

Keizertimes

SECTION A

OCTOBER 28, 2016

\$1.00

Homeless student numbers on the rise

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Keizer schools served 199 homeless students during the last academic year, students who were spending the night doubled up in homes with other families, in shelters, hotels and motels, cars and on the street.

McNary High School was third among the Salem-Keizer School District high schools with 52 homeless students. Claggett Creek Middle School was second among district middle schools with 42 homeless students. With 33 homeless students, Weddle Elementary School was tied for first (alongside Highland Elementary School) among Salem-Keizer elementary schools.

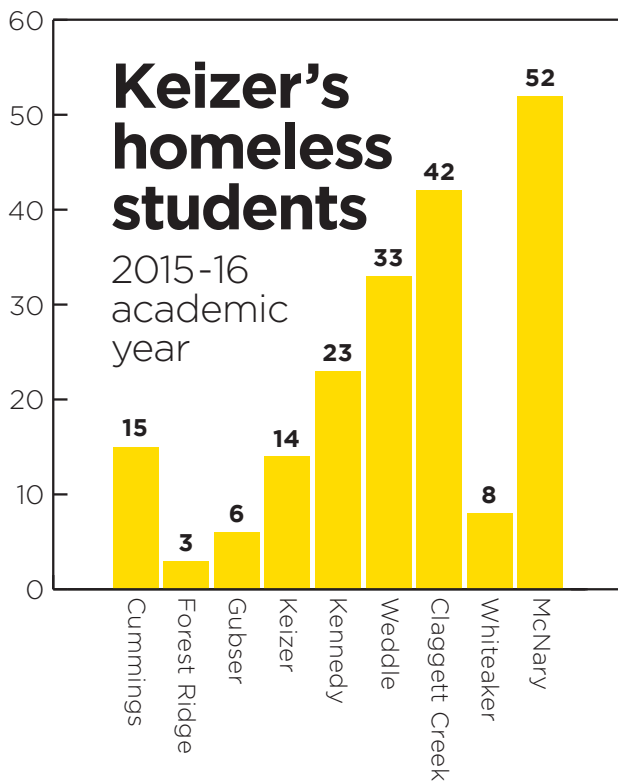
If those numbers are sobering, consider this: there are no dedicated shelters for homeless youth in Marion County.

"There is no place but the streets," said Tricia Ratliff, program director of Salem's HOME Youth and Resource Center. Ratliff spoke to members of the Mid-Willamette Homeless Initiative Task Force at its meeting Monday, Oct. 17, providing an overview of what is available and what is needed as far as local services.

HOME, which is administered by Community Action Agency, provides local homeless youth, ages 11 to 18, with a contact point for engaging support services and a safe place to spend time studying or simply among friends.

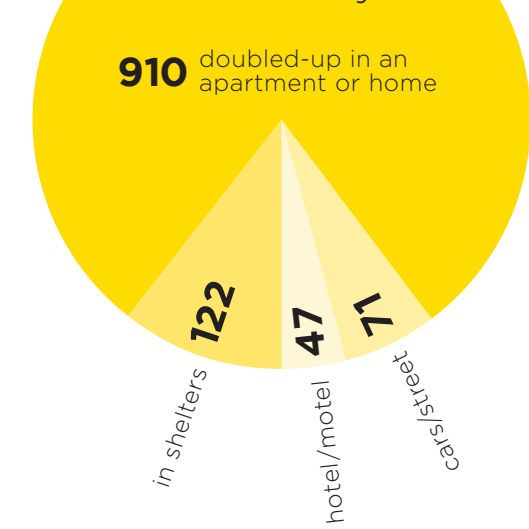
HOME administrators are seeking to expand the scope of what it offers, but Ratliff said the most glaring hole is the lack of a dedicated shelter.

"We're working to provide a continuum of care because supporting one step and not thinking about what's downstream is a disservice," she said.



Where are they sleeping?

2015-16 academic year



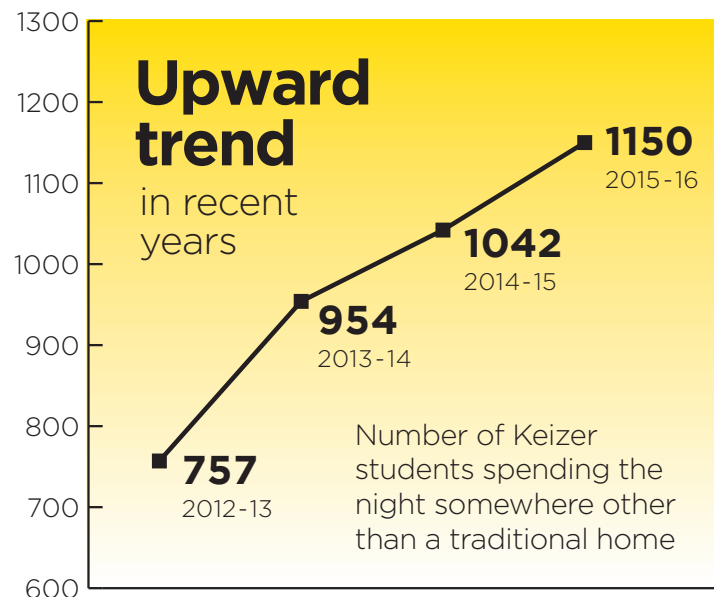
Intervention services and transitional housing options are somewhat more stable, but there are still a lot of difficult conversations being had at HOME on a daily basis.

