

# Dallas gets clean audit

By Jolene Guzman  
The Itemizer-Observer



DALLAS — After hazardous weather and driving conditions prevented Dallas' auditor from visiting with the Dallas City Council in January, she was able to give her fiscal year 2015-16 audit report Feb. 21.

Auditor Kamala Austin, a partner in CPA firm Merina & Company, delivered mostly good news.

Audits conducted on behalf of the city of Dallas and the Dallas Urban Renewal District received "clean opinions," meaning financial practices were substantially in compliance with laws.

Austin also conducted a "single audit" on a federal loan the city received.

"Something new for the city of Dallas, but what hap-

pens is if the city receives over \$750,000 in federal awards, in addition to having an audit, you are also required to have a single audit," Austin said.

The single audit analyzed management practices on a loan for drinking water projects. It was granted by the state of Oregon, but financed with federal money, so it's considered a federal loan, Austin explained.

She said the city will have

another single audit next year.

On the city's regular audit, Austin said there's one omission of note: a supplies inventory at the water department. The inventory counts water meters and other supplies and it wasn't conducted in time to be included in the audit.

"It didn't affect the opinion on the financial statements. You still have a clean opinion," she said. "It's just something that we noted."

Austin briefly reported on the Dallas Urban Renewal District audit, noting that the entity is separate from the city.

"It is its own taxing district and is required to have its own audit, as well," she said.

There wasn't much for Austin to report on the URD, as there were no non-compliance findings.

# Fun at Ag Fest



RACHEL SUDERMAN/for the Itemizer-Observer

Kids enjoy the petting zoo at the Mid-Valley Ag Fest at Polk County Fairgrounds and Events Center on Saturday and Sunday.



RACHEL SUDERMAN/for the Itemizer-Observer

Faces are painted for free at the Mid-Valley Ag Fest at the Polk County Fairgrounds and Events Center Saturday and Sunday.

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# Wines of the Valley

## Polk County Edition

Spring is just weeks away. The vines have not started sprouting leaves yet, but local vineyards are busy bottling new wines and cuvees to showcase for spring wine club pickups.

Most wine clubs will have a spring pickup in April, and that means new and exciting choices for tasters, too — and in the Willamette Valley, named Wine Region of the Year by Wine Enthusiast Magazine.

Polk County has about 30 wineries to choose from — most with tasting rooms.

Each one has its own feel. Wine is unique in that a dozen winemakers could take the same grapes and decide to make the same kind of wine, and end up with a dozen different nuances.

To make it more interesting, that same bottle of wine may taste slightly different — richer, more full-bodied — six months later.

One great thing about heading out to our local wineries in spring is dodging the summer crowds. It gives you a chance to talk one-on-one with the tasting manager — or, if you're lucky, the winemaker, in person.

Regardless if your experience with wine is starting from nothing, or a bottle (or box) of cheap rosé, you will find a great time to be had at Polk County wineries. The people are not snobby about their profession or their wines, and are eager to share as much knowledge as the wine

drinker wants to know.

It's fascinating to learn the difference between a pinot noir, pinot gris or pinot blanc. What, exactly, makes a cuvee? Why is a rosé rose? How do you make a white pinot noir?

Polk County wineries feature beautiful pinot noirs — of course, as the pinot noir grape is what the Willamette Valley is known for — but also have dabbled in exceptional ports and sparkling varieties. They grow beautiful white varieties, producing crisp, fresh, sweet or dry whites. Local winemakers have traded with other regions in Oregon to create lovely deep reds.

While many Polk County wineries having tasting rooms open year-round, it is a good idea to call ahead to make sure before you head out. Tasting rooms that aren't open year-round are often open by appointment during the winter months.

There truly is something for everyone at Polk County wineries. If you're not interested in the

wine itself, take a tour for the views — and bring a camera, because the hilltop vistas are stunning.



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