

Keizertimes

SECTION A

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Jeff and Hollie Crist hold a picture of their son Brandon, who died of a heroin overdose in late September. KEIZERTIMES/Craig Murphy



See next week's issue for the next installment in this series.

MEET BRANDON CRIST (1993-2015)

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

Brandon Crist's parents were going to kick him out of the house.

The 22-year-old had once again been caught doing drugs. Though they loved him dearly, Jeff and Hollie Crist couldn't let him live under their roof anymore.

They never had the chance to kick him out.

Two days after Brandon didn't show up at home, Hollie's motherly instincts proved to be sadly correct when the officer knocked on the door.

Brandon had been found dead in his van after a heroin overdose.

The death has been jarring to many who knew Brandon, some of whom thought he had finally kicked the drug habit that had plagued him for so long. Brandon's death was a key factor behind the *Chasing Dark* series of stories in the

Keizertimes.

The death has been most jarring to Brandon's parents.

"Both Jeff and I were so devastated that he was all by himself for two-and-a-half days in his van," Hollie said last week. "Then I wanted to say goodbye and kiss him one last time and was told at the funeral home they suggested I not see him. So we never got to say goodbye."

In Brandon's last year, he had moved back home to Keizer. His parents thought he was clean, only to find out he wasn't. Instead of using suboxone, an opiate blocker that is designed to help

block the craving for heroin, Brandon was selling suboxone pills to pay for heroin.

As far as Jeff was concerned, when he came from work Monday, Sept. 28, he was kicking his son out of the home.

"I just thought he would come back and I would kick him out. I was done. I didn't want to see him again."

"I'd had enough," Jeff said. "I was done. Putting me through it, that's fine. But his mom is emotional, with all the ups and downs this puts her through. It wasn't fair to her. Considering all the things we'd done in the last eight months, we spent a lot of money, fixing cars, buying stuff."

When Hollie got home on

Sept. 28, she noticed Brandon had left his Facebook page open on a laptop in the house.

"I saw his private messages," Hollie said. "I called his last phone numbers he'd called. Anyone he contacted, I texted them. He was selling suboxone. I was frantic. I put a Facebook post out to his friends about him being missing. He didn't want us to see anything. He just randomly left the computer open that day. I felt this was a God thing, because I was able to reach out to his friends."

Hollie knew something was wrong at that point.

"When I looked out Tuesday, his van wasn't there," she said. "He would always call or text if he didn't come home. I called all the hospitals, jails, rehab centers. I knew. I started worrying Tuesday morning when he didn't come home."

Jeff wasn't as concerned initially.

"I just thought he would

come back and I would kick him out," he said. "I was done. I didn't want to see him again."

Jeff then turned to Hollie.

"You said, 'You know he's not coming home,'" Jeff said.

Hollie looked at her husband and nodded.

"You said, 'He is too,'" she said. "That Wednesday at about 8:45 p.m. we got the knock we'd feared for five years."

It was a Keizer Police Department officer knocking on the door.

"He said, 'Is Hollie here?'" Jeff recalled. "I said yes. Then I said, 'So you found him?' He wouldn't say until he could talk to Hollie."

When Hollie came to the door, the officer explained Brandon's body had been found in his van in Salem.

As with other addicts, there were two Brandons.

"He's outgoing," Hollie said

Please see CRIST, Page A9



Finance director retiring
PAGE A2

Tour of Covanta plant
PAGE A3



Doc talks mental health
PAGE A5



MHS athletes sign letters
PAGE A12



MHS athletes sign letters
PAGE A12



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Beauty and the Cutie



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howard
Belle (Madi Zuro) poses for a photo with Jolene Hook at the Princess Tea Party held before the Saturday matinee of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* at McNary High School. For more photos, see page A10.

Keizerites push for WinCo

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

Ever since word came out during the summer about the Keizer Haggen closing, the question has been what grocery store chain could come to town?

Speculation and interest ramped up even more when the Haggen – formerly an Albertsons – closed in late September.

With Safeway the only grocery store in Keizer, the most common name being sought is WinCo Foods, though a company spokesperson told the *Keizertimes* this week there are no current plans.

Shortly after the Haggen closed, Keizer resident Joshua Miller started a "Keizer Wants WinCo" page on Facebook, a group with 55 members as of Tuesday afternoon.

"With Keizer down to one grocery store, just Safeway, I'd like to think it's good to have competition," Miller told the *Keizertimes* on Tuesday. "The lines at Safeway are really long, and things cost more than I want to pay."

Miller figured it would be good to start a Facebook page and has asked those interested in getting a WinCo here to



contact the Idaho-based company via their website.

One of the big questions regarding a WinCo – or any grocery chain, for that matter – coming to Keizer has been location. In addition to the Haggen building – roughly 40,000 square feet – at River Road and Lockhaven Drive, there is also the former Roth's building at River and Chema-wa Roads. That 20,000 square foot building has been vacant since Roth's left in the spring of 2012.

Another option would be building a new store in Keizer Station Area C, where infrastructure is currently being put into place for a new apartment complex and a senior living facility on an expanded McLeod Lane. That's the area

where a highly controversial Walmart was proposed a few years ago.

Miller's main push is for a new grocery store in Keizer, wherever it might be.

"It doesn't matter to me too much," he said. "Those (River Road) locations are great, but someone on the page posted that the size of those buildings aren't within WinCo parameters. I'm hoping it's not true. Keizer Station would be fine, too. Keizer just needs more competition for grocery stores and I like WinCo."

There have also been a number of posts on the topic lately on Nextdoor, a social media platform used in several Keizer neighborhoods.

Please see WINCO, Page A13

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