

DRUGS: '...society must educate our youth about the dangers...'

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"If we want to reduce crime, we need to reduce the demand for illicit drugs," he added. "Enforcement and incarceration alone will not solve the problem. Continuing drug court programs, expanding treatment facilities and education by everyone in society certainly seems like the logical approach."

Nelson and fellow task force members took down a number of drug organizations over the years. Recently Nelson and Garrett Roelof from the Salem Police Department were honored for their work in a number of arrests being made in relation to the April 2012 death of Keizer's Laurin Putnam.

But Nelson found over the years taking out an organization was akin to simply taking out the top part of a weed in the yard: if you don't get rid of the roots, the weed will simply grow back.

Applied to law enforcement, Nelson believes the

answers lies in education and treatment.

"We need to consider the idea of expanding and making available detoxification and treatment centers," Nelson said. "Most importantly society must educate our youth about the dangers of drug abuse and closely guide them down a clean and sober roadway."

Even with that, Nelson knows treatment and detox programs aren't going to be 100 percent successful. For example, Nelson talked with Crist often following a July 2013 arrest. After the arrest, Crist entered a detox center and then transitioned to a long-term rehab center and called Nelson about once a month.

"He showed interest when he got out of the treatment center about talking to kids about the dangers of drug use, particularly heroin, and the devastation it hails on individuals and families," Nelson said.

Nelson felt confident Crist

had turned his life around and considers the interactions successful – a combination of enforcement, education and treatment.

"The addiction leads ordinary good citizens into a lifestyle of crime to support their expensive habit."

— Det. Chris Nelson

"Brandon fought hard against the dark and evil addiction to heroin. He gave himself a glimpse of freedom and you could hear energy and excitement in his voice

when he was drug-free. Unfortunately, he relapsed after treatment and the addiction to heroin ended his life," Nelson said of the addiction.

Despite that, Nelson feels taking a few minutes after a drug arrest to talk about recovery options is the right call.

"Every (interaction) with someone suffering from addiction can be a success," he said. "It's an opportunity in law enforcement to remind individuals who are suffering from addiction that there is hope. Taking the time to educate and encourage treatment options is time well-spent."

Nelson noted the need for drugs like heroin often leads to a destructive cycle.

"Many of the suspects we interact with in law enforcement have a drug dependency, which is a gateway to property related-crimes, low-level drug dealing and sex trafficking," he said. "The addiction leads ordinarily good citizens into a lifestyle of crime to support their expensive habit."



The Keizer Fire District is looking to replace equipment, including the ambulance shown on the right.

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Those services were cut in 2009 after previous ballot measures to bring in more funding were denied by voters.

If the ballot measure passes, reserves would be used to get Saturday service started next summer, with extended weeknight and Sunday service starting in the summer of 2017. Student bus passes would start next fall with the start of the new school year.

Proponents have set up a website at www.yesforcherrriots.com, while opponents have established the www.stopemployertax.com website.

In contrast to the hotly debated payroll tax, the equipment bond levy for the Keizer Fire District has been flying

quietly under the radar. Ballot Measure 24-389 would collect \$6.2 million over a 20-year period, at a rate of about 14 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value. That means a \$28 annual tab for a \$200,000 home.

The equipment bond would take the place of a measure being paid off in February to pay for the Keizer Fire Station on Chemawa Road. The bond would focus on buying new equipment. Most urgently, that would include new ambulances, including one purchased in 2008 that fire chief Jeff Cowan has acknowledged as being a lemon.

Ballots have to be submitted by 8 p.m. on Nov. 3.

In Keizer, drop off locations are the box in the parking lot at Keizer Civic Center (930 Chemawa Road NE) and U.S. Bank, located at 5110 River Road N.

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