

THE DALLESPORT/MURDOCK NEWS

*SERVING THE PENINSULA COMMUNITIES
OF DALLESPORT AND MURDOCK*

NEAT IS A NEIGHBORHOOD SUPERPOWER

COMMUNITY GOALS FOR 2026

When a place looks cared for, it feels cared for. The outside of our homes, yards, fences, driveways, sidewalks, and even the ditches are the first “hello” we give our neighbors and visitors, and it quietly sets the tone for what we expect from one another.

It is not about perfection. It’s about pride, momentum, and community culture.

Why “neat” matters more than we think

A clean, well-kept environment does something powerful: it encourages people to engage, look out for one another, and invest in their surroundings. Research shows that visible upkeep is closely tied to how safe and connected people feel in their community, while visible disorder can erode that sense of cohesion.

There’s also strong evidence that simple community improvements can strengthen neighborhood well-being, especially when residents are involved. Small, visible actions add up and help shape the story a neighborhood tells about itself.

The 2026 “Outside Pride” goal

Let’s make 2026 the year we collectively raise the baseline. Not by judging, but by doing. Not by complaining, but by setting a new normal.

If you can see it from the road, it’s worth caring for. Think:

- Windblown trash and loose debris
- Old tarps, broken furniture, and scrap piles that have “become permanent”
- Overgrown weeds along fences, driveways, and property edges
- Storage that’s drifting into “junkyard” territory
- Uncovered loads or unsecured trash that ends up in our ditches

COMMUNITY GOALS FOR 2026

For some starting points that don't feel overwhelming, try these strategies:

The 15-minute reset

Pick one small zone (front steps, driveway edge, mailbox area, fence line) and set a timer for 15 minutes. Bag what's trash, stack what's donate-worthy, and put the rest "in a home."

The "one project per month" plan

January: fence line and roadside

February: porch and entry

March: yard tools and storage

April: scrap and metal

May: weeds and brush

By summer, the whole property will feel different!

Team up with a neighbor

Pick a day to clean up a shared edge—along a fence line, ditch, or roadside. Working together makes the task easier and strengthens connections at the same time.

Dump It

- Dallesport Transfer Station
- The Dalles Disposal

Recycle It

- Klickitat County Blue Bag Recycling Program
- Scrap metal recycling at transfer stations

Donate It

- Habitat for Humanity ReStore (The Dalles)
- St. Vincent de Paul (The Dalles)
- Goodwill (The Dalles)
- NU-2-U Shop (The Dalles)

Sell It (or Give It Away)

- Craigslist
 - Facebook Marketplace
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Let's set the tone together. Our Peninsula is worth the effort. A neat outside doesn't just look better, it feels better. It invites connection, raises pride, and creates a culture where people naturally take care of what they share.

If you've been waiting for a "right time" to tackle the pile, consider this your sign!

DALLESSPORT/MURDOCK COMMUNITY COUNCIL CORNER

DALLESSPORT PARK PROJECT UPDATE

An application has been submitted for a 2026 community project requesting \$150,000 from state legislators. The funding would support the planning phase of the proposed Dallesport Park Project, located at the corner of 6th & D Street in Dallesport.

The application was processed through the Klickitat County Public Works Department and administered by Jeff Hunter. If the funding is awarded, Klickitat County will proceed with developing park plans.

If you have any questions, please contact Theresa Hutton, Dallesport/Murdock Community Council member and Dallesport Park Committee Chairman at dallesportcouncil@gmail.com.

COUNCIL BYLAW REVIEW

On Monday, December 15, the Dallesport–Murdock Community Council held a work session to review the Council’s Bylaws and discuss potential revisions. The Bylaws were last fully reviewed in 2019, so council members walked through the entire document and discussed updates to several articles to improve clarity and modernize language.

Proposed changes will be presented at the January Council meeting on Thursday, January 8, and voted on during the February Council meeting on Thursday, February 12.

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER CORRECTION

After speaking directly with the Dallesport Water District Manager, we want to clarify a point from our December issue. Language used in that newsletter may have unintentionally implied that the District was under a moratorium on water use. That is not the case. There is no moratorium, and the Dallesport Water District currently has 81 approved water hookups available for development. The Water District is a vital asset to our community, and its capacity to support responsible growth and future development plays a key role in Dallesport’s long-term success. We appreciate the District’s time and collaboration, and we remain committed to sharing clear and accurate information with our community.

Residents who would like to learn more are encouraged to attend the Dallesport Water District’s monthly meetings, held every fourth Wednesday at 2:30 p.m. at the Dallesport Community Center.

Winter's Winged Return

The Bald Eagles are Back!

