

DEADLINES

NEWS DEADLINES

For inclusion in the Wednesday edition of the *Itemizer-Observer*:

Social news (weddings, engagements, anniversaries, births, milestones) — 5 p.m. on Thursday.

Community events — Noon on Friday for both the Community Notebook and Community Calendar.

Letters to the editor — 10 a.m. on Monday.

Obituaries — 4 p.m. on Monday.

ADVERTISING DEADLINES

Retail display ads — 3 p.m. Friday.

Classified display ads — 11 a.m. on Monday.

Classified line ads — Noon on Monday. Classified ads are updated daily on www.polkio.com.

Public notices — Noon on Friday.

CORRECTIONS

The *Polk County Itemizer-Observer* is committed to publishing accurate news, feature and sports reports. If you see anything that requires a correction or clarification, call the newsroom at 503-623-2373 or send an email to emntentzer@polkio.com.

WEBSITE

The *Polk County Itemizer-Observer* website, www.polkio.com, is updated each week by Wednesday afternoon. There, you will find nearly every story that appears in the print version of the newspaper, as well as some items, including additional photos, that do not appear in print due to space limitations.

The *Itemizer-Observer* is also on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Watch for breaking news, links to stories, sports scores updates and more.

WEATHER

RECORDED	HIGH	LOW	RAIN
July 4.....	87	55	.00
July 5.....	91	56	.00
July 6.....	91	52	.00
July 7.....	NA	NA	NA
July 8.....	89	52	.00
July 9.....	87	52	.00
July 10.....	82	57	.00

Rainfall during July — 0.00 in.
Rain through July 10 — 33.30 in.

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A barn fire in the 1800 block of Falls City Road was discovered at 5:30 a.m. on Thursday by the property owner who awoke to his barn fully involved in fire, said April Welsh, the spokeswoman for Dallas Fire & EMS. The fire was caused by electrical issues. The barn did not have any animals inside. It contained vehicles, storage and a semi-trailer. When 20 firefighters arrived, they took a defensive approach to protect the surrounding property, unable to go inside the barn for an interior attack, Welsh said.

APRIL WELSH/
for the *Itemizer-Observer*

Four fires strike in two days

Dallas Fire & EMS respond to two fires caused by cars driving in fields

By Emily Mentzer
The *Itemizer-Observer*

POLK COUNTY — Two of four fires in two days from July Fourth through Thursday were sparked by cars driving on fields, said April Welsh, spokeswoman for Dallas Fire & EMS.

“Our conditions are already getting pretty dry,” Welsh said. “We had significant rainfall this winter, but that has allowed vegetation to grow. Now that it’s getting warmer, the warm temperatures and the winds are causing things to dry out.”

The call for the first fire on July 4 came in just before 3 p.m., Welsh said.

“It had the potential to be fairly substantial in size,” she said.

People were driving to a vineyard on Crowley Road and may have gotten lost, so turned around in a field. The car caught the field on fire. Welsh said, “It was a total accident.”

Thirty firefighters and eight apparatus responded to the roughly 2.5-acre field fire. The rye grass was not combined yet. Loss was about \$2,800, Welsh said.

“One thing that was kind

of unique about this fire is it started out as a fairly small fire, but it was pushed by the wind,” she said.

Polk County Sheriff’s deputies, Southwest Polk Fire District, Oregon Department of Forestry, Polk County Fire District No. 1, Sheridan Fire and Amity Fire assisted at the scene.

A barn fire in the 1800 block of Falls City Road in the early hours on Thursday was deemed as being caused by electrical issues, Welsh said.

“That call came in at 5:30 a.m.,” Welsh said. “The property owner woke up and found his barn fully involved in fire and called 911.”

The barn did not have any animals inside. It had three

vehicles, storage and a semi-trailer which were all damaged.

“It made it more challenging,” Welsh said. “When our firefighters arrived, the shop was fully involved, so at that point, they had to take a defensive-type approach and protect the property around it and control the fire itself. There was no way they were going to be able to do an interior attack on that.”

In total, 20 firefighters battled the barn fire, all from Southwest Polk, Dallas Fire, Falls City Fire and Polk No. 1. The barn and contents are a complete loss, estimated at \$25,000, Welsh said.

Two smaller fires broke out on July 5, Welsh said. One was a burn pile that got out of control. The other was

caused by a vehicle in a field.

No firefighters were injured in any of the fires from July 4 through 6, Welsh said.

A countywide burn ban was initiated on July 3, Welsh said.

“Even though we did have the rainfall (this winter and spring), it’s not going to be enough to saturate the ground at this point,” Welsh said. “Our area is agriculture. We’re going to start into harvest season real soon. We need to make sure people are really cautious with their farm equipment, where they’re driving, dis-

pose of cigarettes properly, and discourage people from burning anything.”

When possible, mowing should be done in the morning while there is dew on the ground, Welsh said. If a fire does start, call 911.

“Do not hesitate to call 911,” she added. “The quicker we can get there, the quicker we can get their fire under control. There’ve been some cases when people have tried to put out their own fires. We can come with more people and more equipment. Just call 911. Don’t hesitate.”

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Mark Fancy 503-751-0147

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#9

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