee shop and deli isn't the full-scale

restaurant Doug has dreamed of owning yet — featuring sandwich, wraps, soups, a salad bar and coffee — it's a start for the couple.

They officially took over Dec. 1 and by the next day, Renee was already nailing regular customers' names.

"Hi Tom," she said to a customer as he walked through the door. "It's Tom, right?"

The man nodded his head and headed toward the counter to place his order.

Doug said they want to make customers feel at home.

"We want to make it a little more personable," he said.

With that in mind, they will be keeping favorite sandwiches on the menu.

Popular creations — Gobbler, Spicy Jack, and The Whittaker — still are featured.

Doug is adding chili dogs to the menu on Thursdays, and everyone's favorite soups still will be served.

The resident cook agrees with his customers on the best sandwiches — Gobbler and Spicy Jack — and he likes a good mocha, too.

"This is a perfect fit for him," Renee said.

# Library district would save Wagner

## Falls City officials consider size, scope of district needed for library

By Jolene Guzman  
The Itemizer-Observer

FALLS CITY — Would Falls City residents support paying to keep the Wagner Community Library open?

That is what Falls City school and city officials want to find out before plunging into planning to put a taxing district or operating levy on the ballot.

The library's funding is limited to what remains in the Wagner Trust Fund managed by the city, which will run out within a few years. Neither the city nor the school district can afford to pay operational costs, so it would be up to the citizens to provide funding necessary to keep the doors open.

Both entities believe that may be a challenge, citing losses at the ballot for a bond to build a multi-purpose gym at Falls City Elementary School and weak support in the precinct for the Polk County Sheriff's Office levy.

"The city precinct has always been very tight on voting," Mayor Terry Ungricht said. "It would take a lot of educating and trying to get the no-sayers to come to a meeting to offer their ideas."

The group decided its first step should be surveying the community, with suggestions of putting the survey in utility bills, online and passing it out at sporting events.

Library Director Andy Rommel said material stating what the library provides to the community should be distributed at the same time the survey goes out.

"To be perfectly honest with you, I don't want to put a whole lot of work into it if people are going to vote no on it," said Bob Young, who is on the school board.

He said, as a school board member, he's willing to support the library to keep it open, but there only so much that can be done once the trust money runs out.

"These people need to say yes or no to something, and if they say no, fine, it's no," he said.

The library's advisory board would oversee writing the survey, which the city and district could help distribute to community members.

Depending on the outcome of the survey, the two entities may schedule a meeting with state library and Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library System representatives to discuss forming a district versus asking voters for a three- to five-year levy.

Ungricht said he would like to see community members, both those who use the library and those who don't, attend that meeting to hear about options — or provide their own.

"That's what we are running into — we are not getting public involvement," he said. "We're only trying to come up with solutions to help the community, and we don't have all the ideas."

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