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# THE DALLESPORT/MURDOCK NEWS

*SERVING THE PENINSULA COMMUNITIES  
OF DALLESPORT AND MURDOCK*

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## **OUR BACKYARD AIRPORT**

### **All about the Columbia Gorge Regional Airport**

The airport in Dallesport is quiet by design. There is no control tower, no terminal, no commercial airline service, and no steady flow of passengers. Most days, it appears unobtrusive. Yet it is one of the most significant pieces of public infrastructure in the community, and its importance becomes clear when weather patterns change.

The airfield began in the early 1920s as a grass strip known as Case Field. Early aviation depended on flat land, open approaches, and closeness to population centers, all of which the Columbia River Gorge provided. Case Field was named after Walter E. Case, a local airmail pilot who lost his life flying through the Gorge. From the beginning, the field was meant to be useful, not ornamental.

Its defining transformation came during World War II. In the early 1940s, the United States Army Corps of Engineers developed the site into a formal airfield. Activated in 1943 and built to military standards, the airport was designed for reliability under pressure, not casual operation. That wartime history continues to shape the airport's layout, scale, and role today.

Although the airport is physically located on the Washington side of the Columbia River, it has been owned by the City of The Dalles since the 1940s and later operated jointly with Klickitat County. At the time, The Dalles was the nearest city with the administrative and financial capacity to operate a serious regional airfield. From the outset, the airport was intended to serve both states, reflecting the river's role as a connector rather than a boundary.

During wildfire season, the show begins.

Fire Boss aircraft, fixed-wing air attack planes, and a wide range of helicopters begin cycling through the field. These aircraft are not simply passing through, they are working to save lives and property. The airport's ability to support rapid turnaround, refueling, coordination, and staging makes it a vital part of regional wildfire response.

Outside of fire season, the airport supports emergency medical flights, utility and infrastructure aviation, training operations, and business



aviation. Residents also see military helicopters, including Black Hawks and Chinooks, using the field for training, readiness, transit, and fueling. These aircraft are not permanently based here, but their presence reflects the airport’s ability to safely support complex and demanding operations.

The airport operates without a staffed control tower, with pilots coordinating movements using standard Federal Aviation Administration procedures and shared radio frequencies. This approach is common and appropriate for airports of this size and function, and experienced fire, medical, and military pilots are trained to operate safely in these environments.

Financially, the airport operates on a modest annual budget. Revenue comes from hangar leases, land leases, fuel flowage fees, and basic operating activities. It is not a profit center. By law, airport revenue must remain at the airport and be reinvested into operations, maintenance, safety improvements, and infrastructure. These funds also help secure state and federal aviation grants that would otherwise be unavailable.

Hangars are one of the airport’s most important assets. Some are owned by the airport and leased to users, while others are privately built on airport leased land. Demand for hangar space reflects active and necessary aviation use, not speculative development.

Like most long standing public infrastructure, the airport requires ongoing maintenance and periodic upgrades. Current development efforts are focused on measured, need based improvements, not rapid expansion or commercial transformation.

Recent and planned projects include additional hangar space to meet existing demand, safety and operations related to infrastructure improvements, and long term planning guided by the airport’s master plan. Workforce training is also a big part of the airport’s long-term role. Plans are underway to support aviation education through Columbia Gorge Community College, including a proposed training hangar focused on aviation maintenance and technical skills. Students would receive hands-on instruction aligned with Federal Aviation Administration standards, preparing them for careers as certified aviation maintenance technicians. This type of training reflects regional workforce needs and ties the airport directly to education, job creation, and long-term economic resilience.

Importantly, airport development follows a formal planning process that includes environmental review, public input, and coordination with state and federal aviation agencies. Changes do not happen quickly or without oversight. Development is deliberate, regulated, and tied to demonstrated need.

Dallesport has many valuable assets—orchards, vineyards, industrial land, and long-held family properties. The airport plays a distinct role as a gateway, operational asset. It brings outside resources in and allows local capacity to move out. Most days, it works quietly. When conditions are difficult, it does its job, and it does its job well.

**Life Flight Network**  
 ~\$85 / year  
 Household membership for emergency air medical transport  
 Without coverage, a single flight can cost \$12,000–\$25,000+

**Hood Aero**  
 Local flight training based at the airport  
 Private Pilot License: ~\$8,000–\$12,000  
 Costs are paid gradually as lessons are completed

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## COMMUNITY COUNCIL CORNER

### 2026 Dallesport Park Survey — Your Input Is Needed

Klickitat County is updating its Comprehensive Plan, and this survey is the primary way Dallesport residents can weigh in on parks, recreation, and future community amenities. If you want a voice in what gets prioritized and funded, this is it.

