

Keizertimes

SECTION A

JULY 3, 2015

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Verboort's mom gives thanks



KEIZERTIMES/Craig Murphy
Kathy Verboort (far left) thanked Keizer Dutch Bros. Coffee employees Danny Custer, Courtney Brute and Hayley Cole for the \$20,900 raised on June 3 for her injured son, Austin.

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

Kathy Verboort continues to be blown away by the love being shown to her son.

Son Austin, 16, was critically injured in a two-vehicle accident May 22. Austin's Jeep Wrangler crumpled after being hit on the driver's side, leaving the McNary High School junior in a coma.

Immediately family, friends, businesses and strangers pitched in to help in anyway possible. A one-day fundraiser at Dutch Bros. Coffee in Keizer on June 3 raised \$20,900 while a gofundme.com account has raised nearly \$24,000 from almost 300 people.

Through it all, Austin has

continued to improve. He was moved to Randall's Children's Hospital at Legacy Emanuel in early June. An update from June 25 noted Austin had risen to a level 6 (out of 8) on the Rancho coma scale and family members heard his voice on June 23 for the first time since the accident.

On June 26, Kathy picked up a check from Dutch Bros. and thanked the employees for giving all proceeds from June 3 to the Verboort family. The family is friends with several employees there, plus employees from other locations came to help out that day.

An emotional Kathy read the note she sent to the Oregon-based company.

"On behalf of Austin Ver-

boort and our family we thank all the employees who sacrificed an entire day of wages and tips, knowing many of you have your own financial struggles, and (those who) traveled from out of town to help," she said.

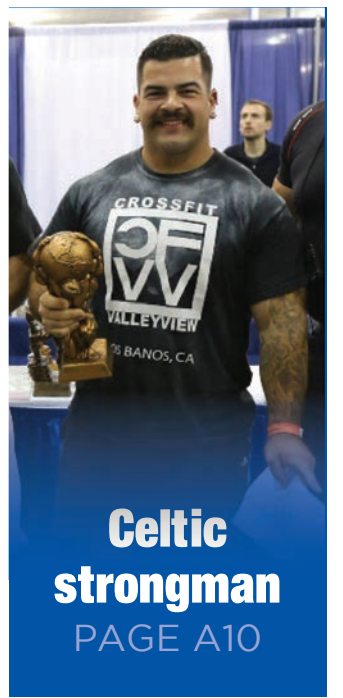
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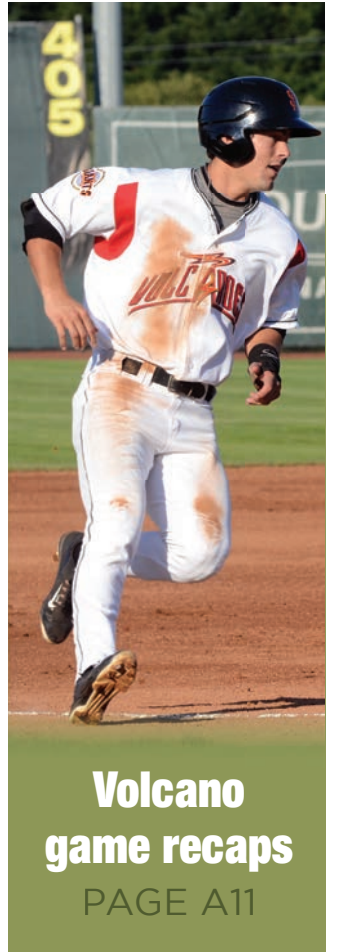
Happy 4th of July!



Dancing with special needs
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Celtic strongman
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Volcano game recaps
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Submitted
Jerry Bowerly, Paul Morgan and Ed Bietshek, three Keizer-area veterans, all ended up on the same Honor Flight in May that took them to visit the nation's war memorials.

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

This July 4, four U.S. Armed Forces veterans with Keizer ties are feeling especially patriotic.

The quartet – Jerry Bowerly (Navy), Alfred Bochler (Air Force), Paul Morgan (Navy) and Ed Bietshek (Air Force) – took part in an Honor Flight of Oregon allowing them to visit numerous memorials and museums in Washington D.C. in late May. The trips are designed specifically for World War II veterans to visit the national war monuments.

