EDITORIALS

Free speech is not free

The Dallas City Council is looking at a new policy to govern rules of conduct on social media.

Some say this would violate a councilor's first amendment rights. The intent of the new policy is not to prohibit someone's free speech, but to hold them accountable when they break the already-established rules of decorum.

As the saying goes, "Free speech is not free."

Lately, we've seen a few comedians cross the line of what society considers acceptable when it comes to expressing their disdain and dislike of our president, or using speech considered to be inappropriate by most of our nation.

They have the right to express themselves in whatever manner they choose — very little is truly illegal when it comes to free speech and expression — but choices, actions and words come with consequences.

While the man holding the top political office in our nation uses social media however he chooses, we expect more from our local representatives.

Not only should our councilors show respect to each other both in person and online — even when (especially when) they disagree — but they should avoid discussing city business on social sites including Facebook.

We have seen councilors comment on each other's Facebook feeds. On the surface, it seems innocent enough, but if a majority of councilors discuss city business, regardless of location or medium (in person, via telephone, email, or social media) it could be considered a violation of public meetings laws.

It is great to see our councilors taking to the internet in attempts to better educate the community. We've seen an increase in city council meeting attendance, perhaps a result of some councilors' social-media savvy. However, we've also seen some major misunderstandings and upset citizens because partial truths were posted online. If the whole story or process or policy would have been disclosed sooner, it could have saved everyone some headache.

PUBLIC AGENDA

Public Agenda is a listing of upcoming meetings for 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).

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14

• **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 Warren St. S., 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, JUNE 15

• **Monmouth Arts and Culture Commission** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.

• **Independence Parks and Recreation Board** — 6 p.m., Independence Civic Center, third floor, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

MONDAY, JUNE 19

• **Independence Tourism and Events Commission** — 6:30 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

• **Dallas City Council** — 7 p.m., Dallas City Hall, 187 SE Court St., Dallas. 503-831-3502.

TUESDAY, JUNE 20

• **Independence Historic Preservation Commission** — 4 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.

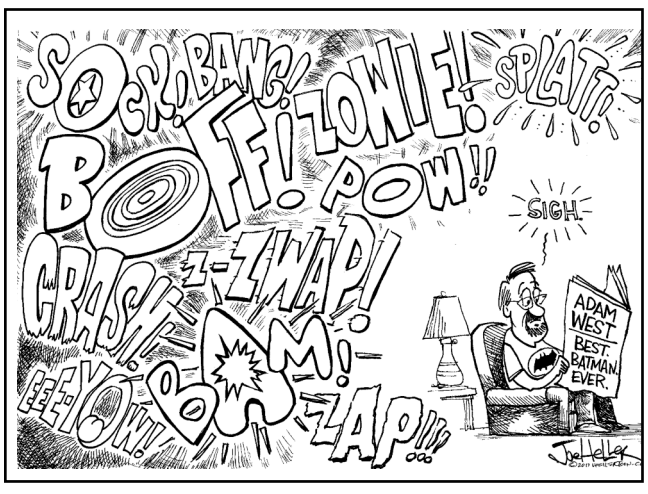
• **Monmouth City Council** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.

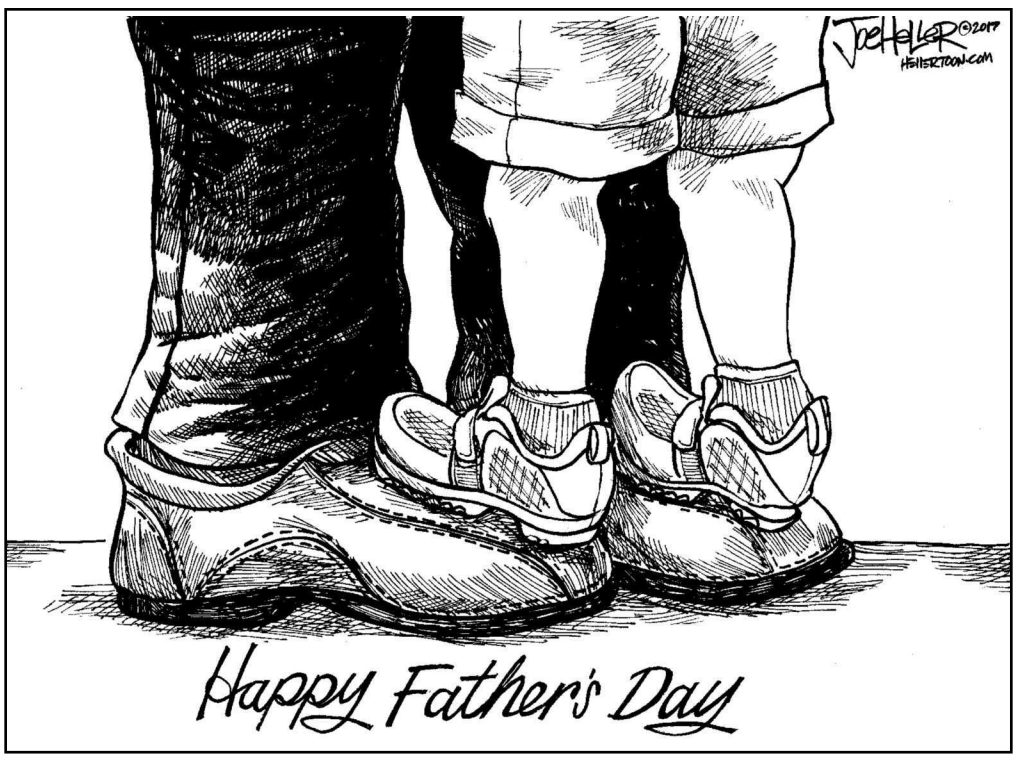
• **Polk County Board of Commission work session** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, BOC office, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21