The 2026 Dallesport Park Survey takes about 8 minutes to complete and can be submitted once per device (cell phone, computer, or tablet). Every response matters, and higher participation gives our community a stronger voice in county-level planning.

Please consider sharing the survey with others in your household and your neighbors and encouraging them to participate as well.

You can access the survey using the QR code here →




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Over the past several months, the Dallesport/Murdock Community Council has held multiple work sessions focused on reviewing, refining, and updating the Council's bylaws. Proposed changes were presented and discussed at the February meeting, and the Council will vote to adopt the updated bylaws at the March meeting.

Looking ahead, the **April 9th Council Meeting will feature a special guest. Evan Evangelopoulos from Klickitat County's Comprehensive Plan** team has confirmed he will attend and will bring the updated Land Use Workbook for the Council to work through together. This will be an important opportunity to engage directly with the County on land use planning and future development considerations.

Community members are always welcome to attend Council meetings and participate in these discussions.

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### DALLESPORT COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Anthony Rizzi - Chairperson (term expires 2026)	Colton Smith - Newsletter (term expires 2027)
Keith Hutton - Vice Chairperson (term expires 2028)	Samantha Smith - Web (term expires 2027)
Regena Carrico - Secretary (term expires 2027)	Jay Carrico - (term expires 2028)
Teresa Hutton - Treasurer (term expires 2028)	Howard Johnson - (term expires 2026)
	Judy Ware - (term expires 2026)

**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](mailto:dallesportcouncil@gmail.com).**

**COMMISSIONER'S CORNER****A note from Commissioner Lori Zoller**

I would like to start by thanking the community members of Dallesport. You have stayed engaged and worked to better your community for many, many years. I believe many changes will happen in the next couple of years. It's hard to predict how this will unfold because there are so many interests in Dallesport. You certainly represent a melting pot of private landowners, private industry, public interests in the Airport and the Port, as well as the community interests of Dallesport proper.

The County has supported the Community Council and helped fund valuable assets for your future. And, as the County, we will stay engaged with our Departments doing what is required to help you achieve a healthy, positive future.

The growth and land use planning for Dallesport is included in our Comprehensive Plan update, which is currently moving through our Planning Department. We have been updated on this progress and you will soon hear from Director Scott Eldelman. The Planning Dept. will assist with the meetings. in forming your future desires and directions for Dallesport. But also, in the form of a workbook for you to complete. This workbook will help us capture what is meaningful and necessary for the Dallesport community from the citizens themselves. I am proud to say I helped develop the approach for this new planning effort to ensure we capture what is important to the local people in each Community.

Looking ahead 5-10 years, and given your mixed interests, I believe Dallesport has a bright future. You have ample wastewater treatment availability and water interests in the area to be developed to support varied growth. Improvements at the Airport will create local jobs through the Airport Business Park. Private industry and the Port will also offer future job availability for the area. That will create a need for housing, perhaps local markets, restaurants, cafes, and other local amenities. With proper planning and permitting I do not see either entity taking over. I believe all involved want the best for the area and a planned appealing community. "Planned" is the key word. Collaborating with our Planning Department on the Comprehensive Plan will be key to achieving a balanced outcome for a healthy, inviting Community.

As the Commissioner for District #2, I look forward to working side by side with you and watching it all unfold. I am currently developing a program for community revitalization and beautification and hope to present the proposal at your next Community Council meeting. So stand by, it's a great program. Please know you can reach out anytime and we will work together for the successful future of Dallesport.

Lori Zoller  
Klickitat County District #2 Commissioner

## *Neighborhood Care and County Support*

Dallesport is a beautiful place to live — and it's all right here in front of us.

It's the wide open pastures and working land, the orchards and vineyards that change with the seasons, and the birds moving through the Columbia Hills. It's watching storms roll through the Gorge and clear just as fast. It's the light at sunrise and sunset that makes you text your neighbors to come outside and take a look. It's the airplanes dropping in and lifting off, a reminder that this small town is more connected to the world than it sometimes feels.

