

Polk County Itemizer-Observer

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Property tax bills are on the way

Itemizer-Observer staff report
POLK COUNTY — Property tax bills are in the mail, or should be soon, and many owners will see a reduction in their taxes for 2017-18, said Polk County Assessor Doug Schmidt.

"According to numbers submitted by the Assessor's Office, a significant number of property owners could see a decrease in their property taxes this year," Schmidt said in a news release about 2017-18 property taxes. "Even though a property's assessed value may have increased by 3 percent or more, the taxes on the property may not have increased the same amount."

The reason behind that is changes to the amount of property taxes needed to repay bonds in certain taxing districts, Schmidt said.

2017-18 Polk County Property Tax Averages				
Note: The values shown below are for demonstration purposes and may not reflect the actual Average Assessed Value for that city.				
	Average Assessed Value	Tax Rate Percentage	Average Yearly Taxes	Change from 2016-17
Dallas	\$157,334	14.2780	\$2,246	-0.6%
Falls City	\$58,022	11.8714	\$689	-0.8%
Independence	\$126,807	18.9401	\$2,402	-1.8%
Monmouth	\$151,558	17.3278	\$2,626	-2.1%
West Salem	\$205,744	17.5615	\$3,613	2.4%
Willamina	\$87,111	14.5746	\$1,270	-1.3%

Source: Polk County Assessor

Graphic by Kathy Huggins/Itemizer-Observer

Polk County paid off its road bond recently, reducing the countywide tax rate

by 50 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. Central School District reduced its bond re-

quirements by 44 cents per \$1,000, reducing taxes in its district. Those reductions

could mean a decrease in property taxes from 2016-17, Schmidt said.

Not everyone will see property tax bills fall. The exceptions are those who live in West Salem and in the Southwest Polk Rural Fire Protection District, where taxes required to pay for bonds increased.

"Both the city of Salem and the Salem-Keizer School District increased their bond repayment requirements, so West Salem will see an increase in their taxes this year," Schmidt wrote. "However, because the Polk County bond was paid off, West Salem property owners may not see the full 3 percent increase in their taxes."

The same is true of Southwest Polk, which passed a bond to pay for equipment and fire stations.

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IN YOUR TOWN

DALLAS

Dallas High School stages "Little Shop of Horrors" just in time for Halloween.

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FALLS CITY

Falls City football will host North Douglas in a league playoff game.

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INDEPENDENCE

Central High School's production of "The Addams Family" is all about growing up.

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MONMOUTH

Increasing population is behind city council zoning change.

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SPORTS

Central's boys soccer team defeats Corvallis 1-0.

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POLK COUNTY

Check out all the Halloween events around the county.

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Salem Health West Valley receives award

Itemizer-Observer staff report
DALLAS — The Oregon Office of Rural Health has recognized Salem Health West Valley hospital as the top performing Critical Access Hospital for the second year in a row.

"We're proud of our reporting team and our lean problem-solving culture here at the hospital," said Bruce Rodgers, Salem Health West Valley chief administrative officer. "Understanding our quality measures shows us our successes and opportunities for improvement. It's all part of getting better every day."

The Federal Office of Rural Health Policy created the Medicare Quality Improvement Program in 2011 to implement measures focused on low-volume critical access hospitals. The program helps small hospitals identify measures that fit best and ensure the highest quality patient care.

All 25 of Oregon's critical access hospitals participate in the voluntary program.

Can you solve the mystery?

Dallas Downtown Association hosts unique murder mystery on Saturday

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — A murderer hides among Dallas' colorful cast of characters.

Is it Finn Burgundy? Maybe Pram Peach or Wolfe Indigo? Perhaps it is Mayor White.

You get to play detective on Saturday during the Dallas Downtown Murder Mystery, as characters reveal clues and possible motives. At the beginning of the event, you are given clues, and a map of downtown to guide you to each suspect to gather more evidence.

Be careful who you trust, though, because they all have secrets.

"There's a dark underbelly in this town," said Burgundy, the director of the local theater troupe, Moon Shadow Playhouse.

He would know. Others in town say he might be part of it, with the taking of bribes

for parts in his productions and the not-so-secret drinking problem.

"I don't drink. Not at all. Maybe one — or four," Burgundy said. "If you had to put up with all the characters I put up with, you'd drink, too."

Then again, he demands a lot of his actors and crew, so they may spread rumors out of revenge.

Or to hide their own guilt.

Pram Peach, Moon Shadow Playhouse's costume designer, has dreams of designing clothes for movie stars.

"My goal is to make it to Hollywood and have my things shown on the red carpet," Peach said. "I've been sending my stuff to stars, but I haven't gotten anything back from them yet. I'm just kind of frustrated and waiting to see if you can get something to go to the red carpet with."

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Doug Graven, left, Mark Sturtevant and Carol Chaney all portray characters.

JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Welcome to your nightmare

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Warning: Organizers of "Welcome to the Movies," a haunted house at 877 Main St., Dallas, ask all who enter to sign a waiver.

That's how scary it can be.

"A lot of people are in here — it's mainly people, not so much props," said Mellissa Hoover, organizer and scarer. "There are props to set the scene, but I have a lot of volunteers. There's 30 scarers in here. It's pretty packed."

Each "scarer" is ready to jump out when visitors least expect it — even if it's their

second time through.

"The experience changes almost daily," Hoover said. "It's never the same."

Volunteer zombies and monsters aren't heartless, especially with children.

They have a code word parents can use with the actors let them know to tone it down for little ones, if needed.

If visitors are too afraid to turn the first corner, they'll get a refund of their donation-admission.

"We've had four teenagers who turned around and came back. They were too scared," Hoover said.

See HAUNTED, Page 3A



Mellissa Hoover, right, and her cast of "scarers" and ready to terrify you for a cause.

EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer

THE NEXT 7 DAYS PLANNING FOR YOUR WEEK	wed	thu	fri	sat	sun	mon	tue
Need a new hobby? Try pickleball, a new sport somewhat similar to tennis, at Roger Jordan Community Park. 9 a.m. Free.	Oregon author Willy Vlautin speaks about his novels, including one to be released soon, at the Dallas Public Library. 7 p.m. Free.	Dallas Seventh-day Adventist Church starts three-day documentary series for Martin Luther's 500th anniversary. 7 p.m. Free.	The Polk Community Free Clinic offers health care for the uninsured and underinsured at Trinity Lutheran in Dallas. 7 a.m. Free.	Dallas resident Rebecca Fromherz performs with Salem Concert Band at the Elsinore Theatre in Salem. 3 p.m. \$10-\$30.	Salem Health West Valley hosts a fundraiser sale at the hospital. Proceeds provide student scholarships. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.	Happy Halloween! Have a fun and safe holiday, and be sure to watch for little ghosts and goblins as they trick-or-treat.	
Partly sunny Hi: 65 Lo: 45	Mostly sunny Hi: 66 Lo: 42	Sunny Hi: 66 Lo: 44	Sunny Hi: 65 Lo: 45	Mostly sunny Hi: 63 Lo: 43	Mostly sunny Hi: 61 Lo: 43	Partly cloudy Hi: 63 Lo: 43	