Each winter, bald eagles return to the Dallesport/Murdock peninsula and the surrounding stretch of the Columbia River, offering one of the Gorge's most remarkable seasonal sights. Their presence is not random. It is deeply tied to the river, the landscape, and the natural rhythms of this region.

Bald eagles migrate to the Columbia River Gorge in winter primarily for food and open water. While colder temperatures freeze many inland lakes and rivers, the mighty Columbia continues to flow, creating more reliable fishing opportunities. Areas near dams, backwaters, and slower eddies are especially attractive because fish are easier to spot and catch.

The eagles are also drawn to the mature trees along the riverbanks, the power poles surrounding the river, and our basalt rock outcroppings which provide ideal perches for hunting and safe nighttime roosts. During this time of year, bald eagles feed mostly on fish, waterfowl, and small mammals. The wide, open views of the Gorge allow them to conserve energy while watching for food, an important advantage during winter months.

This seasonal abundance is why eagle numbers increase noticeably in winter, particularly around areas like The Dalles Dam and along the peninsula shoreline.

Learn more about bald eagles this winter at the *Columbia Gorge Discovery Center & Museum*. Join fellow eagle fans for an **Eagle Watch** event at **9:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 17**, or attend the museum's Public Raptor Programs (Tue & Thu at 2:00 p.m.; Sat & Sun at 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., included with admission), where visitors can meet Liberty and Ferguson, the two resident bald eagles in their care.

[Visit the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center](#)

Hours

Open Daily 9:00 am–5:00 pm

Admission

\$12.00 General

\$10.00 Seniors (62+)

\$7.00 Ages 6-16

FREE Ages 5 & under



Bald Eagle Fun Facts

- The females are about 25% larger than males
- They can spot a fish from over a mile away
- Pairs often reuse the same nest for decades, and nests can weigh over one ton
- They don't get their white head and tail coloring until age 4–5
- A typical wingspan ranges from 5 ft 11 in–7 ft 7 in
- Protected under the Endangered Species Act in 1973 and recovered by 2007

When bald eagles return each winter, they bring with them a powerful reminder of the beauty and resilience of the Dallesport/Murdock peninsula. It's an invitation to pause, look up, and take in one of winter's most iconic sights, right here at home.

Dallesport/Murdock Sewer System – Community Update

The Dallesport/Murdock sewer system is operated and maintained by Klickitat Public Utility District (KPUD) and serves an important role in protecting public health and the environment in our community. The system was originally built to support both existing homes and anticipated future growth, replacing many older individual septic systems in the area.

At our most recent Community Council meeting, residents raised concerns after observing recent sewer spills and overflows. While infrastructure issues can occur in any system, especially one that has been in place for many years, it’s important that these incidents are communicated, documented, and addressed in a timely way.

If you notice a sewer-related issue — such as an unusual odor, backup, or visible leak — please report it directly to KPUD as soon as possible. In addition, we encourage residents to document what they observe (including location, date, and photos if possible) and share that information with the Dallesport/Murdock Community Council via email at dallesportcouncil@gmail.com.

A shared, centralized record allows us to track recurring issues, recognize patterns, and strengthen our collective ability to advocate for timely and effective responses. Reliable sewer infrastructure is vital to the health, safety, and future of our community. By staying informed and communicating concerns clearly, residents can play an important role in helping KPUD understand on-the-ground conditions and ensure the system continues to serve Dallesport/Murdock well into the future.

KEY CONTACTS

Dallesport-Murdock Fire Dept - KCFD # 6

630 Central Ave. PO Box 215
509-767-1252

Dallesport Water District

302 Sixth Ave, Dallesport, PO Box 131
541-980-6514
dwdclerk@dallesportwater.org
dallesportwater.org

Dallesport Post Office

Monday-Friday 8:00am-2:00pm
Saturday 7:30 am-11:00 am (package pickup only) 509-767-1577

Dallesport/Murdock Community Council

136 Sixth Ave, PO Box 8
dallesportcouncil@gmail.com
dallesportcouncil.com

If you have ideas for this newsletter, would like to contribute content, or would like to be added to the email distribution list, contact Editor Colton Smith at dallesportcouncil@gmail.com.

LYLE SCHOOL NEWS



Important Dates

January 19th – No School: MLK Day

January 22nd – End of Term 1

January 23rd – Early Release for Grading

Here are some of the great things that are happening in Lyle School District!

November Students of the Month – November was all about gratitude! The following students were named student of the month by their teachers: Evelette Perez, Ellington Frey, Keali Johnson, Damien McClain, Harley Wright, Tristin Spino, Layne Raczykowski, Dariel Spalding, Brooklyn Vining, Amelia Higgs, Bryce Macleod, Daniel Slate Jr.

Bookmobile – The FVRL Bookmobile will be on campus on January 7th and 21st . Please help your kids remember to bring their books back to school!

