

Keizertimes

SECTION A

MAY 13, 2016

\$1.00

Furor over officer budget hole

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

Yes, the Keizer Budget Committee was able to approve the 2016-17 fiscal year budget in two meetings last week.

But not everyone was happy.

In particular, funding for another police officer position — or the lack thereof — once again caused a great deal of angst.

The Keizer Police Department currently has 37 officers, down from the 41 a few years ago. Adding back at least one officer has been a top priority for several years

and was identified as such again during a recent long-range budget planning session.

However, adding a police officer was not in the proposed budget. Several budget committee members expressed disgust. That led to Keizer Mayor Cathy Clark — a longtime cheerleader of the city — to question if things need to be changed.

At one point during the May 5 budget meeting, the reserves was brought up again later.

“I have said this before to this group, I don't withhold funding just for fun or to hoard cash.”

— Chris Eppley,
City Manager



File Several Keizer Budget Committee members expressed frustration last week about the lack of a new officer. More stories are on pages A2 and A9.

After police chief John Teague went over his budget, nine-year budget committee member Ron Bersin started with his questions.

“We're still only at 37 police officers,” Bersin said to Teague. “Why is that?”

Teague smiled at Bersin. “I'm the wrong guy to ask,” Teague responded. “You know that.”

Bersin thus turned his questioning towards city manager Chris Eppley and finance manager Tim Wood.

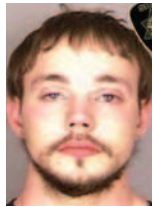
“Earlier we talked about a 15 percent reserve fund,” Bersin said. “Right now we're 2.7 percent over that. We should be at \$1.4 million, but we're actually at \$1.7 million. There's \$273,000 there, so we should be able to get a police officer in (the budget). We talked about it at long-range planning. I don't know what we need to do, but we really need to talk about adding the position. There is money in the budget, while still staying in the (desired) reserves.”

Please see OFFICER, Page A9

Keizer man arrested on sex abuse charges

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

A middle school student is being hailed for helping to capture a 22-year-old Keizer man who was arrested Tuesday morning on 10 counts of encouraging child sexual abuse.



P. Highsmith

According to the Keizer Police Department, the incident started shortly before 8 a.m. Monday with a 13-year-old seventh grade female student walking to Claggett Creek Middle School observed a male she believed had followed her to the school,

Please see ABUSE, Page A8



Keizer IRISFESTIVAL

Just around the corner

By CRAIG MURPHY
Of the Keizertimes

It's May in Keizer, which could only mean one thing: it's time for the Iris Festival.

Keizer's biggest weekend of the year is almost here, starting in earnest next Thursday, May 19 with a kickoff dinner and party. Activities conclude with several events on Sunday, May 22 including runs, several performers and the Poker Run.

The centerpiece, of course, is the Valley Credit Services Iris Festival Parade starting at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, May 21. The parade starts at River Road North and Lockhaven Drive

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Photo submitted by Don Vowell

Iris are blooming just in time for the annual Keizer Iris Festival, which takes place May 19 to 22.

KHT premieres Drop Dead!



By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

In Keizer Homegrown Theatre's (KHT) latest production, a troupe of has-been thespians attempts to stage a comeback, but the bodies keep piling up.

“It's pants-wetting funny,” said Tyler Fredrickson, who plays the stage manager of the production. “My character alone flips from passive to assertive to aggressive at a moment's notice.”

