

BADGE,

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I've talked with Chief (John) Teague about it and we're in agreement on that issue.

Are there any perceived tensions between KPD and residents of the city?

Keizer is different because we don't have a large black community, but even the ones who have moved here from other areas we find are having a better relationship with our police force – even when they've had difficult relationships with police in other cities.

We try to engage them in conversations and they'll often say that policing here is different than the areas which they came from. They tell us we're fine.

They may have had some negative contacts, but we try hard to give them a more positive interaction.

For anyone, if an arrest has to be made, we want that to be as positive an experience as we can make it. Chief Teague has been big on moving the department away from jail and punishment to looking at the underlying issues and dealing with those to curb the arrests.

There has been a big push for problem-oriented policing solutions and community engagement at KPD in recent years, are members of the union seeing changes in public

response to their presence as a result of these policies?

I think it's a work in progress. For the people we've been able to impact positively, and their neighborhoods, we hear glowing reviews. It might be a drug house or people squatting in foreclosures and solving those issues impacts a lot of people in small areas of the city.

That's also been a result of restructuring the department. While the patrol officers might be going from call to call, members of the Community Response Unit can start looking into problem spots that we've received multiple calls about over several shifts.

We have the time to sit and watch what's happening at a problem house, and then we can bring in our code enforcement officer to work on the issues from his angle.

It can be frustrating for us, too, when it takes a lot of time to bring some sort of resolution to those problems because we try to treat all of them as if they were in our own neighborhood. We wouldn't want our kids growing up around that and we don't want other kids growing up around that either.

You were involved with Blast Camp, a camp designed to break down barriers between law enforcement and youth, a few weeks ago. Do you think that officers are benefitting from the increased contact made

possible through events like that?

To some degree, but there's only so much we can do in a three-hour contact for three days in a year. Parental influences are huge on the kids in the community. If there is negative thoughts coming from the parents, it probably doesn't matter enough in the long run.

Some of the kids come in the first day and they are a little standoffish, but then they start to see that we're just there with them having fun. Those contacts help, but there's many more times when we're in a store in uniform and someone leans over to a kid and tells them, "You be good, or I'm going to make them take you away."

That's not what we're here for. I've looked right at parents and told them, "I'd sooner take you away than that kid. He's awesome."

All they are doing is confusing them. Kids are told repeatedly that if they need help to go to the police, but then they hear that same police officer can take them away. Why would that kid run to a police officer after that?

Blast Camp, and camps like that, give us a chance to show different side of police personalities. We just need some of the parental influence to change to coincide with that.

When complaints arise about officers, what do they typically involve?

A lot of complaints are handled at the supervisor level, but most often a lot of the complaints could be settled with the use of video, if we can find a resolution to what becomes public record.

In one case, we had a complaint of an officer slamming his hand on the top of someone's car, but we were able to go back and look at the video and see he was really just tapping it saying they were good to go.

We more frequently run into issues with callers thinking that our patrol officers aren't taking enough time with them on their call. They might also perceive an officer

as being rude, but they want to see an officer as personally invested in their issue. That's understandable, but our job is collecting facts.

It's not that officers are not empathetic, but it can be perceived as rude. If they're three calls pending and a major one comes in, the officer probably has to go and isn't going to have time to explain.

What are the most frequent compliments you hear from Keizer residents and/or other individuals along the judicial system chain?

One of the things we take some pride in is the people who we pull over in the middle of the night and they end up getting into arguments in the back of the squad car. We end up with people with warrants, dope or stolen property who are upset that someone decided to drive through Keizer and now they're getting arrested. For that being the reputation of the town we live in, it's a beautiful thing.

We also hear from a lot of residents that they think we are everywhere. We only have three officers on patrol at any one time in a town of 37,000. That's not a great ratio, but if

people think we're everywhere, we're happy that they feel our presence like that.

I've heard a lot of compliments of our detectives for their professionalism and thoroughness and great report writing. But I've also heard from a lot of residents who feel as though we are very thorough.

What is the union's stance on the need for extra officers at KPD?

We absolutely need them. We have a certain level of service that is expected, but three officers are expected to handle the workload of four or five officers right now. It means more stress and a larger workload and they can't take as much time with individual calls.

Eventually, as the town continues to grow, that service level is going to suffer. If we go to a completely reactive department, the public perception is going to falter.

