



Polk County  
**Itemizer-Observer**

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**Planning is key for enjoyable eclipse**

By Jolene Guzman  
The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — We could have thousands of visitors for the days before and after the Great American Eclipse on Aug. 21.

Travel Oregon estimates that up to 1 million people will travel to Oregon, and plenty of Oregonians outside the “path of totality” will travel to the Mid-Valley to see the full eclipse.

That means those of us lucky enough to live here need to be ready to deal with — or avoid — the inconveniences that may arise from having that many guests.

“It can be really enjoyable if we prepare,” said Travel Salem spokeswoman Kara Kuh.

People travel from all over the planet to see solar eclipses, so it’s to our community’s benefit, economically speaking, to show our visitors a good time in hopes they will return, said Dallas Economic Director AJ Foscoli.

“It both excites me and scares me to death,” he said. “Because that means we will have 7,000 new people coming in to see what a great community we have. And if we show ourselves well enough, maybe they will want to come back.”

Planning is key to making those few days more bearable, Kuh said.

“If residents do their shopping three or four days before the eclipse, they won’t be struggling against the crowds,” Kuh said.

She said people should consider limiting their travel in the days around the eclipse by moving unnecessary appointments to another time.

See ECLIPSE, Page 7A



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

A teen from Oregon State University Extension used drone to film La Creole Orchards on Thursday.

**The search for the grail**

*Caceu owns one of two olive farms in Polk County*

By Jolene Guzman  
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Bogdan Caceu is searching for the “holy grail” of olive trees.

Caceu is the owner of La Creole Orchards, bordering the Bridelwood neighborhood of Dallas. He’s among about a dozen growers who are pioneering Oregon’s budding olive and olive oil industry.

There are two farms in Polk County, La Creole and Redding Olive Grove in West Salem. The first orchard planted in the state is in Keizer.

Caceu grows about 1,200 trees on 5.5 acres, and hopes to plant another 6,000 trees on the property someday.

Before that, Caceu must tackle the problem of how to irrigate all those trees — he has a grant application in at the Oregon Water Resources Department. Also critical to long-term success is finding the best olive varieties to plant to withstand Oregon’s winters.

Caceu and other Oregon olive grow-



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Tiny olives grow on the trees at La Creole Orchards.

ers are getting assistance in the quest from an Oregon State University Extension research team.

“What would be really nice is find

that one cultivar that very few people grow, and we find out that it’s perfectly cold-hardy and that it gives a really nice crop per acre and yields per ton in terms of oil, and (makes) a really nice oil,” Caceu said. “That is the holy grail that the OSU research program might identify for us.”

**An educated gamble**

La Creole’s 4-year-old trees dot the sunbaked hillside in rows between oak trees and plum trees leftover from the orchard’s previous life. At this point in the growing season, the olives are tiny green orbs. Final results of the 2017 season won’t be known until harvest in November, but Caceu is pleased with the fruit set on his still-young trees.

The orchard’s output will increase in the coming years as trees as young as 1 year old are planted in blocks surrounding the older trees.

Caceu selected the Dallas property from about a dozen options in Oregon.

See OLIVES, Page 10A

**Fire near Falls City fully contained**



The Riley Central fire burned just west of Falls City.

KC WAGNER/for the Itemizer-Observer

By Lukas Eggen  
The Itemizer-Observer

FALLS CITY — The Oregon Department of Forestry said the Riley Central Fire, which began on July 9 just west of Falls City, has finished mop up duty.

ODF Public Information Officer Jim Gersbach said they have entered a check and patrol phase.

“We will continue to monitor the fire to make sure that something wasn’t fanned by winds and came back or something like that,” Gersbach said. “With fires, you want to be careful with ever saying a fire is completely out. We want to make sure that everything looks good.”

The length of the check and patrol phase will depend on the terrain.

“If you have a lot of logs, you have to make sure there aren’t any embers burning underneath,” Gersbach said. “It varies by the type of fire and terrain. There’s no telling how long it might be.”

The fire was more than 4 miles away from the Black Rock Mountain Bike trail system, Gersbach said.

Gary Weaverli, a trail manager for the Black Rock Mountain Bike Association, said he did not hear of any damage to the mountain bike trails.

“As far as I know, BRMBA is OK,” Weaverli said.

See FIRE, Page 7A

**IN YOUR TOWN**

**DALLAS**

The Dallas Food Bank renovation is complete.  
»Page 2A

**FALLS CITY**

Falls City will offer camping and breakfast and a viewing party for the Great American Eclipse.  
»Page 5A

**INDEPENDENCE**

Polk Fire No. 1 to upgrade equipment.  
»Page 2A

**POLK COUNTY**

County administrator Greg Hansen announces pending retirement.  
»Page 14A

**SPORTS**

A three-on-three basketball tournament returns to Summerfest.  
»Page 12A

**Polk museum to build a plank house**

Itemizer-Observer staff report  
RICKREALL — The Polk County Historical Society is working with Grand Ronde Tribal Elder Don Day to build a replica cedar plank house at the Polk County Museum in Rickreall.

The Polk County Board of Commissioners approved the project last week.

“This replica will be an outdoor display on the Polk County Museum grounds in Rickreall,” wrote Ann Gage, the Polk County Historical Society education coordinator in a letter to the commissioners. “It will be used as an outdoor educational exhibit demonstrating primitive technologies, tools and methods by Don Day during its actual construction.”

Gage wrote that after its completion, it will be a venue for educational programs about the Kalapuyan culture.

“Its presence and the recording of the construction process will provide unique, historical documentation for the public,” Gage wrote.

**Newsletter**

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THE NEXT  
**7**  
DAYS  
PLANNING FOR YOUR WEEK

**wed**

Try your hand at pickleball at the Roger Jordan Community Park with the Dallas Pickleball Club.  
9 a.m.-noon. Free.



Sunny  
Hi: 80  
Lo: 56

**thu**

Need inspiration for the next great novel? Come out to the Dallas Senior Writing Group at the senior center.  
10 a.m. Free.



Mostly sunny  
Hi: 76  
Lo: 53

**fri**

If you’re looking for something to do with the whole family, check out Monmouth Library’s family movie.  
1:30 p.m. Free.



Mostly sunny  
Hi: 81  
Lo: 56

**sat**

Check out the Independence Farmers and Riverview Markets for fresh products and cool treasures.  
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Sunny  
Hi: 86  
Lo: 57

**sun**

Come see singer Marcia Whitehead perform and share her story at First Presbyterian Church in Dallas.  
10:30 a.m. Free.



Sunny  
Hi: 85  
Lo: 55

**mon**

David Rosenfeld, a first-generation immigrant of German-Jewish parents will speak at the Monmouth Senior Center.  
Noon. Free.



Sunny  
Hi: 83  
Lo: 54

**tue**

Looking to give your kids something different to do? Check out the chess club at Independence Library.  
4:30 p.m. Free.



Sunny  
Hi: 80  
Lo: 51

