

Keizertimes

SECTION A

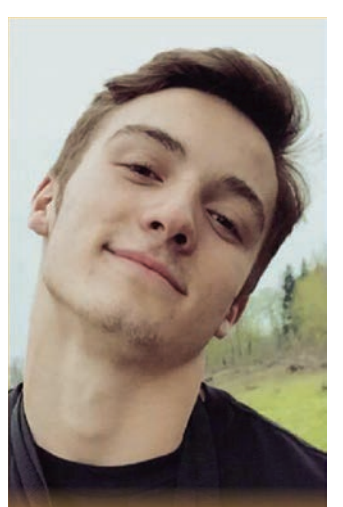
MAY 29, 2015

\$1.00

Praying for Austin



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
Austin Verboort's family and friends attend a prayer vigil Wednesday, May 27. Verboort sustained critical injuries in a crash Friday, May 22.



**Sidebar:
Friends
talk about
Verboort**
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MHS student in coma after crash

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

A McNary High School student remained in critical condition this week following a savage crash just after school was released for Memorial Day weekend last Friday, May 22.

The two-vehicle crash happened just after 2:30 p.m. on Lockhaven Drive North, near McClure Street North and involved three MHS juniors, all of whom were 16-year-old Keizer males.

Christopher Roger Gibson was driving a 1986 Chevrolet Blazer while Austin Daniel Verboort was behind the wheel of a 1995 Jeep Wrangler. Trevor David Guzman was a passenger in the

Jeep.

Though the initial Keizer Police Department report listed the accident as a head-on crash, pictures from the scene seemed to indicate the Jeep was t-boned on the left side by the Blazer, with the driver's door taking the brunt of the impact.

All three teens were taken to Salem Hospital, with Verboort suffering critical injuries and in a coma. The other two were released by the following day.

The Verboort family released a statement through the hospital on Sunday evening.

"On Friday night, Austin was involved in a tragic accident resulting in a traumatic brain injury," the statement

read. "Austin had surgery to alleviate swelling in his brain and to repair a fractured femur. Austin is in a coma and listed in critical condition. Please continue to pray for healing for Austin, Trevor, and Chris – along with their families. We are incredibly thankful for the amazing outpouring of love and support – both spiritually and financially – we have received from our families, friends, the community and the caring staff at Salem Hospital."

The statement also asked for privacy and no media interviews.

Mark Glyzewski, Public Relations consultant with Salem Health, couldn't say on Tuesday afternoon whether Verboort was still in a coma or not.

"I can confirm Austin Verboort is in critical condition," he said.

On May 23, Paula Keller-Phelps started a GoFundMe website to raise \$10,000 to help the Verboort family. That goal was later raised to \$20,000 as the \$10,000 mark was reached in about two days. As of Wednesday morning, more than \$13,000 had been raised by more than 200 people.

The site noted Verboort suffered a broken leg in the accident, which doctors performed surgery on. An update from Monday noted Verboort started breathing on his own that morning and that his temperature and vital signs continued to improve.

Please see CRASH, Page A10

**Council
to look at
budget**
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KLL to make list of needs

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

This one might sound a little familiar.

Members of the Keizer Little League will be coming up with a list of improvements needed at Keizer Little League Park.

Brad Arnsmeier and Paul McGrath brought up the topic at this month's Keizer Parks and Recreation Advisory board meeting.

"We understand the fields we are playing on were once the crown jewel for our district," Arnsmeier said. "We had nice fields growing up. Once this facility was completed, it was fantastic. In the last seven or eight years we've been try-



KEIZERTIMES/Craig Murphy

City leaders look at Keizer Little League Park during a Parks Tour in 2013.

ing to build a community. In the process, the fields have been left behind a little. There is work to be done. There are

things we'd like to see improved."

Please see KLL, Page A6

Changed idea for next mural



KEIZERTIMES file/Craig Murphy

Jill Hagen (left) and Lore Christopher (center) talk with Don Lebold about a mural design in February. The design to put on the side of Town and Country Lanes has since been changed.

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

So what will the mural at Town and Country Lanes look like?

That's a good question.

As it was originally explained by members of the Keizer Public Arts Commission, the town's second public mural – scheduled to be done this fall – was to include a variety of items, including pictures of filberts, trees, irises, various fruits and more. A river would go through the center of the mural, with children doing handprints and professional artists helping out as well.

However, that was just an idea. After the March KPAC meeting, Kim Steen mentioned the north wall of the building where the mural is going – 140 feet wide – would be a great spot for a mural of the Iris Festival Parade.

Chair Lore Christopher championed that idea at the April KPAC meeting.

"We have two artists interested. Kim was thinking it would be perfect for a parade (mural)," Christopher said.

"We thought that was magic. That spot would indeed be perfect for a parade."

Jill Hagen, who originally met with Town and Country owner Don Lebold in February to get him on board with the idea, said a third artist is also interested.

"We set an April 30 (call to artists) deadline," Christopher said of when potential designs should be submitted. "They all need more time. I'm thinking we can even push it to June 15."

Such a motion was made.

Christopher noted a possible site for another mural down the road.

"We wanted to do a Keizer history mural," she said. "We're thinking the south end of the old Roth's building is the perfect place. You could see it on the way to Keizer Rapids Park."

If that indeed happens, it would open up the Town and Country mural for being focused on the parade, a mainstay in Keizer for decades.

Please see MURAL, Page A6

**Lady Celts
advance
at state**
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Three seniors sign...



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald

McNary seniors Kiana Villarreal, Megan Ulrey and Kimi Ito all signed letters of intent to play softball in college Friday, May 22. Villarreal will play for Kansas' Steward County Community College. Ulrey and Ito will play for George Fox University. For more on each of the girls, grab a copy of the upcoming editions of the Keizertimes.

**Sisters
are fourth
at state**
PAGE A8



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