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Fire crews respond to two blazes



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer

Polk County Fire District No. 1 responded to a fire on Sacre Lane on Thursday.

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — An electrical fire in a 200-square-foot shed destroyed the structure on Gentle Court East on Sunday afternoon.

“Crews did not enter the shed due to a large amount of material and contents being stored in the loft,” said Neal Olson, Polk County Fire District No. 1 deputy chief. “All operations were done from the outside, removing siding and metal roofing material.”

No damage estimate of the shed fire was available at

press time.

Another fire on Thursday on Sacre Lane was caused by a breakdown on mortar in the chimney, causing a wall joist to ignite in an area that was hidden because of remodeling, Olson said.

“The occupants heard a crackling and got out,” Olson said.

Firefighters attacked the fire through the roof, cutting a hole to allow smoke and heat to escape.

Twenty-six fire personnel and nine vehicles responded. Dallas Fire & EMS also responded.

No injuries were reported.

IN YOUR TOWN

DALLAS

City council postpones leader vote.

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FALLS CITY

Falls City’s girls basketball team picks up a pair of victories.

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INDEPENDENCE

Central High School to perform “Band Geeks” beginning on Friday.

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MONMOUTH

City now compliant with state whistleblower laws.

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SPORTS

A.J. Morales making up for lost time as a wrestler.

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EDUCATION

Lead-based paint and asbestos may increase costs of Dallas maintenance bond projects.

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POINT targets meth network

Itemizer-Observer staff report
POLK COUNTY — Polk County Inter-agency Narcotics Team “deiced” a methamphetamine distribution network in the county following a four-month investigation.

In an operation called “Deicer,” the team arrested 13 people, and is on the hunt for six more, the Polk County Sheriff’s Office announced Monday.

Investigators identified and charged the following subjects involved: John Molina, Michael Gravelle, Chaeron Mortimer, Travis Weddle, Naomi Ahlgren, Rachel Keys, Damon Mathers, Tricia Haslett and Colin Lynch, all on one or more counts of delivery of methamphetamine and possession of methamphetamine.

Officers arrested Jesse Creekmore on delivery of methamphetamine within 1,000 feet of a school, manufacture of methamphetamine within 1,000 feet of school, and multiple counts of manufacturing of meth, delivery of meth and possession of meth.

See METH, Page 5A

Snow leaves schools on thin ice

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — Yay snow day! Oh wait, we have to make them up?

Maybe, depending on how close districts are to approaching the minimum amount of hours students are required to be in school.

State law requires students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade have 900 hours of instructional time during a school year.

For grades nine through 11, the requirement is 990 hours, while seniors are to attend 966 hours.

Those are minimum requirements, and schools build schedules with time to spare.

Perrydale School District already has exceeded its leeway with the three days it has had to call.

“We have two built into the schedule, so we will need to make one up,” said Perrydale Superintendent Eric Milburn.

Central School District has called three snow days, the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before Christmas break. Superintendent Buzz Brazeau said if that is the last of the snow days, the district should meet the hours required.

Dallas School District has used five snow days, including Monday, but has up to nine it could use.

Not that it wants to, said Steve Martinelli, the district’s



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer

Winter weather has forced Polk County schools to use snow days. Schools may have to make those days up later.

director of transportation.

“Even though we have nine, when we get to eight, at some point do we say that is just too many days to miss school?” Martinelli said in a report to the Dallas School Board Monday night. “In the past, we were doing 10 budget reduction days, and we know the affect it has on kids.”

Scheduling make up days could be tricky.

For Central, any makeup

days may have to occur after the end of the first semester at the end of the month.

Dallas will look at schedules to see where additional days can be plugged in. Thirty hours of in-service and parent-teacher conference days are already included in instructional hours, so converting those to regular class days won’t help make up hours.

See SNOW, Page 7A

Snow days

- Perrydale School District has called three snow days, which exceeds the two snow days built into the schedule. Perrydale will make up one day.

- Central School District has called three snow days (the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday before Christmas break) but should still meet the hours requirement if there are no more snow days. Dallas School District has used five snow days, but has up to nine it could use.

- State law requires 900 hours of instructional time during a school year for students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade. For grades nine through 11, the requirement is 990 hours. Seniors are required to attend 966 hours.

Foggin subject of special meeting

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — It wasn’t that Dallas City Manager Ron Foggin applied for another job, but how some Dallas City Council members found out that was the topic of a special meeting Monday night.

Foggin is a finalist for the city manager post in

McMinnville, a fact that many on the council were unaware of until they read about it in the Yamhill Valley News Register, a newspaper covering McMinnville.

Foggin said he is sorry for the council having found out that way.

“I, first of all, want to apologize because I broke one of my rules,” Foggin



Foggin

He said he applied for the job because he saw it as an opportunity for professional

growth, but added he has enjoyed working for Dallas. He said he would hope to continue if not selected for the McMinnville vacancy.

Foggin said he found out he was a finalist on Dec. 12, and the reason he didn’t tell the council then was because he wanted to take time to decide if he wanted to continue seeking the position.

“Even as late as last Tuesday night, during the council meeting, I really wasn’t sure I wanted to say in the process,” he said. “I had an email prepared to let the council know I was applying, I would be sent out the end of that week.”

The News Register article, written on Dec. 29, beat him to the punch.

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THE NEXT 7 DAYS PLANNING FOR YOUR WEEK

wed
Celebrate the snowy weather at Independence library’s Wacky Wednesday snowman crafts, offered twice.
3 and 6:30 p.m.



Snow showers
Hi: 32
Lo: 23

thu
Join other young professionals at a Dallas Chamber of Commerce networking event, at Citizen’s Bank.
5:30 p.m. Free.



Mostly sunny
Hi: 33
Lo: 18

fri
Re-live the teenage angst and have a laugh about it at Central’s production of “Band Geeks,” opening tonight.
7 p.m. \$5-\$8.



Mostly sunny
Hi: 34
Lo: 24

sat
A few cans of food or other donation is all that is needed to for donation yoga at Dallas Yoga and Balance Studio.
11 a.m.-noon.



Cloudy
Hi: 37
Lo: 28

sun
Looking for an excuse to don your favorite hat? Take part in National Hat Day!



Mostly cloudy
Hi: 42
Lo: 34

mon
Celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day at Dallas First Presbyterian Church and find out about social justice advocacy.
5:45 p.m.



Showers
Hi: 48
Lo: 43

tue
Dallas’ swim team hosts Lebanon for its first home meet since Dec. 6. Dallas hosts Central on Jan. 24.
4 p.m.



Showers
Hi: 51
Lo: 48

