

# Small rewards, big change at skate park

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
Of the Keizertimes

Kelly Owen's first trip to Keizer's Carlson Skate Park was discouraging.

The Salem Health emergency room and trauma nurse estimated that less than a third of the park's users were wearing helmets while they rode their bikes, skateboards and scooters. And that was the best rider-to-helmet ratio of the four parks she and co-workers visited in the mid-Willamette Valley.

"It's important that everyone wear helmets because brain injuries are so tragic, but so preventable," said Owen.

Getting kids to wear their helmets has become something of a crusade for Owen.

"In spring and summer of 2015, we had some really tragic events resulting from longboard and skateboard crashes. We had some local kids end up with life-changing traumatic brain injuries and one was killed," Owen said.

Owen herself cared for more than one of the injured riders, and it got her thinking about what more she could do to intervene.

"I already do a lot of talks in the schools about wearing helmets, so it's not like the kids don't have the information. We have to get them to actually



**Above:** Kelly Owen talks with Aaron Sanders and Cameron Hatfield.  
**Right:** Kaia and Silas Branch were two of the riders wearing helmets on Owen's recent visit to Carlson Skate Park. KEIZERTIMES/ERIC A. HOWALD



wear the helmets," Owen said.

The team decided that rewarding good behavior might be their best option. Armed with donated \$5 gift cards from Dutch Bros. and Jamba Juice and others that were purchased, Owen set out on the first of five unannounced visits to Carlson Skate Park this summer.

In addition to goodies, Owen brought along a poster board advertising free gift cards and featuring photos of two of the crash victims she cared for.

On her first visit, still only about a third of riders were wearing helmets. On her second visit, helmet usage was up to 50 percent. When she visited for a third time Tuesday, July 26, about 80 percent of riders were sporting headgear while

riding.

"I think we sometimes try to make things too hard. I truly am amazed how something like rewarding kids with a \$5 gift card seems to be making such a huge difference," she said.

For riders who don't own helmets, she keeps some on hand to pass out, but even then there are holdouts.

"Kids are very fussy about their helmets and what they look like," Owen said. She ran through a small supply of multi-transport helmets quickly and the bike helmets remaining don't

have the same look.

Her ace-in-the-hole at Carlson is 14-year-old Cameron Hatfield. Owen met Cameron on her first visit and enlisted him as an ambassador to talk with the other kids he meets at the park.

"Most of them say it's uncomfortable or looks dumb, but after talking to Kelly I started wearing my helmet a lot more," Hatfield said. "If you fall and get hurt that's your fault. You have to care about your life."

Hatfield said the older park visitors are less receptive to his message, but riders his age and younger have been more open to it.

"This park gets a lot of kids who are middle school and younger, and I think we have a better chance of redirecting their behavior," Owen said. "It's been our most successful park in regard to increasing helmet usage."

Owen also hopes that influencing behavior at the park will increase helmet usage in other community spaces. The kids who were injured last summer were riding on city and county streets.

"The thing to remember is that this is only a start. Parents need to reinforce helmet usage at home. It can change lives later on," Owen said.

To support helmet program, contact the Salem Foundation, 503-561-5576 or foundation@salemhealth.org, and make a donation to the injury prevention program.

## GRASSROOTS GOVERNMENT

The Keizer Public Arts Commission had its most recent meeting July 26. Here's what was discussed:

- Commissioners voted to renew agreements with the seven artists who currently have art featured along River Road North. The agreements will keep the artwork in place through December 2017.



Leaving the Cold by Deborah Reid Denno, part of the Artist's Trunk Show at Keizer Civic Center.

- KPAC is also looking to add additional pads for public art on River Road. Options currently being explored are in front of Dollar Tree, Can Staff, Ace Cash Express, Shari's and the focal point on the southwest corner of the Chemawa Road North-River Road North intersection. Community Development Director Nate Brown said reception from owners at some of the locations has been lukewarm while others are still being contacted.

- Commissioners are looking to fill open art display spaces in the Keizer Civic Center between January and March 2017.

- Fifteen portraits on the Keizer Mural Project at Town and Country Lanes are complete with a dozen more left to finish. Organizers are shooting for a Sept. 10 dedication ceremony.

