

GATE,

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April 4 Keizer City Council meeting.

"The main issue is parking," Anderson said. "Another issue is (parents) are dropping off all of the students. At 6:55 a.m. the noise starts. Trash gets spilled out of vehicles. On top of

that, speeders go up and down Newberg Drive."

Anderson also is bitter about a gate on the opposite side of the school at Sandy Drive being closed at the start of last school year.

"When I talked with vice principal (Jay) Crystal, I asked him if it's the school's responsibility to provide parking and he said no," Anderson said. "That

responsibility has been pushed onto this neighborhood. It should be on the parents or the students themselves. It's not right. They locked the gate at Sandy, then ours is not locked. We get the (parking) overrun. It's just not fair."

Jespersen acknowledges the parking woes on the west side of the school are related to the gate on the east side of the school being closed in the fall of 2014.

"That has slowly made an impact on the opposite side of our campus," Jespersen said. "With the Sandy gate, parents were able to drive up and drop off students. Anytime you close off an area, that will impact another area. Our enrollment is the same, so it's not a spike of drivers. There is now more parking in the neighborhood we're referring to."

Jespersen, who took over as MHS principal partway through the 2014-15 school year, said school officials sell as many parking passes as there

are parking spaces.

"We want kids to be parking in our lot," he said. "That's good for the kids and that's good for the community. The neighbors would rather have them park in our lot, which I get. We have more kids that drive than we have parking spots for. For students that don't get a parking pass, they still drive and park in the adjacent neighborhood."

Wenning said a key difference between now and the Sandy Drive issues two years ago is the current problem is only about parking, while loitering issues were the main thing on Sandy. Wenning also pointed out the problem to any solution.

"This is getting a little bit crazy."

— Charles Anderson

school bus."

While Anderson encouraged neighbors to sign a petition to get the gate closed, Jespersen pointed to the severity of conditions that led to the gate at Sandy being closed.

"Sandy was closed because of loitering, not parking," he said. "There were issues there that caused not only McNary High School to agree with (the neighbors) but also the city council, the Keizer Police Department and the Salem-Keizer School District. Now the issue is based on parking. We are sympathetic to neighbors that don't want students parking in their neighborhood. If kids are parking illegally like blocking driveway access or hydrants, they should be cited for that."

Jespersen said too many parking passes were sold last year, so the policy was revised for this school year. Seniors and juniors get first dibs, with any eligible sophomores being able to purchase passes that are remaining.

"The minimum requirement for these (juniors and seniors) is a 2.00 GPA and 90 percent attendance," Jespersen said. "If there are additional passes after we have sold passes to all eligible upperclassmen, then sophomores are eligible to purchase a parking pass. They must have a 3.00 GPA and 92 percent attendance."

Behavior is also a criteria. Jespersen said the policy was chosen for a simple reason.

"We are trying to incentivize kids for doing the right thing," he said.

Anderson noted he unsuccessfully tried in 2007 to get an issue with speeding cars on Newberg addressed and hasn't felt much more help from authorities with this issue. He cited an instance last week where he pointed out several student parking infractions to a KPD officer.

"There are four violations, and the cop is just sitting there," Anderson said. "They are clearly in violation. I don't want to see them give kids a bunch of tickets, I just want them to shut the gate like they did on Sandy. This is getting a little bit crazy."

Anderson, who called last

week's meeting with Jespersen "a waste of time," noted a similar complaint about a van being parked in front of a hydrant was not addressed. He wants other options explored, such as bus passes for students who have to use a parking lot not on school grounds. He also noted Loren's Sanitation trash trucks have problems picking up trash when so many student vehicles are parked on either side of the roads.

"We want to make it easy for kids to get to school. We don't want to put up any unnecessary barriers."

— Erik Jespersen

Celt basketball alums: Sign up to compete in all-ages basketball tournament

The McNary High School boys basketball team will be hosting an Alumni Tournament May 14 and 15 for all former Celtic varsity basketball players.

"The program would like to bring back and honor all former players and coaches for an awesome weekend of basket-

ball," said Ryan Kirch, McNary boys basketball head coach.

Kirch is hoping to draw in players from as far back as the 1970s and 1980s to play in the tourney.

If you are interested in playing, please contact the program at mcnaryalumni@gmail.com for more information.



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Shopping break. A perfect moment to talk about alcohol.

An alarming number of pre-teens are drinking alcohol – which makes it urgent to find every opportunity to talk to your kids about the dangers of underage drinking. For tips on how – and when – to begin the conversation, visit:

www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov

talk
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Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
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Truth Will Out

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By Charles Preston

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