

KeizerCommunity

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New GM of McNary Estates has deep roots in Keizer

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

The McCowans couldn't stay away from Keizer.

Alan McCowan was at the Keizer Police Department for 25 years and retired in the spring of 2013 as a lieutenant. He and wife Teri moved to the Bend area, where McCowan worked in property management on a part-time basis.

But he wasn't ready to slow down yet, plus there were family considerations.

"We have a third grandchild coming," McCowan said. "We wanted to be closer to family. Everyone was still over here and we were over there. On Christmas Eve, we got into a head-on collision. We had minor injuries, but it totaled the car. On oncoming car lost control and ripped my car up."

While there were no serious injuries, the accident led to some thinking. "It was minor injuries, but we realized going back and forth was not practical," McCowan said. "So we had a house built off of Windsor Island Road and came back in March."

McCowan took a job with Keizer Outdoor Power Equipment and moved back to Keizer. In late August he started work as general manager of the McNary Estates Homeowners Association. The position became full-time on Sept. 9.

"This is a management position where part of duties are to enforce rules of the HOA," McCowan said. "There is also

Former Keizer Police officer Alan McCowan was recently hired as the new general manager of the McNary Estates Homeowners Association. KEIZERTIMES/Craig Murphy



administration work to make sure documents and paperwork are done correctly."

McCowan said. "I don't really miss it. I don't miss police work. There are times it would be fun to do that, but I put in a good amount of time. I have other things that are better for me know. Would I go back into it? No, and most retired cops would tell you that. I had an opportunity to do something different. It was my time to go."

McCowan was tabbed to become the full-time manager in Redmond, but the company didn't grow as anticipated and he came to a realization. "It was time to come back," he said. Besides, his brother called it. "When I left (in 2013), my brother told me, 'I'll see you in two years,'" McCowan said with a chuckle. "He was almost exactly right. I like being here, being close to family and friends. I always liked Keizer."

McCowan's brother Matt and his wife Traci are McNary Estates residents, with Traci serving on the HOA Board.

"Just like any job, you need to learn how they do things," he said. "At the KPD I managed the personnel of the patrol division. The management part is the same, but it's a different topic. I took what I learned (at KPD) in dealing with people and responding to issues. The same techniques can still be used."

An avid golfer who has been a marshall for the McNary Golf Club in the past, McCowan's family still has deep roots in law enforcement. Don't expect him to go back in, however.

"The circuit board blew up and the parts for it are not made anymore," he said. "We had to get a new system. Now the gate is functional, but we're having to swap out 600 new remotes. I'm meeting with people, meet with other neighbors, keep up on street issues and meet with new residents if they have questions."

In the coming months, McCowan will be getting an office in the basement of the McNary Estates Restaurant.

The job may be a far cry from being a cop, but McCowan has found some similarities.

"Almost the whole trip up these awful, deathly, white-necked ravens are following you. They don't go to the summit, but they follow and scavenge the food from hikers," Turner said.

About two days from the summit, Turner realized that playing tuba at such a high altitude might come with unexpected complications.

"On the third night I woke up to use the bathroom. I got out and looked around and the mist had frozen. Everything was like ice and I started to realize this might be an issue. It

was a beautiful sight, though, and it would crunch underfoot," Turner said.

Sure enough, when the Turners reached the base camp, the valves on the tuba had frozen. Blowing hot air through the instrument loosened them enough to play and Turner played *Somebody Over the Rainbow*. He saved the fight song for the peak.

Turner and his father spent the rest of their trip on safari and relaxing in Zanzibar. "We literally ended up in the middle of a zebra migration. We were parked in the middle of a herd with thousands of zebras running all around the car," Turner said.

Turner, who has traveled extensively, said the experiences leave him refreshed every time. "It kind of puts everything in perspective when you see people who are growing food and hunting to survive. It makes me very grateful to live where I do and work with the kids I work with," he said.

For video of Turner playing at the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro, visit www.keizertimes.com.

WMS teacher hits high notes atop Kilimanjaro

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Whiteaker Middle School band teacher Sean Turner is never far from his tuba or, at the very least, a tuba mouthpiece. Even when he's on top of Africa's highest peak.

While being interviewed, Turner produces a plastic mouthpiece from his pocket to demonstrate the "buzzing" that he uses to keep in practice when he's traveling.

"It comes with me just about everywhere," Turner said. However, when Turner was planning a trip to Africa with his father, John, to summit Mt. Kilimanjaro, he landed on an idea of a grander scale.

"The trip came together and then I heard that one of my former college professors had acquired a travel tuba," Turner said. "I thought wouldn't it be cool to actually play tuba at the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro. Then I thought to contact the Guinness Book of World records to see if anyone had done anything like that before. It turned out they hadn't."

While a typical tuba weighs about 20 pounds, the travel tuba weighed less than 10. But, permission to use the instrument came with a caveat: Turner would have to play *Mighty Oregon*, the University of Oregon fight song, at the summit and capture it on video.

He agreed to the terms and took off for his monthlong vacation last summer.

"When you go through security, everyone has to see the tuba because they think you're using it to smuggle drugs. At one airport, one of the security officers offered me the equivalent of about \$100 for the instrument itself. It costs a couple of thousand, but she was insistent," Turner said.

It's a seven-day hike from the base of Mt. Kilimanjaro to its summit and that proved to be just as interesting as reaching



Submitted Sean Turner (right) with his father, John, atop Mt. Kilimanjaro. The pair trekked to the summit where Turner played the UO fight song on tuba.

the destination.

"In the first day, you're in the jungle and you're passing by elephant dung and seeing monkeys. You're dressed for warm weather and you've got seven layers of clothing in your backpack for the summit," Turner said.

In the first four days of the hike, Turner and his father passed through three different biomes — jungle, low bush and high desert — before spending the final three days hiking through the rocks that comprise the highest points.

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