Those of us who live here every day know how special Dallesport is. A cleaner, more cared-for town isn't about perfection, but about pride, safety, and opportunity. The condition of our properties shapes how safe people feel and whether families and small businesses see Dallesport as a place worth investing in.

Over the past several months, the Community Council has received emails and calls from residents who are increasingly frustrated by neglected properties and the quality-of-life issues that often follow. Neighbors have reached out about burning tires, unsecured and aggressive dogs, repeated late-night visits that wake households, and loud or disruptive behavior tied to poorly maintained properties. Many people are simply tired and unsure where to turn for help.

We want to be clear and transparent about our role. The Community Council does not have enforcement authority and cannot intervene directly on individual properties. We also want to be thoughtful and responsible in how county resources are used. This is not about overwhelming Klickitat County or turning neighbors against one another. It is about helping residents understand when ongoing or unresolved issues rise to the level of needing a formal process — and how to navigate that process appropriately.

There is also a bigger picture at play. When we take care of ourselves as a community, it gets noticed. Clean, cared-for neighborhoods signal engagement, stability, and pride — not just to visitors, but to county staff, agencies, and decision-makers as well. Like many small communities, it can sometimes feel as though Dallesport sits on the margins, easy to overlook or slow to receive attention and resources. The reality is that communities that show effort, organization, and forward movement are far harder to ignore.

Taking care of our surroundings is one way we put ourselves on the radar. It says, we're invested, we're paying attention, and we're working toward something better. When that care and consistency are visible, it strengthens our case for support, partnership, and follow-through from the County and beyond.

For those seeking guidance, Klickitat County has a code compliance process designed to work with property owners over time. It begins with submission of a formal written complaint, followed by County review, investigation if needed, and notification to the property owner with an opportunity to respond. While the Council does not file complaints on behalf of residents, we can help point people to the right place and clarify the process. More information is available at <https://www.klickitatcounty.gov/1350/Code-Compliance>.

Not everyone has the same time or resources, and this is not about judgment. It's about acknowledging that neglect and repeated disturbances affect neighbors and make it harder to show the best of Dallesport — to others and to ourselves.

Dallesport already has what many places are trying to create. Caring for our surroundings is how we honor what's here and honor one another.

# LYLE SCHOOL NEWS



## Important Dates

*March 8 – Daylight Savings*

*March 9 – No School; Teacher Training*

*March 17 thru March 20 – Spring Conferences; Early Release*

*March 23 thru March 27 – No School; Spring Break*

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

**January Students of the Month** – January was all about *respect!* The following students were named student of the month by their teachers: Ellington Frey, Keali Johnson, Raelee Young, Katya Alter, Matty Wolff, Rouse Gonzalez-Gomez, Nathaniel Vergara-Galen, Conway Pederson, TJ Hearn, Janaila Dobson- Huerta, Avenelle Dobson-Huerta, Melody Ibarra-Villarreal, Matthew Nelson, Ella Collins, and Rayeden Bailey.

### **First Semester Honor Roll**

*Gold: GPA 4.0* – Seniors: Emily Hernandez, Carson Ramsay, and Jack Thiemann. Juniors: Joanna Bodolay, Ella Collins, and Keira Tennison.

*Silver: GPA 3.2-3.99* – Seniors: Emily Eubanks, Mylee Jones, Ezekiel Marble. Juniors: Kaylynn Adams, Tripp Beeks, Jazzie Comstock, Mason Ramsay, Carissa Williamson. Sophomores: Jalen Glueckert, Aiden Kucher, Bryce Macleod, Abel Walker. Freshman: Morgan Bachtell, Melanie Barajas, Alexa Cervantes, Kaden Clark, Brittany Granados, George Lacefield, Matthew Nelson, Angelica Rivera, and Annalyse Williamson. 8th Graders: Analia Flores, Tristan Hearn, Vivian Tennison, Harley Vermeire. 7th Graders: Billie Glueckert, Everett Lacefield, Juliette Lacefield, Josiah Marble, Dylan Spalding. 6th Graders: Avenelle Dobson-Huerta, Amelia Higgs, Marissa Smith, Elliott Towle.

*Bronze: GPA 3.0-3.19* – Junior: Daniel Slate Jr. Sophomores: Nikarrie Abrams, Bella Williamson. Freshman: Rayeden Bailey. 7th Grade: Tyrina Comstock.

**February Special Election** – We'd like to thank everyone who voted in the election. Our Replacement Enrichment Levy Passed with 65.41% "Yes" votes! We appreciate your support!

