

Parents file lawsuit against school district

Itemizer-Observer staff report

DALLAS — Parents of current and former students of the Dallas School District are suing the district for its policy allowing a transgender boy to use the boys' locker rooms and restrooms at Dallas High School.

Those suing the district include the group Parent for Privacy; Kris and Jon Golly; Lindsey Golly; Nicole Lillie; Melissa Gregory; and

the nonprofit group Parents Rights in Education.

The suit names Dallas School District; Oregon Department of Education; Gov. Kate Brown; the United States Department of Education; U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos; the United States Department of Justice; and U.S. Attorney General Jeff Session.

The case was filed in the U.S. District Court in Port-

land on Nov. 13 and alleges that the district's Student Safety Plan, a policy allowing Elliot Yoder, 16, to use the facilities matching his gender identity, violates the rights of other students.

The plaintiffs are represented by Beaverton attorney Herbert G. Grey and Canby attorney Ryan Adams.

The American Civil Liberties Union said it may intervene in the case.

Fire displaces four

Itemizer-Observer staff report

FALLS CITY — Four people are displaced following a house fire in Falls City on Nov. 14.

Falls City Fire was dispatched to the blaze on North Main Street just after noon, according to a Falls City Fire Department press release.

The occupants of the house were not home at the time of the fire. People driving by on North Main spotted the fire and called 911.

Additional crews from Southwest Polk Rural Fire Protection District and Polk County Fire No. 1 were requested to help put out the fire.

"The house was damaged 75 to 80 percent," said Megan Sykes, the Falls City Fire spokeswoman. "All four occupants have had to find other places to stay. They will not be able to return to the home."

Frink's General Store is collecting cash donations to help the victims of the fire. Sykes said the local community is assisting them with donations of clothes, furniture and other necessities.

Twenty-one firefighters responded to the blaze. No one was injured in the fire.

The cause of the fire is unknown at this time, and is under investigation by the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal, Sykes said.

SCHOOL NOTES

Rope Busters coach Jim Dent honored

DALLAS — Jim Dent, the longtime coach of Dallas Rope Busters, was recognized by the American Heart Association at an assembly at Lyle Elementary School on Nov. 3.

He received the award for his support of the "Jump Rope for Heart" campaign. Rope Busters is an after-school jump rope club in which students learn to do jump rope tricks on their own or in teams. The club practices regularly and performs at school functions and sporting events.

The AHA presented him an appreciation award for the "Rope Busters 35 year of continuous and outstanding support of the American Heart Association's Youth Programs."

Hughes named Distinguished Educator

DALLAS — LaCreole Middle School math teacher Brian Hughes is October's Distinguished Educator. Hughes received the award on Nov. 15.

His students listed his best traits as a teacher, "He motivates us to do our best in math" and "He likes to make the classroom joyful." Another student said he "inspires students to do their best," while another added "I like how he always makes me happy when I am sad."

The Distinguished Educator Program recognizes "excellence in teaching and learning" in Dallas School District schools.

Morrison receives grant for internships

DALLAS — Morrison Campus Alternative School received a \$28,000 Polk County Business Development G Grant to establish a new internship program with local businesses.

"It's going to be strictly for working on developing internships and help our kids go from schools to careers. We're really excited for the opportunity," said Morrison Principal Brian Green. "We will have the opportunity for 38 different placements throughout the year."

The Polk County Board of Commissioner approved the grant in late October. Green said the money will provide a stipend for each student who completes the eight-week program and assistance if student require special shoes or clothing for their internship.

"This is a pilot program and we are looking to grow this," Green said.

Dallas Education Foundation issues grants

DALLAS — Twelve teachers in Dallas school were awarded grants for classroom supplies or projects in Dallas Education Foundation fall grant distribution. This year, the foundation raised its maximum grant from \$500 to \$1,000.

This year's grants total \$9,003, with \$4,000 of that donated by the Dallas Community Fund. Grant were awarded to: DHS Brandi Dickerson, DHS, microscopes for biology department; Barb Buchan, Lyle third-grade math power points; Melissa Glazner, Morrison, science lab supplies; Kelleigh Ratzlaff, DHS, blenders for Culinary Arts; Brian Rebeschke, Lyle and Oakdale, contra bass bars G and F, and mallets; Jacob Gradek, LaCreole, circuits and electric motor materials; Amy Morrison, LaCreole, tools and materials for STEAM, STEM; Amy McFarland, LaCreole, learning aids for students; Robert Mahoney, DHS, 4K TV for visual media class; Jacob Gradek LaCreole, genetics and embryonic lab supplies; Brandy Dickerson, DHS, Buzzers for Hi-Q Science Team; Malynda Shook, LaCreole, watercolor and paper cutting supplies.

