

Keizertimes

SECTION A

NOVEMBER 6, 2015

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Transit tax fails; KFD levy OK'd

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

Opponents and proponents alike agree Tuesday's rejection of the proposed payroll tax to pay for increased local transit service wasn't a vote against transit.

Rather, it was a vote against that particular funding mechanism.

Area voters rejected the Salem-Keizer Transit District's Measure 24-388 on Tuesday, which called for a 0.21 percent payroll tax to bring in approximately \$5 million in new funding.

Updated results released late Tuesday night by the

Marion County Clerk's Office showed the measure failing, with 19,790 voters (58.18 percent) against and 14,227 voters (41.82 percent) for. The results showed 60 of 65 precincts counted, with a voter turnout of 35.67 percent.

The Keizer Fire District's \$6.2 million equipment bond, Measure 24-389, was more successful. The measure was approved by 4,365 voters (64.17 percent) while 2,437 voters (35.83 percent) were against it. The results showed 11 of 12 precincts counted, with a 39.23 percent voter turnout.

The payroll tax would have

paid for the return of week-end transit service, extended weeknight service and free bus passes for local middle school and high school students. Those services were victims of budget cuts in 2009.

There was plenty of opposition to the proposed transit tax. Both the Keizer and Salem Area Chambers of Commerce vigorously fought against the measure, claiming it was not a fair burden on local businesses. The opposition included videos and sign-waving campaigns.

But there was common consensus after the results came out about the message.



KEIZERTIMES/Craig Murphy
Bob Schafer drops off his ballot at the ballot drop box in front of Keizer Civic Center Tuesday, Nov. 3.

Allan Pollock, general manager for Cherriots, noted there was agreement from both

sides of the campaign expanded transit service is needed. Please see VOTE, Page A10

MHS grad wins Met Opera contest



Submitted
Daniel Ross (right) with co-winner Felicia Moore after the Oregon District competition of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Patience is a virtue for most, but absolutely essential for an opera singer. Just ask McNary High School grad Daniel Ross.

"I'm getting old enough that it is about time to start trying the bigger competitions. It seemed like the right time so I went for it," said Ross, one of two Oregon District winners in the annual Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

The contest is the most prestigious opera competition in the country and the final winner receives a job with the New York Metropolitan Opera for its upcoming season. He'll compete in the regional qualifier, slated Jan. 10, in Seattle. The finals will be held next March.

Ross, a 27-year-old tenor, has been pursuing a career in opera since his high school days.

"I had some natural talent and teachers who were able to direct me toward opera," Ross said. "I just happen to have a particular talent and a rare

voice type. Very few people are capable of making the sounds that I make and, even on stage with a symphony, my voice is trumpet-like and will still rise above the instruments."

After graduating from McNary, Ross earned a bachelor's degree in music and went on to graduate studies at the University of Cincinnati. While there, he was a featured singer in the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's performance of George Frideric Handel's *Messiah*.

He moved back to Oregon in 2013 and performs regularly at Salem First Presbyterian Church, but larger roles have been elusive.

"With the economic crash, it's taken its toll on the arts and its far well from over. At least 14 opera companies I know of have gone bankrupt this year, and that's slowed from previous years," Ross said. "Suffice it to say it's difficult to find work as a professional musician. The competition was a way to put myself out there and network with new people."

Please see OPERA, Page A11

'They won't change on their own'

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

Sometimes it starts with the prescription painkiller.

Sometimes it is youth wanting to experiment.

Sometimes it is curiosity about the old bottle sitting in the medical cabinet.

Sgt. Bob Trump and Officer James Young with the Keizer Police Department's Community Response Unit (CRU) know there are various ways people can get addicted to heroin.

They also know it often doesn't end well.

According to stats provided by Cara Steele at the KPD, the most common drug-related charge in Keizer, by a wide margin, continues to be unlawful possession of methamphetamine. Last year, there were 69 charges in that category. A distant second was possession of less than one ounce of marijuana, with 35 charges. Unlawful possession of heroin was in third, with 15 charges last year.