Cereal Drive – Thank you for all the cereal donations! 1st grade was the big winner in elementary, 7th grade in middle school, and 11th grade in high school! Each winning class will be treated to a donut celebration! All the cereal was given to the Lion's Club to include in their holiday food boxes!

Elementary Concert – On Wednesday, 12/10/2025, Mr. Dempsey and our elementary students put on a wonderful Winter Concert. From Kindergarten through 5th Grade, our students were amazing! We enjoyed sweet Christmas songs, holiday skits ("Twas the Night Before Christmas), a Grinch Readers Theatre, and a wonderful recorder performance of "Hot Cross Buns" The evening finished perfectly with a student-led community sing-along of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." Thank you to everyone who came, and a huge shout out to our music teacher, Mr. Dempsey and our teachers for all the work that goes into making these concerts happen!

K-12 Cookie Decorating – The last day before winter break, our secondary classes teamed up with their elementary "buddies" for an afternoon of festive cookie decorating! Students were able to pick out a special Squishmallow to exchange with the buddies they met during last month's pinecone ornament event. A little backstory on the Squishmallows: These were donated to the Lion's Club after the Burdoin Fire. The Lion's Club wanted to make them a special gift to our students for giving back to our community. The pinecone ornaments were a real hit in our community this holiday season.

A huge, heartfelt thank you to the Lyle PTO! They generously provided all the delicious cookies and decorating supplies that made this event possible. We are so grateful for your support of our students.

School Board – At the December school board meeting, our two newly elected directors, Jessica Smith and Amy Roots, took their oaths of office. We also took a moment to recognize our two outgoing directors, Barbara Mills and Marc Harvey. Barb has served on the school board for 12 years and was presented with a plaque for her commitment and years of service to our students, staff, and community. Elementary staff and students made both Marc and Barb posters as a thank you for their years of service on the school board.

Become a Volunteer – Your Support Makes a Difference! We are always looking for dedicated individuals to help enhance the student experience at Lyle School District! We are continuously accepting volunteer applications from parents and community members alike. Volunteering on campus during the school day (8:30-3:30) requires a volunteer application and background check. Your support is incredibly valued, and to get started, you just need to follow one simple step. Send an email to marci.ramsay@lyleschools.org requesting a volunteer application (or stop by the office and we can print one for you). Once your application and background check are on file, you can arrange your volunteer time:

- Parents: If you wish to volunteer in your student's classroom, please coordinate directly with the classroom teacher to arrange a time.
- Community Members: If you would like to contribute in another capacity, please reach out to Principal Smith to discuss your interests and arrange a time to visit the school.

Sub Openings – We are still looking for kitchen and custodial substitutes.

Bus Drivers Needed – Mid-Columbia Transportation Cooperative is looking for sub bus drivers for the Lyle Hub. Training is paid for. If interested, please call the Transportation Department at 509-493-1590.

PTO Meetings – Meetings are typically held on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:00 PM in the school library.

COUGAR ATHLETICS



High School Basketball – Home games:

1/9 Against Sherman: JV @ 4:30, Varsity @ 6:00 PM
 1/22 Against Irrigon: JV @ 4:30, Varsity @ 6:00 PM
 1/23 Against Klickwood: JV @ 4:30, Varsity @ 6:00 PM
 1/22 Against Trout Lake: JV @ 4:30, Varsity @ 6:00 PM

Middle School Basketball – Home games:

1/8 Against South Wasco: @ 4:00 PM C/B/A
 1/12 Against Trout Lake: @ 4:00 PM C/B/A
 1/15 Against Sherman: @ 4:00 PM C/B/A

JANUARY

2026

AA Meetings Wednesdays and Sundays 7pm Lyle School Library 625 Keasey 360-870-3321				1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2 No School Winter Break	3
4	5 Lyle Lions Club Meeting 6:00pm	6 Board of County Commissioners Meeting 9:30am Lyle Schools PTO Meeting 5:00pm	7	8 WAGAP Mobile Food Bank @ Dallesport Community Center 12pm-2pm Dallesport/Murdock Community Council Meeting 7:00pm	9	10
11	12	13 KPUD Board of Commissioners Meeting 2:00pm Board of County Commissioners Meeting 9:30am	14	15	16 Airport Board Meeting 7:30am	17 Eagle Watch at the Discovery Center 9:00am
18	19 Martin Luther King Day No School Lyle Lions Club Meeting 6:00pm	20 Board of County Commissioners Meeting 9:30am	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 KPUD Board of Commissioners Meeting 2:00pm Board of County Commissioners Meeting 9:30am	28 Dallesport Water District Meeting 2:30pm Lyle School Board Meeting 6:00pm	29	30	31

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.” — Margaret Mead