• **Monmouth Planning Commission** — 7 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., 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

County not doing enough for suicide

I read this morning an article about Polk County and the prevention of suicide.

Up to this point I have been kind about the services I received last winter as far as the situation with a girl I welcomed into my home, but I am not doing anyone any service.

The county is under the delusion that a person can reach out on their own.

This girl had BPD and had two distinct personalities where anyone who helped, including the doctors assistants and the police, either became the enemy or she turned on the charm and my call was treated as a domestic dispute.

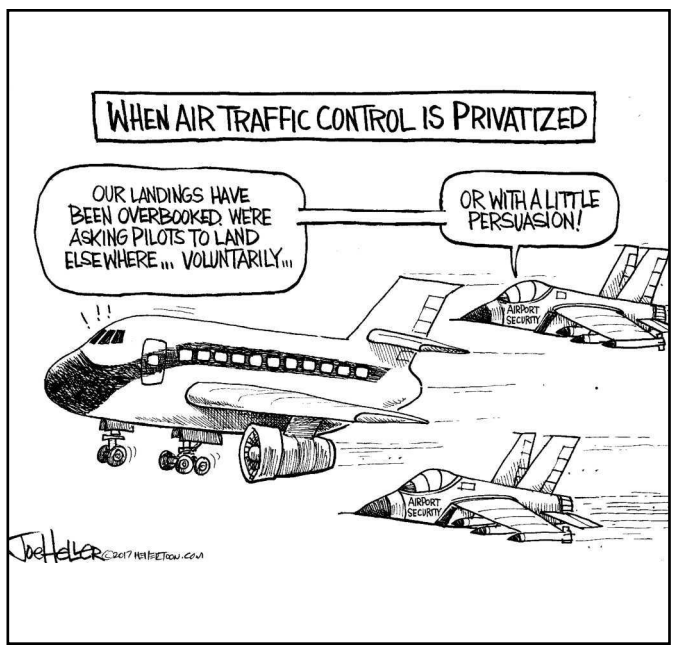
I don't fight, never have. I called for a welfare check and the police simply told us to stay away from each other, joking about it being time for lunch.

The next day she hung herself. Previously in Monmouth, I asked for a psychological evaluation from the doctor's assistant (the only person we were allowed to see). I was blown off.

The pros are delusional if they think these people have the capacity to pick up the phone and call for help. Others may simply be looking for attention.

If you're going to practice this sort of medicine, take it seriously.

Randy Wisnia
Dallas



All life on earth at risk of extinction

Donald Trump, many of his associates, as well as too many of his supporters are obsessively stupid of the threats of global warming and much environmental damage we have created.

Now all viable life on earth is in greater risk of extinction than 66 million years ago when a 6-mile wide asteroid struck near Yucatan, Mexico, killing the dinosaurs and 70 percent of all species.

Among our many sins is fracking, which endangers our most valuable asset: pure, clean water.

Walden Joura
Dallas

Demeaning others feeds hatred

In the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., are posters the Nazis used to spread their hatred toward Jews.

At the beginning of their campaign were three posters that stuck out to me reading: "The Jews are our misfortune," "Just doing my job," and "Propaganda fuels hatred of Jews."

Today we seem to have justified our hatred toward those we don't agree with as if we were just doing our job, and it is our misfortune that they exist.

Name-calling was the beginning of the Nazi rise.

