

**EDITORIALS**

**Dear future superintendent**

Roughly 400 people in the Central School District gave feedback on what is good about the district, what could be better, and what qualities they want in the new superintendent.

It sounds a little like the list a young person would make when picturing his or her perfect soulmate.

Patient, responsible, good listener.  
Bilingual, bicultural, decisive. Works well with others, accountable, good communicator.

McKenzie Group, which conducted the surveys and community forums, said 400 participants was a good sample for a district of Central's size.

The search consultants will place the ad soon and send out emails to recruit candidates for Central's next top leader. Then a 15-person search committee comprising members of both the teachers and the certified unions, as well as administrators and community members will help narrow down the applications. Greg McKenzie said he expects to get "north of 20" applicants for the job and hopes the school board can make an announcement on the hire before spring break.

With so much involvement from teachers, staff, administrators and community members, we hope that whoever is chosen will have the continued support of all in the district.

We know the atmosphere at Central High School wasn't great last year. It seems to be improving, but it will require more work on the parts of both teachers and administrators to keep it going in the right direction.

The community needs to have confidence in its school board's decision, as well as in its teachers and administrators.

It is easy to demand support for teachers and rally against administration. This community needs to find balance between supporting both sides of the coin, because what it all boils down to is that old cliché: The children are our future.

Students felt the tension at the high school — it wasn't something that was hidden away in the teacher's lounge. We all need to stand behind our new superintendent while he or she gets his or her feet wet. We need to give him or her a chance.

**PUBLIC AGENDA**

**Public Agenda is a listing of upcoming meetings of 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).**

**WEDNESDAY, JAN. 11**

- **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.

**THURSDAY, JAN. 12**

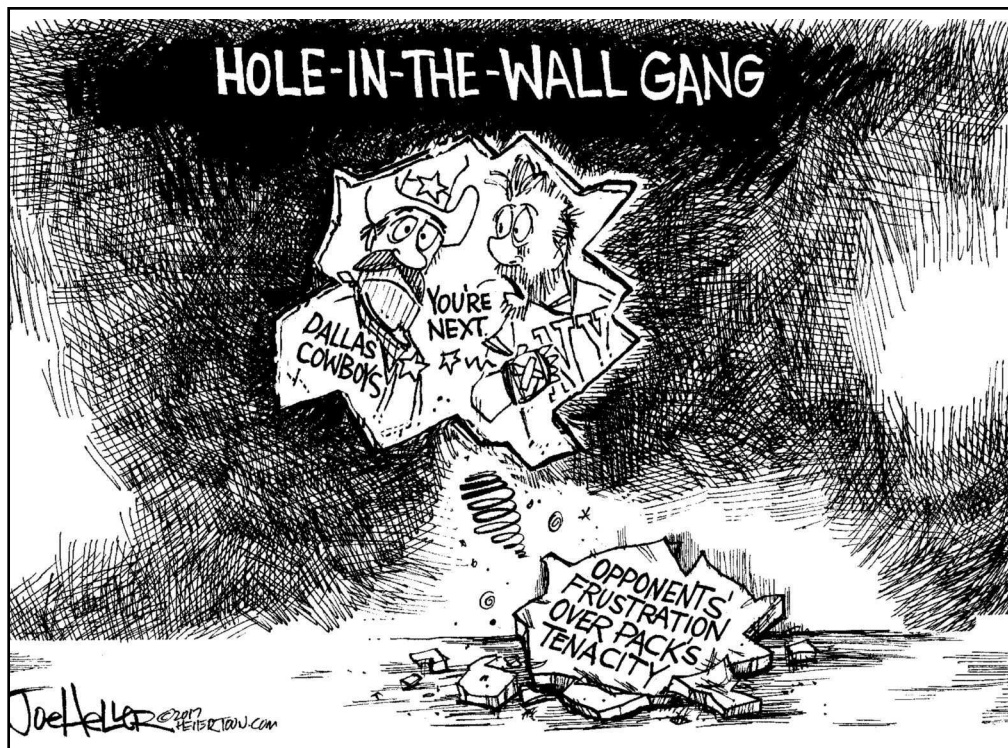
- **Monmouth Tree Advisory Board** — 7 p.m., Monmouth Senior Center, 180 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
- **Polk County Fire District No. 1 Board** — 6 p.m., Central Station 90, 1800 Monmouth St., Independence. 503-838-1510.
- **Western Days Commission** — 7 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

**TUESDAY, JAN. 17**

- **Independence Historic Preservation Commission** — 4 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
- **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, first floor conference room, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
- **Monmouth City Council** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
- **Dallas City Council** — 7 p.m., Dallas City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.

