



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
Members of the McNary High School Rotary Interact Club play an icebreaker game with Keizer Rotary mentor Chuck Fisher.

MHS Rotary out to do some good

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Dontae McNeill joined the McNary High School Rotary Interact Club at the urging of his former coach Isaac Parker. However, it wasn't long before he found his own reasons to stay.

"In the first meeting they showed us a video of a girl with a backpack filled with school supplies and then they show all the ways the things in it could help. It helped a lot of less fortunate people. I saw that and it was sad at first, but then I saw the smiles on the kids' faces and I was smiling. I thought about how neat it would be to make someone that happy," McNeill said. McNeill is the current president of the club and will likely fill the same role next year as the club got a late start.

The MHS Rotary Interact Club is an offshoot of Keizer Rotary. In the same way that Rotary seeks to bolster community projects and efforts, the Celtic students are looking to do the same around the school and through reaching out to the community at large.

"We're talking about setting up a volunteer project with some of the retirement homes and going in to talk with the residents there," McNeill said. "I thought getting to talk with new people might put a smile on their face."

Chuck Fisher, a member of the Keizer Rotary, is acting as a mentor to the students along-

side teachers Brad Lomax and Derick Handley. Keizer Rotary has been looking to start an Interact Club at McNary, but the project didn't find its legs until this year.

"They seem to be all in and very excited," Fisher said. "I like working with youth and it fulfills my own obligations as a board member of Keizer Rotary," Fisher said.

While the club is in its nascent stages, Fisher already has his eyes on a big, interesting future.

"I think the international connection is the one I want to bring to bear. Sometimes clubs from different countries will meet somewhere else and do a project together at a place none of them have been," he said.

Fisher said the club members have also expressed interest in reaching out to the local middle schools and creating additional chapters there since the minimum age for participation is only 12 years old.

Communications officer Lisa De La Cruz said she heard about the club through the McNary AVID program, which shepherds students through high school who are likely to be the first in their family to attend college.

"I have to do community service as part of graduating, but I want to do it, too," De La Cruz said. "It is a good group of people. We're collaborating and finding more things to do and ways to get involved. We're about giving back, making a difference and having fun."

Audio journal presents look into Celt senior's life

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

In January, I met with McNary High School senior David Henderson and handed him a small voice recorder. We'd never met before, but I wanted to know more about his life as a high school student.

"My first thought was it would be interesting, but I wasn't sure about putting my thoughts out there for other people," said David, 17.

His second thought was: "Why me?"

If he had asked me that question at the time, I would have told him I wanted the exactly type of person who would ask that question. In the end, he answered it for himself.

"I figured that maybe I was qualified to do it. I'm sure there are other more interesting people, but why not me?" Henderson said.

For about three weeks, David recorded some of his thoughts about school, life and faith, among other topics. The result is the first episode of McNary Radio Diaries. You can listen to it online at keizertimes.com.

The goal of McNary Radio Diaries is to give voice to students who might otherwise not see their name in our paper. The ones who may not speak up often in class, but still have a lot on their plates and even more on their minds.

Initially, David found it odd to walk his dogs while talking into a recorder, but he warmed



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
McNary High School senior David Henderson is the first subject on the McNary Radio Diaries, a new production of the Keizertimes.

McNary Radio Diaries

up to it surprisingly quickly.

"It felt nice to just talk and not worry about boring other people," David said.

As I listened to the raw audio of David's recording, I found myself cheering him on. Even as he sometimes struggled with words, I could feel his frustrations with things like standardized testing and the relief that came with little victories.

When I talked with David a few days ago, I asked him what he learned from being part of this project.

"That I can have opinions,

and they might be ones that people want to listen to. In school sometimes, it doesn't always feel like that but maybe (my opinions) actually do matter," he said. "Also, be open about how you feel about things, even if you feel like nobody else would care. That's the stuff you should be putting out there."

The grin that spread across my face hurt my cheeks. That was precisely the point.

(Final note: If you listen to McNary Radio Diaries online, I would love to know what you think. Please send critique or feedback to news@keizertimes.com. Lastly, I would like to thank Haris Khan, a junior at McNary, who is a Pro Logic ninja and helped me greatly with this project.)

Seniors: Got talent?

Seniors, polish up your talents. The Keizer Iris Festival's second annual Senior Talent Show will be held at Keizer/Salem Area Seniors in May and registration for entrants has begun.

The 2014 talent show featured a

variety of talents, including singing and dancing, by seniors from around the region. The Senior Talent Show will take place 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, May 16. To register contact Shelly Paddock at 503-871-4466 or via email shellyrocks2@gmail.com.

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