Numbers for meth have risen this year, as have the numbers for heroin.

But Trump and Young both emphasize the stats don't show the true number of heroin offenses or the true impact of damage caused by the highly addictive drug in this area. *Chasing Dark* is a continuing *Keizertimes* series looking at such an impact.

"It's hard to see the increase with stats," Young said. "You can see a person clearly on meth or heroin, but there are no stats to back it up."

For example, consider how many people get addicted to opiates like heroin after coming off prescribed painkillers.

"We see it quite a bit," Trump said. "Probably way more than it shows up in a specific statistic. Heroin is readily available."

Young said that is a common start to the addiction,



Chasing Dark is an ongoing series looking at heroin abuse in Keizer. Be sure to see another story on page A2 and also pick up next week's paper for the next installment.

though not the only one.

"A lot of times it is an injury," he said. "When people can't get more (painkillers) from the doctor but they are hooked on the opiate, they turn to street level heroin. A lot of times it will be after an injury or just experimenting. Sometimes it is a familial connection. Sometimes you'll see the drug use going on in your house growing up, so you wind up using it yourself."

Trump said the addiction to opiates at first seems harmless.

"It often comes from the doctor, so it's seen as being safe," Trump said. "Then (the prescription) dries up, but by now you are addicted."

Young said even leaving old bottles in plain sight can inadvertently start the addiction.

"Even something like a parent or a brother blowing a knee out, they got a prescription for a narcotic," Young said. "That bottle sits in the medical cabinet or cupboard. In the cabinet you have various drug bottles. The 14-year-old in the home hears friends

talking about a drug and realizes those are the things in the cabinet, so all the pill bottles start disappearing."

The Keizer Police Department has a drug turn-in receptacle in the police department's lobby that Young suggested people utilize for old prescriptions.

Young said the heroin seen locally is mostly black tar heroin being imported from Mexico. He holds up a standard size water bottle to describe quantities.

"It can be transported undetected," he said. "Heroin in a package the size of a water bottle can be worth tens of thousands in value. Once it gets into the community, the heroin is broken up and dispersed."

For years, it's been said areas like Keizer are susceptible to drugs due to easy Interstate 5 access. Yes and no, according to Young.

"It is a nationwide thing," Young said. "We're on the I-5 corridor, one of the main drug trafficking areas for the whole Please see HEROIN, Page A3

Holland looking for help for concert

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

Despite a setback Monday evening, Clint Holland is still moving forward with plans for a Dec. 13 Christmas concert at Keizer Civic Center.

His request to the Keizer City Council for a waiver in use fees for city hall was denied by a 6-1 vote on Monday, so his request now is for businesses to help him offset the costs.

"I'm still going to try and do it," Holland said following Monday's vote. "I'm trying to make it an annual event and want it to stay in Keizer." Holland had brought up the idea during the Oct. 19 coun-

cil meeting. While there was support expressed for the idea, there were concerns at the time about the city being asked to waive some fees.

Those concerns were expressed again this week, starting when city manager Chris Eppley introduced the topic. Holland submitted a report with estimated income and expenses, with expenses estimated at \$12,970 and income estimated at \$9,350 including 300 tickets at \$30 each. The expenses included city fees of \$2,575; Eppley said the city fees would be \$3,325 including a \$1,500 refundable deposit.

Please see HOLLAND, Page A11

Slime him!

KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
The top earners in the Kennedy Elementary School Jog-A-Thon slime their principal, Jesse Leonard, after soaring past their fundraising goal of \$8,500. The students raised more than \$10,000 that will be used for field trips and classroom technology.

Halloween power outage
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Big Toy grant help
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KHT 2016 auditions
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CERTIFIED LOCAL • OREGON GROWN ACTORS • HOME

KEIZER homegrown THEATRE

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Celts to face champs in FB
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