

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lyle's Buchan is Distinguished Educator

DALLAS — Lyle Elementary School third-grade teacher Barb Buchan is October's Distinguished Educator for Dallas School District.



Buchan

Students had more to add: "Thank you for teaching us new things and for being polite. Thank you for all the fun times with us."

She was given the award on Nov. 28. Brenda Hess, a parent of a third-grade student, nominated her.

"She is kind, patient and artistic," Hess said of Buchan. "She creates a safe, connected, and thriving learning environment in her classroom."

The Distinguished Educator Program recognizes "excellence in teaching and learning" in Dallas School District schools.

Red Cross responds to Grand Ronde fire

GRAND RONDE — Disaster responders with the American Red Cross Cascades Region responded to a home fire disaster on Thursday at about 7 p.m. in the 7600 block of Fire Hall Road in Grand Ronde. This single-family fire affected two adults and pets.

The Red Cross provided resources to help address the immediate basic needs of those affected such as temporary housing, food, clothing, comfort kits, information about recovery services, and health and mental health services.

The Red Cross Cascades Region (Oregon and Southwest Washington) responds to an average of two home fires every day. Volunteers provide hope and comfort to people affected, helping victims anywhere and anytime. The Red Cross advocates emergency preparedness and offers the installation of free smoke alarms in our community. Residents may call 503-528-5783 or complete an online form at www.RedCross.org/CascadesHomeFire to schedule an appointment.

Cat adoption fees waived for December

SALEM — Want a cat this year? Thanks to a donation from a shelter volunteer, the Willamette Humane Society is waiving cat adoption fees now through Saturday. The organization is waiving fees as part of its "Merry Cat-mas" campaign to help find homes for as many cats as possible before the end of the year.

The campaign applies only to cats 1 year old and older. A local volunteer, the shelter's "Secret Santa," donated money to make the adoption special possible. The long-time supporter had already sponsored adoption fees for all adult and special needs cats for the month of December, according to a Willamette Humane Society press release.

Willamette Humane Society is located at 4246 Turner Road in Salem. For more information: 503-585-5900.

Tax refund checks to wait until February

SALEM — Oregon Department of Revenue officials have announced that no personal income tax refunds for the 2016 tax year will be issued until after Feb. 15, 2017. The refund hold will allow data-matching of amounts claimed on returns to what employers report on Forms W-2 and 1099.

"Data-matching reduces potential refund fraud, and fraud is a problem we want to tackle from every direction we can," said Ken Ross, manager of Revenue's anti-fraud efforts. "The IRS, Oregon, and other states are taking similar measures to prevent potential fraud, capitalizing on the requirement that employers submit W-2 and 1099 information by Jan. 31."

Ross referred to the IRS' announcement earlier this year that taxpayers claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit or the Additional Child Tax Credit won't see their federal refunds until after Feb. 15. The Oregon Department of Revenue stops millions of dollars in fraudulent refunds each year: In 2015, anti-fraud efforts stopped \$6.9 million in fraudulent refunds claimed on almost 4,000 different returns. Fraudsters are known to submit fraudulent returns early, trying to go unnoticed among the many early filers requesting legitimate refunds. Among returns filed before Feb. 15, about 90 percent request a refund.

"No one wants to hold up a taxpayer's legitimate refund, and taxpayers have been pretty understanding of the need to combat fraud," Ross said. "We take very seriously our responsibility to make sure tax dollars go to the legitimate owners and not to fraudsters."

Visit www.oregon.gov/dor to get forms, check the status of your refund, or make payments. Call 503-378-4988 or 800-356-4222 (toll-free) or email questions.dor@oregon.gov for additional assistance. For TTY for hearing or speech impaired, call 800-886-7204.

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Our office will be **CLOSED Jan. 2**
EARLY DEADLINES
as follows:

- News Department:**
Social News Wedding, Engagements, Births, etc.
.....Wednesday, Dec. 28, 4pm
- Community Events** Business, School, Community News
.....Thursday, Dec. 29, Noon
- General News**.....Thursday, Dec. 29, Noon
- Letters to the Editor/Obituaries**
..... Friday, Dec. 30, 10am
- Advertising Department:**
LegalsThursday, Dec. 29, Noon
- Display Main news advertisements/inserts
.....Thursday, Dec. 29, Noon
- Classified Display Friday, Dec. 30, 11am
- Classified Line Ads Friday, Dec. 30, noon

Itemizer-Observer
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Food: Hunger affects all students

Continued from Page 1A

"If you can't eat and you don't have fuel, that affects your body, how you work in school, getting up for class and actually being able to mentally do your work," Bowles said. "It also affects your stress levels, because food insecurity is not knowing where your next meal is going to come from."

Food insecurity is a widespread issue that has affected all parts of the student population.

Junior David Ribich, a cross-country and track and field runner, takes what he eats seriously.

"Food is a really big part in athletics," Ribich said. "It comes down to what you eat and what you really need to avoid."

His freshman year, his meal plan started to run short.

"I had no idea what I was doing," Ribich said.

The combination of eating at the dining hall and picking up the occasional snack or coffee on campus meant his meal balance for the term wasn't going to last. Ribich's parents were able to transfer more funds to him. Others weren't as lucky.

