

KeizerCommunity

KEIZERTIMES.COM

Two veterans leaving Keizer Police posts

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

Just like that, the Keizer Police Department has lost two employees with a combined 52 years of experience.

Rita Powers, the Police Support supervisor, retired from the KPD Aug. 7 after exactly 26 years with the department. John Troncoso, a longtime detective and head of the Criminal Investigations Division, is leaving the department today, Aug. 14. His official retirement date is Sept. 1, but he already had scheduled vacation for the rest of this month.



J. Troncoso



R. Powers

Troncoso was among nine employees joining the KPD on Oct. 1, 1989, meaning he joined shortly after Powers.

Police chief John Teague, who joined the KPD the same day as Troncoso and deputy chief Jeff Kuhns, noted the impact will be felt now and especially down the road.

"Anytime you lose a good employee with 25 years of institutional knowledge, that's a hard thing to fill," Teague said. "Once they are gone, then you realize how many gaps they filled in."

Powers figured her anniversary date would be a good time to step aside.

"I just decided it was time," she said on Tuesday. "I'm enjoying being home for a while and having my own schedule. It was 26 years to the day. I thought about

doing it a year ago, then decided to hang on a little longer. I've been contemplating it since about February. I just wanted to take a break. Being at a job for 26 years is a long time. People don't usually hang on to a job that long anymore. I enjoyed it. It was something different every day."

Powers, who has four granddaughters, has a big upcoming event to keep her busy.

"I have a grandson on the way, due at Christmas," she said. "I'll help my daughter with him and maybe do some local traveling."

Powers enjoyed her time at the KPD.

"I had a really good career," she said. "I started just before John and Jeff started. It's been fun watching some of these guys grow older, to watch how their lives have evolved, to see their kids be born and grow. That's the part I'll miss the most. It's really been a family. Some of these guys have started very green. A lot of our officers started as reserves, so I've seen them grow to become excellent officers."

Teague had high praise for Powers.

"Rita is solid as a rock," he said. "She's one of those invaluable employees. I call them basement people. They are the people that are foundational to the agency. They don't gain a lot of headlines in part because their work doesn't gather headlines. Their personality is they show up, they do great work, they don't cause problems. That's the type of people organizations love to have."

For Troncoso, retirement has been a long time in coming.

"I've been thinking about it for four years," he said. "As the time came, it was a little difficult to do. I wasn't set on

it. I want to make some lifestyle changes."

One of Troncoso's main assets over the years was his ability to speak fluent Spanish, which surprised people who judged him by his looks.

"It was definitely a valuable skill to have," Troncoso said. "There weren't many detectives in the area fluent in Spanish. People would volunteer things (in Spanish) in front of me, not knowing I understood. But I really used it more to help Hispanics. I worked a lot with the Hispanic community. It's been beneficial for me and it's been beneficial for the department since I can function in that world."

Because of his bilingual ability, Troncoso has been helping other law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney's office for much of his career. One of the few times he couldn't do much came with the Harkey murder in 2004.

"I finally got a taste of what it's like to not be bilingual with that case," Troncoso said. "I tried to talk to people but they spoke Russian, not a word of English. I just came up empty. I realized what most of my non-Spanish speaking peers had experienced over the years. I was at a dead end."

Troncoso enjoyed his time at the KPD.

"It has been fulfilling," he said. "Everyone who gets into this profession knows it's public service. Most people do want to make a difference and to help. It has been nice to be able to do that."

Teague noted Troncoso's retirement will be felt far outside the KPD.

"Losing John is a regional loss," Teague said. "That guy's value extends from this department to the profession locally. Compounded with being an exceptionally motivated investigator, he's also a Spanish speaker. His value to other agencies and the DA's office, they will sing his praises. There are not many police officers as widely respected as he is."

Full stomachs, warm hearts



KEIZERTIMES/Lyndon A. Zaitz

Delaney Madison Grill and owner Jim Marshall marked its one-year anniversary earlier this week by offering complimentary dinners to clients and residents of Simonka Place (pictured), Hope Station and the Union Gospel Mission. A total of 78 diners chose from a select menu in the dining room overlooking Staats Lake. For some it was the first nice meal at a sit-down restaurant in years.

KCFB seeking school supplies

The Keizer Community Food Bank will once again be giving away school supply packets this year.

Donations can be brought to the food barrel cart in the Fellowship Hall at Fort Knox Presbyterian Church or to Faith Lutheran Church be-

fore 11 a.m. on Thursdays.

Items needed: backpacks, 16- and 24-count Crayola crayons, glue sticks and white glue, Fiskars scissors, No. 2 pencils, pens, pink pearl erasers, pencil cases, three-ring notebooks, wide lined notebook paper, tissues,

eight-count broad tip markers, 12-count colored pencils and rulers with both standard and metric measurements.

About 100 packets are given away each year. Any leftover items will be given to a Keizer elementary school.

Museum spotlights agriculture memories

The Keizer Heritage Museum is celebrating farming and agriculture in the region with a new display of farming implements and some history of agriculture in the Keizer area.

The exhibit will run to the end of September.

The exhibit includes information and many photographs. The museum is still seeking items for the display including dried hops and green hop vines.

The Keizer Heritage Museum is open 2-4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays. The museum is located on the bottom floor of the Keizer Heritage Center at 980 Chemawa Rd. N.E.

Eating disorder awareness event scheduled Aug. 22

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The mid-Willamette Valley's first counseling center dedicated to assisting those battling eating disorders is now open in Keizer.

The Oasis Center for Counseling and Wellness opened its doors this week at 4575 River Road N., but is planning an awareness event Saturday, Aug. 22, in conjunction with Project Heal. Project Heal provides scholarships and financial support programs for people with eating disorders who are unable to afford treatment.

"Project Heal will be doing a raffle, offering educational materials and talking with visitors. About seven members of McNary (High School's) string orchestra will be there to play music and several other community partners are planning to attend," said Robin

Travis, owner and clinical director of The Oasis Center.

Food, merchandise, interactive booths, educational materials and a tour of the counseling are planned during the open house which runs from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Keizer Florist is providing flowers for attendees.

Travis has been treating eating disorders since 2001 and recently branched off from her position as a counselor with New Horizons to start Oasis.

"Oasis was created because the Willamette Valley does not have any specialists that treat eating disorders," Travis said.

Travis offers one-on-one and group therapy sessions and currently has openings for new clients. Oasis does accept Oregon Health Plan users. Travis can provide referrals to other area practitioners when her client list is full.

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