### KEIZER CLASSIFIEDS

#### SERVICES

**DIVORCE \$155.** Complete preparation. Includes children, custody, support, property and bills division. No court appearances. Divorced in 1-5 weeks possible. 503-772-5295. www.paralegalalternatives.com legalalt@msn.com ONAC

#### HEALTH & BEAUTY

Got Knee Pain? Back Pain? Shoulder Pain? Get a pain-relieving brace at little or NO cost to you. Medicare Patients Call Health Hotline Now! 1-800-349-1450 ONAC

#### MISCELLANEOUS

DISH TV 190 channels plus Highspeed Internet Only \$49.94/mo! Ask about a 3 year price guarantee & get Netflix included for 1 year! Call Today 1-800-394-5170 ONAC

ULTIMATE BUNDLE from DIRECTV & AT&T. 2-Year Price Guarantee -Just \$89.99/month (TV/fast internet/phone) FREE Whole-Home Genie HD-DVR Upgrade. New Customers Only. Call Today 1-800-243-0916 ONAC

Protect your home with fully customizable security and 24/7 monitoring right from your smartphone. Receive up to \$1500 in equipment, free (restrictions apply). Call 1-800-577-0482 ONAC

DONATE YOUR CAR, TRUCK OR BOAT TO HERITAGE FOR THE BLIND. Free 3 Day Vacation, Tax Deductible, Free Towing, All Paperwork Taken Care Of. CALL 1-800-918-1105 ONAC

WE ARE EVERYTHING EXCEPT OVERPRICED

Simple Cremation \$795

Inexpensive Burial and Funeral Options

Pre-Planning Available

On-Site Crematory



4365 RIVER RD N, KEIZER 503.393.7037

Se habla español

## Good Reasons to Plant Flowers in Late Summer

- Your garden got crispy-fried while you were on vacation.
- Raccoons had a midnight tryst in your flower bed.
- You can still get great, healthy plants at Egan Gardens

Find us on facebook

New summer hours: Mon-Sat 9-5, Sun 10-5

EGAN GARDENS GREENHOUSE GROWERS

9805 River Rd NE Salem www.egangardens.com (503) 393-2131



# CONCEALED CARRY PERMIT CLASS



6PM AT KEIZER CIVIC CENTER MONDAY, AUGUST 8

2 PERMIT OPTIONS: OREGON ONLY (\$45) or MULTI-STATE (\$80) OREGON INCLUDED

Cash or check payment will be made at the class.

A driver license is all you need to bring.

3 WAYS TO SIGN UP!

CALL: 360-921-2071

WEB: FirearmTrainingNW.com

EMAIL: FirearmTrainingNW@gmail.com



HONORED

DO NOT HONOR

UT RES. ONLY

Walk-Ins are Welcome

Multi-state permit honored in Alaska but not Hawaii

**KEIZER ROTARY AMPHITHEATER**

Title Sponsor: **Salem Electric**

2016 FREE Summer Concert Series

Saturday, August 6th

**Your 50's Band**

Sponsored By: **KBZY, DUNCAN CONSTRUCTION, KOZER VISION SOURCE, KRA**

At Keizer Rapids Park \* 1900 Chemawa Rd. N

46th Annual **GREAT OREGON STEAM-UP**

Hart Parr - Oliver - Cletrac Nichols & Shepard

**ANTIQUE POWERLAND**

FINAL WEEKEND 7AM TO 6PM **AUGUST 6-7**

SPONSORED BY COVANTA AND AMTRAK

3995 Brooklake Road NE - Salem www.antiquepowerland.com • 503.393.2424

**Educational and FUN event**

**ACTION!** Trains, trolleys, tractors, machines, threshing, steam powered sawmill

**KIDS!** Youth Passport program (win great prizes), kid tractor pulls, tractor parade

**HISTORY COMES ALIVE!** Quilts, steam engines, 12 heritage museums, cars, trucks, equipment

**SHOPPING!** Swap meet, flea market, souvenirs and more!

**FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT!** Demonstrations, food (including ice cream made with steam power)

**NEW THIS YEAR!** AUG 6-7: Steampunk Township Incubator, AUG 7: Dr Solar's Good Time, Sunshine, Traveling Medicine Show

**AUG 6-7: Oregon National Guard Appreciation Days**