

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

If you see anything that requires a correction or clarification, call the newsroom at 503-623-2373 or send an email to ementzer@polkio.com.

WEBSITE

The *Polk County Itemizer-Observer* website, www.polkio.com, is updated each week by Wednesday afternoon.

Subscribe for \$20 a year or \$4 for one month.

The *Itemizer* is also on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

WEATHER

RECORDED	HIGH	LOW	RAIN
Dec. 5.....	51	36	.00
Dec. 6.....	58	38	.00
Dec. 7.....	53	29	.00
Dec. 8.....	47	26	.00
Dec. 9.....	47	22	.00
Dec. 10.....	47	24	.00
Dec. 11.....	46	22	.00

Rainfall during Dec. — 0.66 in.
Rain through Dec. 11— 48.49 in.

Seven displaced after fire

No injuries, but three family pets die in garage blaze

By Emily Mentzer

The Itemizer-Observer

FALLS CITY — No one was hurt in an early-morning fire in Falls City on Sunday, but three family pets died as a result of the smoke and flames.

The house fire, in the 1800 block of Falls City Road, started in the garage. Efforts from firefighters kept the fire there until it was extinguished, effectively stopping it before it could go into the home, Dallas Fire & EMS spokeswoman April Welsh said.

“The 911 call came in around 4:22 a.m.,” Welsh said. “One of the male residents woke up, smelled smoke, and evacuated the house.”

The home did not have working smoke alarms.

Six adults and one infant have been displaced because of extensive smoke damage to the attic and home. The American Red Cross is assisting the family.

The contents of the garage, which was being used as storage of household items, are a complete loss, Welsh said. Two dogs and a baby pig that were in the garage were also lost in the fire.

Firefighters from Southwest Polk Fire District were assisted by Polk County Fire District No. 1, the Polk County Sheriff’s Office, Pacific Power, and the Oregon Fire Marshal’s Office.

The fire marshal is investigating the cause of the fire. From the time of the call

to having the fire extinguished took about an hour, Welsh said.

A couple things complicated the attack.

“It is rural Polk County, so they do not have hydrants in that area, and they have to get their water from the engines themselves,” Welsh said. Four water tenders responded to the call.

Freezing temperatures added to the difficulty, Welsh said.

“It’s very fortunate that somebody did wake up and got them evacuated out of the house safely,” she said. “Our thoughts definitely go out to the family. It’s terrible enough to have a house fire and to lose everything, lose their family pets. It’s very sad.”

Monmouth Police Department clears up incident involving deaf man, Monmouth woman

Itemizer-Observer staff report

MONMOUTH — The Monmouth Police Department held a media briefing on Thursday to clear up information surrounding a report.

Monmouth Police received a report at 11:30 a.m. on Dec. 6 stating that an adult male tried to grab an adult female while she was walking on the sidewalk in the downtown area.

Prior to the male trying to contact the female, the female was using her phone to take a video of the male’s vehicle, a white van, that was parked near her residence.

When the male attempted to contact the female, she felt he was trying to grab her.

Officers responded to the scene and the male returned to the scene to communicate with officers.

It was determined that the male is deaf and communicates by reading lips and using sign language.

The male parked his van in order to attend an appointment at a nearby professional office. It was also determined he had previous appointments at the same facility within the past nine days, which is why he had been parking in the area.

The male is cooperating fully with police.

Further interviews have been scheduled.

The case will continue as an active investigation until all interviews are completed and a determination is made as to whether any crimes were committed.

Monmouth council votes yes on city utility fees

By Herb Swett

The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — Two utility ordinances were enacted by the Monmouth City Council on Dec. 5.

One provides for full compensation to the city for use of public rights of way and installation and use of utility facilities in the rights of way. The other charges \$200 for application for a utility license and \$200 for amendment, renewal, or transfer of a utility license.

Both were approved on 5-1 votes, with Councilor Laurel Sharrow voting no on both. She said that city residents would be “getting a service they’re not paying for.”

Councilor Jon Carey noted that the Oregon Supreme Court recently ruled in favor of city utility fees and that many other cities are enacting similar ordinances.

Much of the meeting was taken up by Mayor Steve Milligan’s pre-

sentations of years-of-service awards to the following city employees: Ed Alvarez, public works employee, 25 years; Darrell Tallan, police chief, 20 years; Wendie Hamm, court clerk, 15 years; Kelli Carpenter, police detective, 10 years; Scott McClure, city manager, 10 years; Mark Robertson, police officer, 10 years; Jon Steed, finance employee and recently acting finance director, 10 years; Michael Strack, police detective, 10 years; Billy Black, wastewater specialist, five years; and Mike Gregory, line foreman, five years.

During councilor’s reports and comments, Carey reported that the Monmouth-Independence Networks operating income had returned to springtime levels.

Councilor Thomas Steinke noted that the safety commission had proposed a street light at Highway 99W and Madrona Street to illuminate the crosswalk.

In a work session following the

meeting, members of the Monmouth Engaged Committee urged making the city bicycle friendly by lighting intersections better, establishing walking trails on existing sidewalks, and working with Cycle Oregon to promote tourism. Committee members said wineries and breweries would help the city as well. Milligan mentioned clothing and sporting goods stores as ways to keep dollars in town.

Another group proposed making Gentle Woods Park an overnight park for cyclists whose route includes Monmouth. A spokesman noted that advance notice to the police department would be necessary. Council members commented that an ordinance permitting such a use for the park should have a trial period with a one-year sunset clause.

McClure suggested that the city find ways to cooperate with homeowners whose sidewalks need improvement. Steinke said that because

maintenance of sidewalks is the responsibility of the homeowners, the city should limit itself to reminding the owners that the law requires them to keep sidewalks in repair.

The beekeeping issue came up again, with City Attorney Lane Shetterly saying the main concern should be preventing bees from becoming a nuisance. He added that Monmouth has an unenumerated nuisance ordinance, so it was up to the council to limit the number of hives if bees become a nuisance. There was disagreement as to what constitutes a hive, and Shetterly suggested that the council wait a few months for bee season to work on an ordinance.

After the work session, the council reconvened to go into executive session. Topics were labor negotiations, consideration of exempt public records and trade secrets, and performance evaluation of public officers and employees.



Christmas Worship

“We have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him.” — Matthew 2:2


FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

200 Monmouth Indep Hwy
(on the s-curves between Monmouth & Independence)
503-838-3459

Christmas Eve
Divine Worship with Holy Communion - 10:30 am
Candle Light Service - 7 pm

Christmas Day
Festival Worship - 10:00 am

Rev. Dallas C.R. Dubke, Pastor
www.FaithLutheranMonmouth.org



Christmas Eve

Add meaning to your Christmas season by celebrating the birth of Jesus in worship.

7 p.m. Candlelight Service

10 p.m. Candlelight Service with Communion

Coffee & Cookies after each service

All are welcome. Come as you are.

Trinity Lutheran Church

320 SE Fir Villa Rd, Dallas

503-623-2233

www.dallastlc.org



You are invited to Xmas at MCC
11a :: 3p :: 5p
Learn more at mymcc.cc

DECEMBER 24



St. Hilda’s Episcopal



4:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve
Carols and Eucharist

Everyone is welcome!

245 W. Main St. • Monmouth
503-838-6087

Christmas Eve Celebration

Family-Friendly Morning Service 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.



everyone is welcome!

Childcare for ages 3 and under

faith free CHURCH

2290 E. Ellendale Ave. Dallas
faithfreechurch.org

