

Keizertimes

The Christopher Era



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Five topics to watch in 2015

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

What will change in Keizer in 2015?

One change will come early in the year – Monday evening, to be specific.

As the new year gets underway, here is a look at five topics we anticipate being hot topics over the next 12 months. After that is a look back at what we predicted a year ago would be the hot topics of 2014.

New mayor's mark?

For the first time since early January 2001, a person not named Lore Christopher will be Keizer's mayor.

Christopher's 14-year reign (see the special section on pages 8 and 9 for much more) officially comes to a close at the start of Monday's 7 p.m. Keizer City Council meeting, when eight-year councilor Cathy Clark is sworn in as the new mayor.

Christopher has clearly left her mark, both in projects completed during her time as well as her style of leadership. The question now is what kind of mark will Clark leave? Further, how much will she follow from Christopher's playbook and how much will she chart a different direction for Keizer?

Clark, who was profiled in last week's *Keizertimes*, has al-

ready made it clear she wants input from Keizerites, as evidenced by her pledge to keep her monthly Coffee with Cathy informal meetings going.

While Clark is graduating to the top seat, the council has more changes. Veteran councilor Jim Taylor (see story below) is leaving and being replaced by former councilor Brandon Smith. Joe Egli is also leaving the council, while newcomers Roland Herrera and Amy Ripp join Dennis Koho, Marlene Quinn and Kim Freeman.

Though new, the newest councilors are familiar faces. Smith previously served on the council for five years and was on the Parks Board the past two years. Herrera was on the Parks Board as well and was previously a city employee for 19 years, while Ripp has been involved in a number of community efforts such as KNOW (Keizer Network of Women) for years.

Big Toy/other projects at KRP

Late in 2014, the Big Toy got a new location at Keizer Rapids Park. Construction got delayed from last September to this June, which kicked off a process of updating the KRP master plan.

Funding still needs to be



From left: Clint Holland, Bill Lawyer, Lore Christopher and Mark Caillier discuss Big Toy placement during a break in a November 2014 Keizer City Council meeting. Caillier is general coordinator for the project, expected to be one of the hottest topics in Keizer in 2015.

secured for the community build play structure, but project organizers remain confident that will happen and that the 10,000 square foot structure will be built over a five-day span in June.

No set timeline has been established for other projects that were added to the KRP master plan late last year. Among those projects: an indoor sports facility, restrooms with flush toilets (a first for a Keizer park), softball fields and sand volleyball courts.

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Commission works on policies (Page 2)

The year in photos in Keizer (PG. 6)

The best of sports in 2014 (PG. 16)



Gone fishin': Taylor set to leave council



Outgoing Keizer City Councilor gets a kick out of the invitation to a going away party being held Jan. 17 in honor of himself, Lore Christopher and Joe Egli. Taylor, an avid fisherman, has served on the council for 12 years.

KEIZERTIMES/
Craig Murphy

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If you want to know why Jim Taylor has served on the Keizer City Council for 12 years – and the Parks Board for 10 years before that – you have to hit the rewind button.

Taylor, 67, has lived in Keizer his entire life. He was active in Troop 241 Boy Scouts as a child and played youth baseball. Taylor coached youth baseball and softball for years, also serving on the Keizer Little League board for more than a decade.

"My dad was always real active in the community," Taylor said. "Growing up, I saw a lot of people active in volunteering. All of the people I looked up to as adults, whether it be through the Keizer Merchants Association (precursor to the

current Keizer Chamber of Commerce), the Lions Club or Keizer Rotary, I looked at those people and they all volunteered in Keizer. So it was a natural progression."

Taylor is leaving the council at the Jan. 5 meeting, handing his seat over to Brandon Smith. Mayor Lore Christopher is also leaving (see related stories), as well as Joe Egli.

"The most important thing we have in our life is time," Taylor said of serving on Parks Board and council for a combined 22 years. "That's what I was giving up. It was very self-satisfying. I didn't do it for any other reason. I sure didn't do it for ego. If you're doing it for ego, you need to find something else to do. I was just volunteering my time."

With a grin, Taylor added, "A lot of it."

Based on his background, one might assume Taylor had problems putting friendships aside to serve the greater need. He said that wasn't the case.

"I had one occasion where one of my best friends disagreed with where the council was going on an issue," Taylor said. "I was with the majority of the council. This is a very good friend. I finally said, 'I would do anything for you, but I serve 35,000 people.' I couldn't in good conscience go against what was good for 35,000 people for a few people. It was very difficult. He still thinks I was wrong, but our friendship survived."

Please see TAYLOR, Page 12

Trimming down at city hall



A crew from R and R Tree Service trimmed two large trees in front of Keizer Civic Center on Dec. 22. For more photos, see page 3.

Old, new councilors talk long-term goals

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

New Keizer City Councilors don't officially begin their terms until next week.

But Brandon Smith, Amy Ripp and Roland Herrera are ready to hit the ground running.

The trio took part in a council work session last month to look at short-term and long-term council goals, and to look at possible goals they would want to establish. City Manager Chris Eppley ran most of the meeting.

After discussing short-term goals (covered in a recent *Keizertimes* story), Eppley turned to long-term goals set by councilors in March 2013.

One goal was to take necessary steps to liquidate Keizer



Keizer City Manager Chris Eppley (right) answers a question during a Keizer City Council work session last month.

Station Area A property that was foreclosed upon and refund the River Road Renaissance program. The Rawlins properties were foreclosed upon last year by the city.

"We're hoping beyond hope they are able to see what to do with the money."

ily. "If they are able to buy it back and do development, that would be fantastic. We would just as soon be out of the development business. Once we do sell the property, it would come back to you to see what to do with the money."

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Arrest happens at warp speed in Space Age robbery

Officers from two law enforcement agencies worked together to make an arrest on Dec. 26.

Around 8:45 p.m. last Friday, officers with the Keizer Police Department responded to a report of an armed robbery at the Space Age gas station at 4495 River Road N. Officers were told the male suspect confronted the cashier, displayed a handgun and demanded both money and cigarettes. The cashier obliged

and the suspect fled on foot.

KPD and Marion County Sheriff's Office personnel set a perimeter and a KPD K-9 was deployed to help the search.

About an hour after the initial call, a deputy with the MCSO contacted a male at Cummings Elementary

School at Delight Street and Cummings Lane, less than a half-mile away from the gas station.

The male, 28-year-old William M. Storkus of Beaverton, was arrested for robbery, menacing and a parole violation, with a total bail of \$45,000. All of the property and money taken in the robbery were recovered and returned to the gas station owner. The gun Storkus displayed was also recovered.



Storkus

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