**WEDNESDAY, JAN. 18**

- **Monmouth Planning Commission** — 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.



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Hunger article hints at sensationalism**

I'm not sure what to think about the *I-O's* front page article "Facing hunger." While I realize there are people that do not have enough food, I struggle with the overall tone of the article and the statistics stated in the article. It reminds me of a Mark Twain quote, "There are lies, damned lies, and statistics." The term "food insecurity" in and of itself sounds very nebulous and self-defining.

According to the article, at least 59 percent of Western students are food insecure. And the article continuation on page 5A reads "hunger affects all students." Either we have a huge (real) problem on our hands, or a matter of journalistic sensationalism, I'm leaning towards the latter.

There are many resources available to students both private and public that provide either money/vouchers for food or food itself. There is a good chance that before the week is over I'll be subjected to many commercials and articles statistically proving the opposite about how exercise deprived and overweight us Americans are. Is this *I-O* article what they mean by fake news?

*Leif Anderson  
Monmouth*

**Loss of email service at Minet**

Recently I, along with all other subscribers to Minet's internet service in Monmouth and Independence, received notice that our email service will be discontinued. This came as a great surprise to me as I was not aware that such a move was being contemplated and I don't believe any of us customers had an opportunity to comment on whether we would mind losing this service. It was simply presented to us as a fact.

I personally have a large

problem with this happening, since I have been using Minet's email ever since starting with them as a customer when Minet began. I've been told that it is because management believes that not enough customers are using the service, but I've also been told that several hundred do. For me it would be a huge inconvenience, since I have been using it so long all of my correspondence is tied up in it, and chasing down all of my contacts to give them a new address would be next to impossible.

There must be many users out there who are just as inconvenienced as I am that may just go along with this decision, thinking that there is nothing they can do about it. But all we have to do is speak up.

We've been paying our internet fees every month, expecting to have an email service as part of the package. I sincerely doubt that there will be any reduction of our bills if the service is removed.

I urge all subscribers to Minet's email service to contact Minet's manager, Don Patton, and Minet's board of directors, through Minet's office in Monmouth, to express your opinion about this loss. It should be possible to reverse this decision.

*Jim Snyder  
Monmouth*

**Worry about PERS before facilities**

To county commissioners, instead of building a new facility with more taxes, why don't you pay your PERS obligation?

*Steve Dunn  
Independence*

**Let's unite against timber industry**

On Jan. 6, Oregon Public Broadcasting published an article about a report by the Department Of Environ-

mental Quality and the Oregon Health Authority on the condition of drinking water sources in the coast range of Oregon. It was completed in July of 2015, but was not published due to push back from the timber industry and Department of Forestry as they felt it was biased against the timber industry. The timber industry was the focus of the report as, according to the study, "Industrial forest companies are by far the single largest owner of land in coastal drinking watersheds, owning 100 percent of some source water areas." In addition, "40 percent of the drinking water systems on the coast flow through forest owned by private companies that log extensively. And 64 percent of all coastal water systems have had two or more alerts, warning customers of problems with disinfecting water so it is safe enough to drink."

Department of Environmental Quality and the Oregon Health Authority note the practice of clear cutting, slash near unbuffered streams, and use of herbicides are some of the human factors affecting water quality, leading to increased erosion and turbidity in the waterways. This increases the need for chemicals to disinfect the water to make it safe for drinking. This is the water that the citizens of the coast range rely on for drinking.

These issues, combined with the practice of the timber industry of aerial spraying and locking gates to keep recreational users from publicly owned lands should prompt us to action. It is time for all groups who are unhappy with the way the timber industry does business to work together to bring about change. We should demand access to clean drinking water and the public lands that we pay for.

*Lisa Jordan  
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 to the editor that are obvious promotions for a business, products or services will not be printed.

Letters must include the au-

thor's name, address and telephone number. This includes letters submitted via the *I-O's* website. Names and cities of residence are published; street addresses and telephone numbers are used for verification purposes only.

Letters must be submitted from individuals, not organiza-

tions, and must be original submissions to the *I-O*, not copies of letters sent to other media.

Letters of thanks to businesses, individuals and organizations are limited to 10 names.

The deadline for letters to the editor is 10 a.m. Monday. For the full letters policy: [www.polkio.com](http://www.polkio.com).

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Polk County  
**Itemizer-ObsERVER**

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