

EDITORIALS

‘A Visit from St. Nicholas’

(Also known as, “’Twas the Night Before Christmas”)

By Clement Clarke Moore

’Twas the night before Christmas,  
when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;  
The children were nestled all snug in their beds;  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;  
And mamma in her ’kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter’s nap,  
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.  
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,  
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below,  
When what to my wondering eyes did appear,  
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,  
With a little old driver so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment he must be St. Nick.

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:  
“Now, Dasher! Now, Dancer! Now, Prancer and Vixen!  
On, Come! On, Cupid! On, Donner and Blitzen!  
To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall!  
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!”

As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;  
So up to the housetop the coursers they flew  
With a sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too —  
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.

As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.  
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.  
His eyes — how they twinkled! His dimples, how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!

His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow;  
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath;  
He had a broad face and a little round belly  
That shook when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly.  
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And he filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight —  
“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!”

Source: *The Random House  
Book of Poetry for Children*, 1983

PUBLIC AGENDA

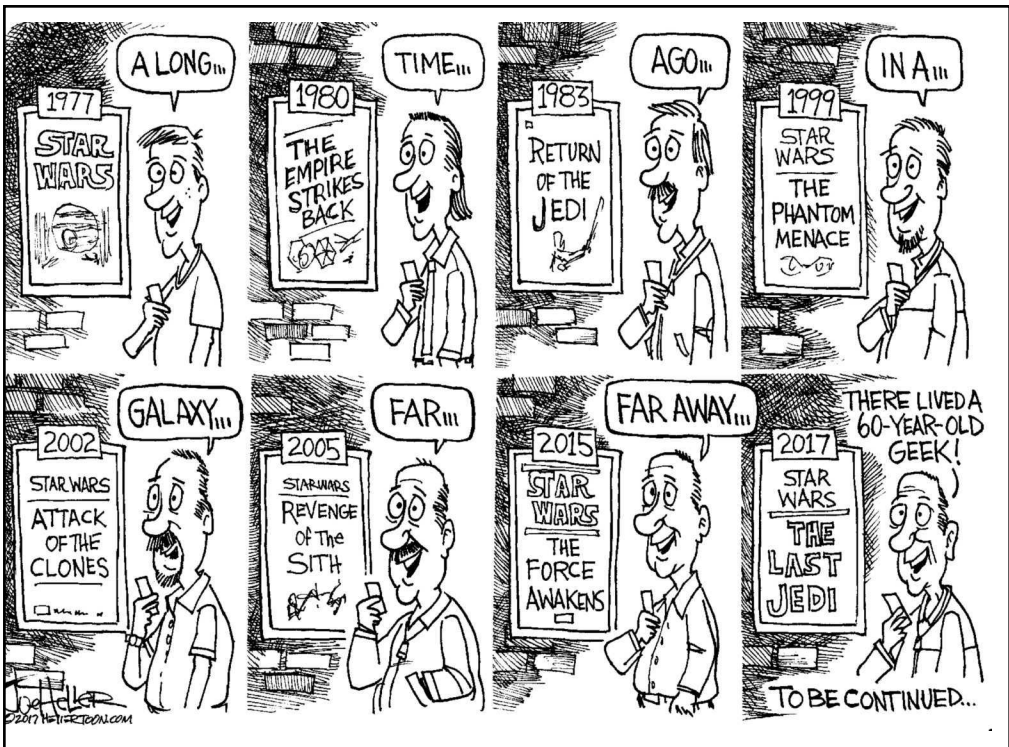
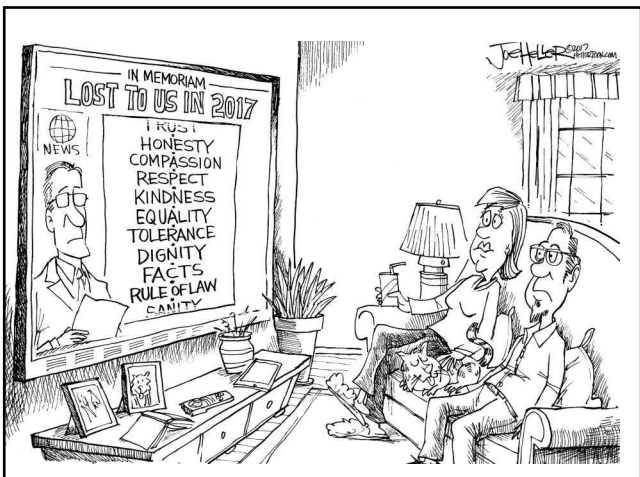
**Public Agenda** is a listing of upcoming meetings for governmental and nongovernmental agencies in Polk County. To submit a meeting, send it at least two weeks before the actual meeting date to the *Itemizer-Observer* via email ([ionews@polkio.com](mailto:ionews@polkio.com)).