"Some people on the team would have \$40 left for food for the next two weeks, which isn't really enough," Ribich said. "Whomever had the most money would buy a meal for them to help make the \$40 actually last."

Food insecurity affects all kinds of students, but at its core is a similar problem. "It is part of a larger problem of access to healthy and nutritious food at a reasonable price," Hardgrave said. If there's a common theme among students on meal plans who visit the food pantry, it's that meal plans are failing to last an entire term.

All freshmen at WOU are required to live on campus and purchase a meal plan.

The university offers a variety of meal plans to its students. Meal plans range



LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer

Western Oregon's food pantry serves all students.

from \$120 to \$550 per term.

In the lowest, WOU officials estimate spending roughly \$1.57 per day at Valsetz Dining Hall to make the balance last the length of the term.

The highest has a suggested goal of spending \$45.84 per week based on eating seven days a week based on WOU's website.

WOU's website estimates a meal to cost an average of \$3 for housing residents at Siletz dining hall, meaning the highest meal plan averages roughly 15 meals per week.

Albert Worotikan, director of dining, said the university recommends meal plan three with a beginning

balance of \$450 and a suggested goal of spending \$37.50 per week.

Based on the university's estimate of \$3 per meal at Valsetz, that would equal about 12.5 meals per week during the 12-week term.

The estimate of \$3 per meal could be the source of students' issues of money running short.

"I don't know how they came up with those numbers," Worotikan said. "We need to be transparent about this. Is \$3 a meal really enough? Let's be honest, I doubt it is, not for lunch and dinner. Breakfast could be \$3, but lunch could easily be \$4 to \$5, and dinner could be \$6 to \$7.50."

Solution on Page 3A

2	6								
				1					3
	5	7	6				4		
					6	9			
	7					2	3	4	
		4	3						
		6		9	4	8	5		
	4					7	9	6	
		2		6					

By Ben Arnoldy

Sudoku

Difficulty: ★★★★★

4	3	2	8	1	6	7	5	9
5	6	9	3	7	4	8	1	2
1	7	8	9	5	2	4	6	3
3	4	7	2	8	5	6	9	1
2	1	6	7	4	9	3	8	5
9	8	5	1	6	3	2	7	4
7	9	1	4	3	8	5	2	6
8	5	3	6	2	1	9	4	7
6	2	4	5	9	7	1	3	8

How to do Sudoku

Fill in the grid so the numbers 1 through 9 appear just once in every column, row, and three-by-three square. See example above.

The Christian Science Monitor



January 2017

Monmouth Area Community Events Calendar

DON'T FORGET

Dec. 28 Free Movie at Monmouth Public Library 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm. The BFG, based on the book by Roald Dahl. Rated PG. Free admission, snack included. 168 Ecols Street S. Monmouth.

Dec. 29 The Gingerbread Man puppet show - Monmouth Public Library. 10:30 am - 11:30 am. Penny's Puppet Productions presents...The Gingerbread Man. Join us for this mini-musical fun adventure and modern day twist on this endearing folktale. Funded by the Friends of the Monmouth Library. Thank you Friends! 168 Ecols Street S. Monmouth. FREE ADMISSION.

Jan. 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR from the Monmouth Business Association

Jan. 1 Polk Flea Market. 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. Polk County's oldest and largest market with 183 tables selling antiques, collectibles, tools, etc. 520 S Pacific Hwy W. Rickreall

Jan. 3 School resumes. PLEASE DRIVE SAFE

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Chamber Forum
• **CHAMBER FORUM:** Did you know Polk County is in the "path of totality" for the 2017 Total Solar Eclipse? On Monday, August 21 at 10:17 AM, Polk County will experience almost two full minutes of darkness as the moon crosses between the sun and Earth. People from all around will be traveling to cities and towns located in the path, including Independence and Monmouth. Concerts, festivals, and more are currently being planned by area wineries and each city. Be sure you know how your business or organization may capitalize on this great event combining tourism and a natural phenomenon! Join the MI Chamber for our forum on Wednesday, January 11 from 12 PM to 1 PM at the Monmouth Public Library (168 Ecols Street S, Monmouth). Box lunch provided by Arena Sports Bar. Register online at www.micc-or.org.

MONMOUTH SENIOR CENTER RIBBON CUTTING: Join the MI Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center, the City of Monmouth, and the Monmouth Business Association as we celebrate the grand opening of the 2,133-square foot addition to the Monmouth Senior Center (180 Warren Street S, Monmouth)! The celebration will be held at noon on Thursday, January 19. And be sure to explore the new facility during the open house from 11 AM to 2 PM.

Thirsty Thursday
• **THIRSTY THURSDAY:** Quench your thirst for business and community connections while promoting your business or organization, learning about the host site, entering to win giveaways, and, of course, enjoying refreshments! Help kick-off our first Thirsty Thursday of 2017 and enjoy a complimentary 3-wine tasting and hors d'oeuvres from Namasté Vineyard (3250 Hwy 99W, Independence)! Plus, wines by the glass and bottles will be available for purchase. Register online at www.micc-or.org.



Happy New Year!
From everyone with the Monmouth Business Association.