**Co-Ed Volleyball Club** – We have a new Volleyball Club for secondary students. They meet in the gym on Tuesdays/Thursdays after school. Starting on March 3rd, the time will be from 4:30 PM – 6:00 PM. If you have any questions, please reach out to Coach DeRochemont or Coach Carpenter.

**Information for Seniors** – Local scholarships are posted to the district website as they are received. Have your senior check often, under Lyle Secondary School/Graduation and Beyond/Local Scholarships.

**Sub Openings** – We have custodial and kitchen substitute openings. To apply, please visit the district website, or call 509-365-2191 to get more information.

**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.



## COUGAR ATHLETICS

**High School and Middle School Track** - Sign-up sheets are posted just outside the student office door!

**High School Basketball** – Our boys finished their season 4<sup>th</sup> place in the Big Sky League. Congrats on a great season. We are very proud of you!

Seniors **Jack Thiemann** and **Carson Ramsay** were selected to the **Big Sky League First Team All-League**. This is an amazing accomplishment and we are proud of you both!

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### *Spring Gardening Resources in the Gorge*

As winter loosens its grip, signs of spring are beginning to show across the Gorge — longer days, warming soil, and the quiet excitement of a new growing season. Whether you're planting a full garden, tending a few containers, or simply curious about where your food comes from, the Columbia River Gorge offers a range of local resources to help you learn, grow, and get started.

#### Plants, Seeds & Gardening Supplies

##### **Good News Gardening** — Hood River, OR

- Seeds, vegetable starts, herbs, flowers, soil amendments, and gardening supplies  
[www.goodnewsgardening.com](http://www.goodnewsgardening.com)

##### **Humble Roots Nursery** — Mosier, OR

- Unique focus on native plants and sustainable landscaping options well-suited to the Gorge's climate.  
[www.humblerootsnursery.com](http://www.humblerootsnursery.com) Shopping by appointment: 503-449-3694

##### **Azure Standard** — Dufur, OR

- Seeds, plant starts, soil amendments, organic gardening supplies, and tools, with local drop sites throughout the Gorge. [www.azurestandard.com](http://www.azurestandard.com)

##### **Vanguard Nursery** — White Salmon, WA

- Commercial level offering of trees, shrubs, vegetables, and landscaping plants. Call before visiting. (509) 493-1549

##### **Dickey Farm Store** — White Salmon, WA

- Plant starts, feed, local produce and provisions, and a great stop for lunch! 509-493-2636

##### **Underwood Conservation District — Native Plant Sale & TreeFest**


Saturday, March 21, 2026 • 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Rheingarten Park, White Salmon, WA

An annual spring native plant sale paired with TreeFest, offering trees, shrubs, groundcover, and educational activities focused on stewardship and local ecosystems.

For gardening questions big and small, the WSU Extension Klickitat County and local Master Gardeners provide trusted, research-based education and practical advice specific to growing conditions in the Gorge — learn more at <https://extension.wsu.edu/klickitat/>.

# MARCH

# 2026

1 AA Meetings Wednesdays and Sundays 7pm Lyle School Library 625 Keasey 360-870-3321	2 Lyle Lions Club Meeting 6:00pm	3 County Commissioners Mtg. 9:30am  Lyle School Board Meeting 5:00pm	4	5 WAGAP Mobile Food Bank @ Dallesport Community Center 12pm-2pm	6	7 Hood River Farmer's Market 10am-12pm
8 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS	9 NO SCHOOL Teacher Training	10 County Commissioners Mtg. 9:30am KPUD Commissioner Mtg. 2:00pm	11 Bookmobile @ Dallesport Community Center 1:30pm-3pm	12 Dallesport/Murdock Community Council Meeting 7:00pm	13	14
15	16	17 ST. PATRICKS DAY  County Commissioners Mtg. 9:30am County Water Conservancy Board 5:00pm	18	19	20 Airport Board Meeting 7:30am	21 Hood River Farmer's Market 10am-12pm
22	23 NO SCHOOL Spring Break 3/23-3/27	24 County Commissioners Mtg. 9:30am  KPUD Commissioner Mtg. 2:00pm	25 Dallesport Water District Meeting 2:30pm  Bookmobile @ Dallesport Community Center 1:30pm-3pm	26	27	28
29	30	31 County Commissioners Mtg. 9:30am				

## 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**

PO Box 8  
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