"When we close at 7 p.m., we're working on what is the best of the worst options before our kids come back to check-in in the morning," Ratliff said.

HOME is hoping to either find or build a space for a shelter modeled after Linn-Benton County's Jackson Street Youth Services. The annual cost of running such a shelter, with up to a dozen beds, would be about \$500,000.

Jackson Street Program Director Kendrasue Phillips-Neal, said the Jackson

Please see STUDENTS, Page A9



Weird in the best way

Celtic play teases connections between Monet, space program

By DEREK WILEY
Of the Keizertimes

McKinley Friesen is feeling existential as the McNary drama department opens its 2016-17 season Nov. 2-5 with *Defying Gravity*, a play that examines the 1986 Space Shuttle Challenger explosion through the experiences of the teacher, who died in the crash, and her daughter.

Friesen, a senior at McNary, plays the daughter, Elizabeth. One line in the play that has stuck with her isn't even her own but comes from Claude Monet, an impressionist painter who died in 1926 but finds his way into the present day for a quest of his own.

"There's a line that Monet says that he's never seen the earth from any higher than a bell tower," Friesen said. "It's interesting how far we've come as a human race and how we're constantly reaching for more and how that evolves in different time periods. People in Monet's time were just trying to see higher than a bell tower but in this time period it's trying to get normal people into space."

The play weaves through time going back from life on the day of the crash to twenty



The cast of *Defying Gravity* acts out a bar scene during rehearsal. The play, performed by the McNary drama department, opens Wednesday, Nov. 2 at 7 p.m.

years after Elizabeth has lost her mother.

"It's interesting that she's (Elizabeth) both a child and adult, kind of mixing those and blurring the line between those," Friesen said. "It's been an interesting challenge."

Friesen is also enjoying the different movement pieces of the show.

"There's a part where I basically get lifted up like a cheerleader," she said. "It's been interesting to rehearse that. There's a scene where I'm a little kid lost in a grocery store but instead of grocery store aisles, all the other characters on stage make the aisles with their arms so they are moving as I move and I get even more lost."

The teacher is played by McNary junior Bella Fox, who grew fond of the part as she memorized a monologue for auditions.

"I really fell in love with it," Fox said. "I really got into it during auditions. It's a unique story but it's not very talked about."

Please see PLAY Page A9

Sleeping next to strangers

The view from one of Keizer's homeless

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Wiz wasn't sure where he would spend Monday night.

"I don't know. We can only go so far pushing a cart, and there are only so many places you can go without being bothered," he said.

Wiz was one of about a dozen people who set down stakes underneath the awning at the south entrance to the old Roth's building over the weekend. Late Monday morning officers from the Keizer Police Department visited the group and asked that they move on. The temporary camp had already sparked numerous mentions on social media sites asking what, if anything, would be done about the people there.

Wiz volunteered to talk about his experiences when I approached some of the straggling camp members about what brought them to this point.

Until earlier this year, Wiz lived just south of Keizer in a mobile home court where he paid around \$300 a month in rent. He made his way in the world traveling to art shows and fairs in the area selling handmade leather items and carved art. He played guitar, too, claims to have opened for Deep Purple in 1966.

"I was paying rent, but I wasn't ever home. I was always traveling to shows. I decided I would rent a couple

Please see STRANGERS, Page A11

Eclipse planning hits logistic hurdles

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Planning for an event centered around the total eclipse that will pass over Keizer in August 2017 is beginning to stumble and time is growing short for things to begin taking shape.

That was the message from Sherrie Gottfried, a member of the Keizer Festivals Advisory Board and the volunteer coordinator of "Keizer



Eclipse 2017. Totally!" Current plans call for the Keizer Parks Foundation to take over Keizer Rapids Park for the

weekend preceding the Aug. 21 celestial event and provide onsite camping and activities.

"It's not been easy so far,"

said Gottfried. "I went out with Allen Barker (a candidate for Keizer City Council Position #1) to do some measuring and we came up with some ideas, but a lot of them were shot down when we presented them to the Foundation Board."

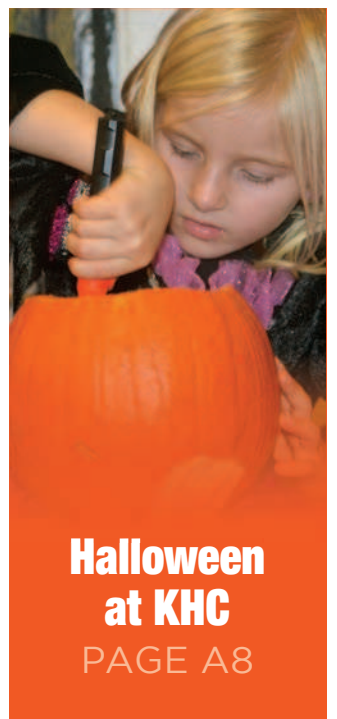
Gottfried said one of the primary concerns is parking. In addition to outstanding questions about whether the

Please see ECLIPSE, Page A11

VOTE 2016
Elections primer
PAGE A3



WMS Honor Society
PAGE A6



Halloween at KHC
PAGE A8



Claggett Creek vs. Whiteaker
PAGE A12



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