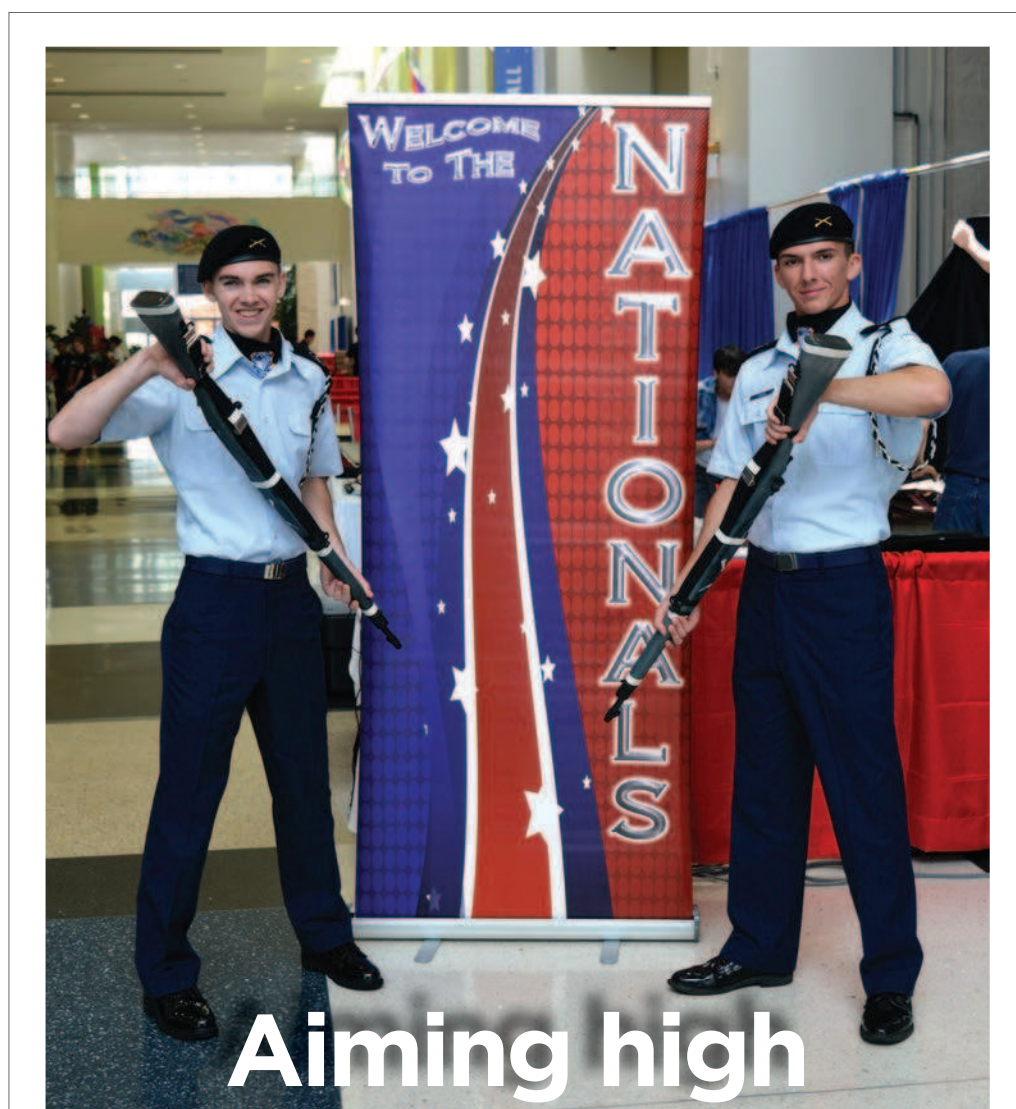
The play is *Drop Dead!* by Billy Van Zandt and Jane Milmore. Directed by Molly Fitzsimmons, the plot progresses along two tracks. The first is the actors trying

“It's pants-wetting funny.”

— Tyler Fredrickson,
Stage Manager

to salvage their careers and slowly biting the dust, and a play-within-a-play that's also something of a murder mystery.

The show runs May 13-14, 20-22 and 27-28. All shows are at the Keizer Lions Auditorium, 4100 Cherry Avenue N.E. Tickets are



Aiming high

Submitted by JD Ellis
McNary High School seniors Dawson Young and Connor Hogan, members of the Celtic Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, recently traveled to the National High School Drill Team Championships in Daytona Beach, Fla., to compete as an armed drill team. The pair returned home having finished in the top 10 in the entire nation.

\$15. Showtimes are 7 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 2 p.m. on Sundays. For performances during the Iris Festival, Keizer Homegrown is donating \$5 to the McNary High School drama

department for audience members who wears Celtic blue or say “Code Blue” when purchasing their tickets.

Keizer Homegrown founder Linda Baker showed up at Fitzsimmons' house

with a dozen roses to ask her to direct the play. Fitzsimmons had never heard of the play before, but discovered a lot to enjoy in the script once she read it.

Please see KHT, Page A8



Man arrested at KLL Park
PAGE A2



Free Comic Book Day
PAGE A5



Middle school track
PAGE A10



Lady Celts score big
PAGE A10



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