We also have a level of service that we want to provide, but change is coming if we can't hire more officers. We don't want to get to the point where we can't respond to certain calls.

In Salem, if you have a

fender bender, the police aren't going to respond. We try to respond to every single one of those types of incidents in Keizer.

It's also going to be harder to recruit officers if the current commotion around law enforcement continues. If you're a well-educated person and you see what officers are going through in the media, what is the likelihood you're going to want to be part of that?

How would additional officers bolster what the force as a whole is able to accomplish?

It's harder to be proactive when you're running from call to call. When you have the ability to be proactive, you get to know individual streets and know which cars are supposed to be there and which ones aren't, things stand out.

Some people think that's a form of harassment, but more officers give us the ability to be proactive because we don't want to be reactive. Reacting means something's gone wrong. Proactive means the bad guys get the message that what they're doing isn't welcome in this city.

KT on vacation



James and Carly Baker recently returned from a Mediterranean cruise that started in Athens, Greece and ended in Barcelona, Spain. Joining the Bakers were: Dan & Debbie Davenport, Chris & Stephanie Eakin, Rick & Dian McDonald, Dan & Kelly Hokanson, Brett & Sheila Larson, Cliff & Darlene Rose, Bob & Tracy Rhoades, Ron & Denise Downs, Ed & Julie Johnson, Jennifer Martin, Kristie Lawrence, Krissy Devane, Bridget Larson-Hill, Myrna Haxby, Rich Hickam.

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Member spotlight

Knipe Realty NW

When a person or a family buys a house, they're not just engaging in a transaction. They're making a decision that will change the course of their lives, their children's lives, probably even their grandchildren's lives. They're choosing a neighborhood, schools, a place to put down roots and build their future

Knipe Realty is committed to helping future homeowners with the heart of a servant. Our real estate agents are selected carefully for their ability to serve their clients with professionalism and care. Rhonda Marshall, Principal Broker is that agent, and the Keizer Chamber of Commerce is pleased to have her as a new member.

Marshall has been with Knipe Realty NW, since 2014 and a Broker since 2003. Rhonda is from the Salem area and grew up in Turner. Before 2003, Rhonda was a mechanical engineer and flipped homes during her off hours. She became enthralled with matching homes to people and wanted to manage their transactions too.

"I wanted to follow the process and make the transition easy – from start to finish," she said. And that's what she does. She takes each transaction personally and works closely with her clients.

"I changed careers because I wanted to help people. Every transaction is customized to the needs of the family. There is nothing more exciting than the look on the face of a family when you open the door to their dream home and hand them the keys. Many of the rewards in this business are intangible. It is more than just another job," said Marshall.

Knipe Realty has a home office in Bridgeport Village and employs about 175 agents throughout the Salem, Bridgeport and Vancouver area. Give Rhonda a call when you or someone you know is looking for an agent who will do her best to help you – with a servant's heart.



Rhonda Marshall

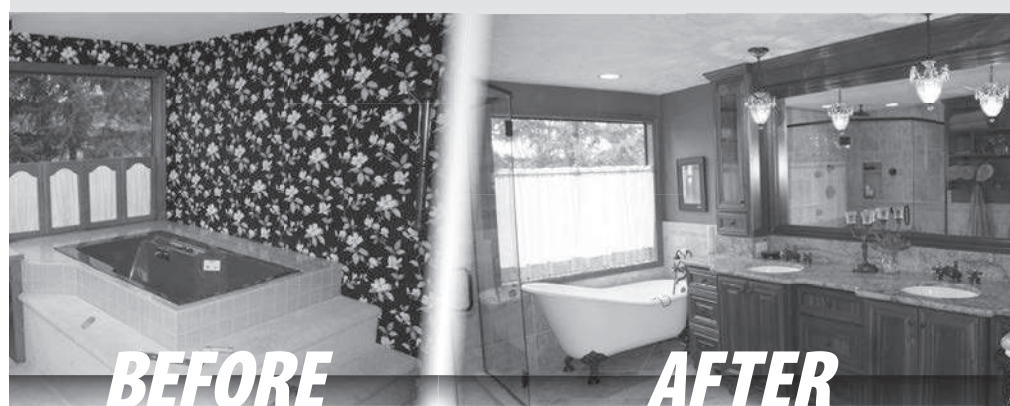
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