Bowerly, Morgan and Bietshek were interviewed about the experience two weeks ago.

"We were strangers in the beginning and we were all buddies by the time we came

back. The esprit de corps was almost immediate," said Morgan, 89.

For Bowerly, it was the WWII memorial itself that left the biggest impression.

"There are so many parts that represent so many things about the war. On the Wall of Gold, there's 448 stars and they all represent 100 men who died. It's stunning and it's all handmade," Bowerly, 95, said.

Each of the men performed very different roles in service of the country. Bietshek had wanted to join the Navy for much of his teenage years. But when he went to enlist, in early 1942, color blindness kept him out of the loop. He turned 18 in October that year and was drafted by Christmas. Still

intent on joining the Navy, Bietshek went to Ft. Lewis in Washington to complete basic training and a slate of exams, then headed south on a train expecting to end up with orders to report for a ship. He woke up in Fresno as a member of the Army Air Force.

"I had a buddy who had done some flying and I could understand how he had been pulled into the Air Force, but I went up to the old sergeant and asked him how in the hell I ended up there," Bietshek, 91, said. "I had gotten 100 on the code test and they had sent me to radio school."

Bietshek had never flown before in his life, but soon found himself handling

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1924 – 2015

'He will be missed'



KEIZERTIMES file/Eric A. Howald
Don Conat, shown in 2012, served in World War II and later had a big role in Make-A-Wish Oregon. He passed on June 20.

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

He lived quite the life, that Don Conat.

Keizer's Conat served in the U.S. Navy during World War II.

Later, he served as a Major League Baseball umpire, most notably kicking Chicago Cubs manager Lou Pinella out of a game once, earning a mention in *Sports Illustrated*.

On top of that, he was a key volunteer for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Conat passed away on June 20 at the age of 92. His funeral was held June 26 at Faith Lu-

theran Church. In accordance with Conat's will, pall bearers included Keizer police chief John Teague and fire chief Jeff Cowan. A reception followed at McNary Estates Golf Club.

"Don was one of the finest, if not the finest, guy I met in Keizer," said longtime friend and financial advisor Ted Anagnos. "He's at the top of the list. He never wanted to take credit for anything. He was involved with a lot of good things."

Anagnos met Conat shortly after moving to town more

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Gray and blue battle anew

It's the silver anniversary of the Civil War.

The Civil War reenactments, that is.

This 4th of July weekend once again means the Northwest Civil War Council's (NCWC) reenactment at Willamette Mission State Park, just north of Keizer. The holiday falls perfectly this year, as the three-day event starts Friday, July 3 and concludes on Sunday, July 5.

Approximately 1,000 reenactors are expected to be on hand for the 25th anniversary event, demonstrating the living and fighting conditions from the early 1860s. Admission is \$8 for adults, \$5 for seniors 55+ and for students, while children under the age of 6 are admitted for free. The admission prices are in addition to the \$5 day-use park fee.

Events begin at 9 a.m. each day and conclude at 6 p.m.



KEIZERTIMES file/Dee Moore
A cannon is fired during last year's Civil War reenactment.

Each day starts with battalion dress parades, with a Civil War-era church service on Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

Each day features a cavalry drill at 10:30 a.m. Morning battles take place at 11 each morning, followed by an artillery demonstration at noon. Various demonstrations and educational talks take place after that, including a talk about flags of the Civil War on Friday and Saturday.

One of the annual high-lights takes place Saturday at 1 p.m. as Abraham Lincoln, once again portrayed by Stephen Holgate, gives a presidential press conference. Holgate has been referred to as the top Lincoln impersonator in the country.

Afternoon battles take place each day at 3 p.m. For a complete weekend schedule, visit <http://nwcwc.org/willamette.html>.

It's getting there...

KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
Hayden Sader, Morgan Thatcher, Habacuc Reyes and Blake Norton (front to back) work on the turf field project at McNary High School this week.

We see what's on the inside
So you get back in the game

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