Whether you are a Republican, Democrat or Independent, demeaning those we don't agree with, disrupting speeches, and destroying property only fuels the hatred that is within all of us.

It does not build unity or understanding.

Because they don't vote our way, we say they lack intelligence or are racist. We have the right to say what we want, so we think we can tear anyone down and it won't affect our rational thought, but hatred begins with thinking you are the only way.

Larry Dalton
Monmouth

WANT TO WRITE A LETTER?

Letters to the editor are limited to 300 words. Longer letters will be edited.

Election-related letters of all types are limited to 100 words. Writers are limited to one election-related letter per election season. Election letters from writers outside of Polk County are not accepted.

Each writer is restricted to one letter per 30-day period.

Letters that are libelous, obscene or in bad taste will not be printed. Attacks by name on businesses or individuals will not be printed.

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

The *Itemizer-Observer* does not guarantee the accuracy of facts presented by letter writers; dissenters are welcome to respond. Letter writers who disagree with other published letter writers should maintain a civil discourse and address the subject, not the author.

Letters, like all editorial material submitted to the newspaper, are edited for length, grammar and content.

Letters must include the author'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 organizations, 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. Letters submitted may not be retractable after this deadline.

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Reach us at:

Mail: Editor, *Polk County Itemizer-Observer,* P.O. Box 108, Dallas, OR 97338.

Fax: 503-623-2395.

Email: ionews@polkio.com.

Office: 147 SE Court St., Dallas.

How to Contact Officials

GOVERNOR
Gov. Kate Brown (Dem.)
160 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-378-4582
Email: via website,
http://governor.oregon.gov/

—

STATE LEGISLATORS
Sen. Arnie Roblan
(District 5, Democrat)
S-417 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1705
sen.arnieroblan@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/roblan

Sen. Jackie Winters
(District 10, Republican)
S-301 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1710
sen.jackiewinters@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/winters

Sen. Brian Boquist
(District 12, Republican)
S-305 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1712
sen.brianboquist@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/boquist

Rep. David Gomberg
(District 10, Democrat)
H-471 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1410
rep.davidgomberg@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/gomberg

Rep. Paul Evans
(District 20, Democrat)
H-281 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1420
rep.paulevans@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/evans

Rep. Mike Nearman
(District 23, Republican)
H-378 State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1423
rep.mikenearman@state.or.us
www.oregonlegislature.gov/nearman

—

U.S. CONGRESS
Sen. Ron Wyden (Dem.)
221 Dirksen SOB
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: 202-224-5244
Fax: 202-228-2717
Salem office: 707 13th St. SE,
Suite 285, Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-589-4555
Email: via website,
www.wyden.senate.gov

Sen. Jeff Merkley (Dem.)
313 Hart SOB
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: 202-224-3753
Fax: 202-228-3997
Salem office: 161 High St. SE,
Suite 250, Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-362-8102
Email: via website,
www.merkley.senate.gov

Rep. Kurt Schrader (Dem.)
108 Cannon HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515
Phone: 202-225-5711
Fax: 202-225-5699
Salem office: 544 Ferry St. SE,
Suite 2, Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-588-9100
Fax: 503-588-5517
Email: via website,
www.schrader.house.gov

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POLK COUNTY
Board of Commissioners
850 Main St.
Dallas, OR 97338
Phone: 503-623-8173
www.co.polk.or.us

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CITIES
Dallas
187 SE Court St.
Dallas, OR 97338
503-623-2338
www.ci.dallas.or.us
Falls City
299 Mill St.
Falls City, OR 97344
503-787-3631
www.fallscityoregon.gov
Independence
555 S. Main St.
Independence, OR 97351
503-838-1212
www.ci.independence.or.us
Monmouth
151 W. Main St.
Monmouth, OR 97361
503-838-0722
www.ci.monmouth.or.us

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HOW TO REACH US

NEWSROOM

Emily Mentzer .....Editor/Monmouth/Independence Reporter ....ementzer@polkio.com
Lukas Eggen.....Sports Editor.....leggen@polkio.com
Jolene Guzman .....Dallas/Falls City/Polk County Reporter .....jguzman@polkio.com

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Heidi Leppin .....Display Advertising Manager .....hleppin@polkio.com
Rachel Best .....Display Advertising.....rbest@polkio.com
Karen Sanks.....Client Services .....ksanks@polkio.com

CLASSIFIED LINE ADVERTISING

Dawn Ohren .....ioads@polkio.com

PRODUCTION

Kathy Huggins .....iosales@polkio.com
Karyn Pressel .....iosales@polkio.com

Web: www.polkio.com Phone: 503-623-2373 Fax: 503-623-2395