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 20

• **Polk County Board of Commissioners** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, first floor conference room, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.

TUESDAY, DEC. 26

• **Independence City Council** — 6:30 p.m., Independence Civic Center, 555 S. Main St., Independence. 503-838-1212.  
• **Polk County Board of Commission work session** — 9 a.m., Polk County Courthouse, BOC office, 850 Main St., Dallas. 503-623-8173.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Student success is team effort

We have some of the best K-12 teachers; we are in the top 10 nationwide for spending dollars for students; and year after year we are in the bottom five of all states for graduating seniors.

Where have we gone wrong?  
Present and past governors have tried to bring in education experts — some were good, some not so good, but none stayed. We need to correct this.

Voters passed Measure 98 putting \$170 million into CTE (Career Technical Education) for 9-12 students to help lower dropout rates and furnish students with college readiness courses. Right away I see an ongoing problem: 5 percent will go for administration, which is too much.

I feel there is too much dedicated funding for K-12 education not getting to the classroom.

It winds up in administration at all levels. Too much winds up in the hands of the Education Service Districts, creating more unneeded administration jobs. Oregon has twice the ESD's than Washington, which has more than double the students. When you add this up, tens of millions are not getting to the classroom where our kids need it every year.

This has to stop.  
Oregon education planning is 20 years behind. It needs to be redone and brought up to a standard that looks to future needs. Legislators need to make sure this is done.

The teachers union has to step forward to make this work and forget the old, outdated planning.



Remember it's for the kids and their future, not self-serving the union as it is now.

The final step is parents need to be involved. Help these kids at home with proper guidance.

Get involved with the school boards and teachers; make sure they're doing things right, and if not, speak up. Praise them when you see things done right.

Bill J. Kluting  
Monmouth

More babies headed for welfare

More babies are needed to save Social Security.  
Paul Ryan got it partially correct, then the “talking heads” got it completely wrong. We are being overrun with babies, but we need parents to have babies that get jobs that pay into Social Security. We are instead, getting babies that stay on welfare.

Gary Richards  
Monmouth

Cinnamon rolls raise money for turf

I would like to thank all who helped with the “Holiday Christmas Roll”

fundraiser. The proceeds will go toward the Dallas Booster Club “Field of Dreams” turf project.

Thanks to the parents, teachers and students that helped roll them out, bake and package them in a very efficient manner. We had students from the girls softball team and the football program graciously willing to help.

Thanks to the individuals and businesses that donated money and ingredients for this project. We always appreciate your support.  
A special thank you to Julie Schneidecker, DHS teacher, for her knowledge and experience making the cinnamon rolls. Her confidence helped the inexperienced team members feel confident. Together we packed approximately 85 dozen. Some were baked and ready to eat, and some were packaged and freezer ready.

We appreciate all who placed orders, and we hope you enjoyed them with family and friends during this holiday season.

Happy Holidays, and thanks for supporting the turf project.

Claudia Drill  
Dallas Booster Club  
Dallas

WANT TO WRITE A LETTER?

Letters to the editor are limited to 300 words. Longer letters will be edited. Election-related letters of all types are limited to 100 words. Writers are limited to one election-related letter per election season. Election letters from writers outside of Polk County are not accepted.

Each writer is restricted to one letter per 30-day period.

Letters that are libelous, obscene or in bad taste will not be printed. Attacks by name on businesses or individuals will not be printed. Letters to the editor that are obvious promotions

for a business, products or services will not be printed.

Letter writers who disagree with other published letter writers should maintain a civil discourse and address the subject, not the author.

Letters, like all editorial material submitted to the newspaper, are edited for length, grammar and content.

Letters must include the author's name, address and telephone number. This includes letters submitted via the *I-O's* website. Names and cities of residence are published; street ad-

resses and telephone numbers are used for verification purposes only. Letters must be submitted from individuals, not organizations.

Letters of thanks to businesses, individuals and organizations are limited to 10 names.

The deadline for letters to the editor is 10 a.m. Monday. Letters submitted may not be retractable after this deadline.

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