For more information or to make a donation to Dallas Education Foundation, go to: <https://www.dallaseducationfoundation.com/>. Donation can be mailed to Dallas Education Foundation, P.O. Box 392, Dallas, OR 97338.

Homeless

Continued from Page 1A

Statewide, the homeless count reached an all-time high at 22,541 students out of 578,381 enrolled, a 5.6 percent increase from the previous year. Oregon's homeless student population has increased 19.4 percent since 2014.

Dona Bolt, the state McK-

inney-Vento coordinator, said some upward trend is due to better accounting.

"There is no doubt that some of the increase comes from raising awareness of the importance of reporting homeless student data and the federal programs available under the Every Student Suc-

ceeds Act," Bolt said. "But other factors such as a lack of affordable housing and not enough family-wage jobs are contributing to the problem."

The McKinney-Vento Act provides the federal definition of homelessness and a grant program to help homeless students.

OSBA honors Wahl, Williamson

Itemizer-Observer staff report

SALEM — Donn Wahl, a member of the Central School Board, was among 10 locally elected board members recognized with a silver award for completing coursework through the Oregon School Board Association's leadership institute. Holly Williamson, Dallas School Board member, was presented a bronze award, along with 30 other board members.

The awards, presented Nov. 11 at the OSBA's 71st annual convention in Portland, recognize board members for significant levels of

achievement in leadership and development, according to a press release from the OSBA.

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West Valley Housing Authority will hold their Work Session Meeting on Wednesday, November 29, 2017 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at 204 SW Walnut in Dallas, Oregon. The Regular Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 29, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. at 204 SW Walnut in Dallas, Oregon. An Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660 will be held immediately following the Regular Meeting, if required.

Agenda for the meeting is posted on the Housing Authority website at www.wvpha.org. The location for the meeting is handicapped accessible. Please advise the West Valley Housing Authority if you need any special accommodations to attend the meeting. For information, please call 503-623-8387, TDD 1-800-735-2900.

What's YOUR neighbor up to?

Find out in the Itemizer-Observer. You may find your neighbor, your boss, your friend or yourself in the pages of the Itemizer Observer. Local stories on local people—that's our specialty.

Itemizer-Observer
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Visit our website, www.polkio.com for local news, sports and community events.

An Open Letter to the Families of our Volunteer Firefighters

Dear Families of Polk County Fire District No.1 Volunteers,

Thank you for your sacrifice.
Your loved ones had a rough summer. Many responded on a number of tragic calls where the skills they have spent so much time mastering could not make the difference that we all want. They witnessed unspeakable scenes but stayed strong, putting the families of the victims ahead of themselves. After each call they returned home to you and tried hard to continue family life uninterrupted. It was a challenging and painful summer for all of us—and by "us", I mean you, too. Some of you heard more than you wanted to, but listened supportively. Some of you heard less than you perhaps needed to, but sat supportively in silence.

Your sacrifice was tested most recently on a Saturday afternoon when your loved ones were suddenly called away once again for a structure fire. You heard your husband, wife, mom, or dad say, "got to go," and in under a minute, they left your weekend plans. With no warning you were left incomplete, without knowing if this would be a 10 minute absence, or if there would be another meal missed and more bed time stories untold. During their six-hour absence that night, there was an empty plate at your dinner table, your children fell asleep without a bedtime kiss, and you fell asleep alone.

What I want you to know is that YOUR sacrifice has made a difference. In the last couple weeks alone your loved ones saved at least two lives and successfully protected and salvaged not only property, but irreplaceable memories and heirlooms. None of the victims are fortunate to be in the situations they find themselves in, but all are in better situations than they might have been because of YOUR sacrifice – because you understood that someone else in our community, in that moment needed your husband, wife, mom, or dad more than you did.

Unfortunately, you do not receive the same thank you as the men and women who go out on these calls. You do not get equal recognition. Yours is a unique sacrifice, one you carry silently on behalf of your neighbors and for our larger community.

I want to say, not only as the Fire Chief who gets to witness the incredible work your loved ones perform, but even more as a member of this community – thank you. Thank you because we could not do what we do as an agency, nor would we receive what we receive as a community, without our volunteers or YOU—their families.

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Ben Stange

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Be sure to look for the Shop Local flyer boxes around town and follow us on Facebook to find out who is participating.

Happy shopping!

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