

EDITORIALS

Volunteers make the difference

With the Fourth of July festivities behind us and Summerfest around the corner, followed quickly by the Polk County Fair and the Great American Eclipse celebrations and parties, we want to take a moment to thank the volunteers that make it all happen.

The amount of volunteer manpower that goes into our local festivals is enormous. People begin planning for the next year's event almost a year in advance.

It takes a committee meeting monthly to organize and pull off Western Days and hundreds of volunteers, not to mention the group efforts from law enforcement around the county.

People are needed to collect money for the fireworks shows in Independence, to direct traffic and people, to organize the Monmouth-Independence Rotary Grand Parade, to clean up after the parade and festivities, to run the Mini-Marathon.

Participation is a huge part of the picture. Without people entering the parade or other events, it wouldn't be spectacular. The time and energy that goes into each float is big. Money for entry fees benefit our communities.

People who line the streets to watch the parade and attend other events throughout the summer also help make the magic happen.

These events are not organized or paid for by the cities, but by commissions, donations and volunteers.

We are thankful to members of the Polk County County Emergency Response Team, who annually give their time to run a first-aid tent at Western Days, as well as provide security for all of the county's events.

We are thankful for those who put in the seemingly endless hours of planning and organizing to make the Fourth of July so special in Polk County.

We're grateful for Beth Jones bringing back the barbecue competition in Dallas, and the Dallas Fire & EMS volunteer firefighters for keeping a fireworks show in Dallas.

We urge others to get involved. If you love the wonderful events that happen throughout the year, don't assume others will pick up the slack. Get involved and help keep these traditions alive.

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).

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5

- **Monmouth Historic Commission** — 6 p.m., Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
- **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.

MONDAY, JULY 10

- **Hops and Heritage Festival Commission** — 6 p.m., Independence Elks Lodge, 289 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
- **Dallas School Board** — 6:30 p.m., Dallas School District office, 111 SW Ash St., Dallas. 503-623-5594.
- **Central School Board** — 6:30 p.m., Henry Hill Education Support Center, 750 S. Fifth St., Independence.

TUESDAY, JULY 11

- **Independence City Council** — 7 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.
- **Polk County Board of Commission work session** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, BOC office, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.
- **WIMPEG Board of Directors** — Noon, Volunteer Hall, 144 Warren St. S., Monmouth.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12

- **Monmouth Tree Advisory Board** — 7 p.m., Monmouth Senior Center, 180 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-838-0725.
- **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.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Cyclists should follow safe distance

On Sunday, June 25, about noon, I observed two bicyclists riding east on East Ellendale.

They were just east of the Polk Veterinary Clinic when I saw them.

They were both wearing helmets, and at least the second rider had on a bright yellow shirt to make him more visible to cars.

The thing that looked unsafe to me, was that the second rider was only about one bicycle distance back from the first rider.

AARP's Safe Driving Course teaches drivers to maintain a distance of at least three seconds when it is daylight, and the pavement is dry.

You add one second if the pavement is wet, and one second if it is nighttime.

(Driving in the rain at night would require five seconds to be safe.)

So, when the first vehicle passes a stationary object, you begin the count: "one-one-thousand, two-one-thousand, three-one-thousand" (or the appropriate number for the time of day and weather).

Your car shouldn't reach the stationary object until you get to the "three-one-thousand" (or appropriate number).

Being a former registered nurse (who was raised by two very safety conscious parents), I prefer to prevent injuries by following safe practices, rather than heal them.

I try to teach others to consider safer practices as well.

I can just image the re-

sults if the first bicyclist develops a problem, and the second bicyclist is following too closely.

Have fun riding in this nice weather, but be safe.

*Barb Chrisman
Dallas*

Brandt's worker saves the day

I'm writing to say a big thank you to employee Andy from Brandt's Garbage Service.

This kind, compassionate gentleman found me lying on the ground after a fall around 8:30 a.m. on June 14.

He was on his route and heard me cry for help. He came running to me and offered help.

I was so very grateful and appreciate his kindness and help in calling 911 for me, and he insisted on staying with me till the paramedics came.

Thank you Andy from the bottom of my heart and yes, I broke my hip, but am recovering nicely.

Thanks to all concerned.

*Esther Misley
Independence*

Climate affects life as we know it

We need to answer four questions about climate change: is it happening, what's causing it, what are the consequences and what can be done?

For evidence, there's glacier loss, rising sea levels, increasing ocean acidity, dying corals and changing migratory patterns. Also average global temperatures do seem to be increasing century over century.

Why now? Since the temperature jump started with the Industrial Revolution and because CO2 and other industrial gases are excellent heat absorbers, a good guess is that the jump is because of industrial activity.

The consequences are enormous. While I don't think climate change will wipe out all life on earth, most likely our life will disappear, at least the way we want to live it.

You like hunting? Fishing? Skiing? Sorry, all gone. You like good, cheap, plentiful food? Sorry, gone.

How about just getting around the neighborhood?

Tens of millions of people in sub-Saharan Africa will move to escape the desert. Where are they going to go?

Mexico City has 21 million people and they're running out of water. Where are they going to go?

Oregon has 4 million people and California 40 million. Where are they going to go when Los Angeles becomes unlivable (please, I know ...) and the temperature change in the Pacific Northwest is minor compared to elsewhere.

What to do? If nothing, you better kiss your cushy, roomy, high-tech, well-fed life good-bye because the cost of living is about to go up.

Or we can try to cut green-house gas emissions and hope we're in time.

Yes, cuts will cost trillions but the world we like may survive. No cuts will cost megatrillions, and our world — and maybe your grandkids — won't survive. You choose.

*Dan Farnworth
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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