

ECLIPSE,

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“A lot of what we’re hoping to do is still in the planning stages, but the goal is to raise money to put back into Keizer parks,” Ford said.

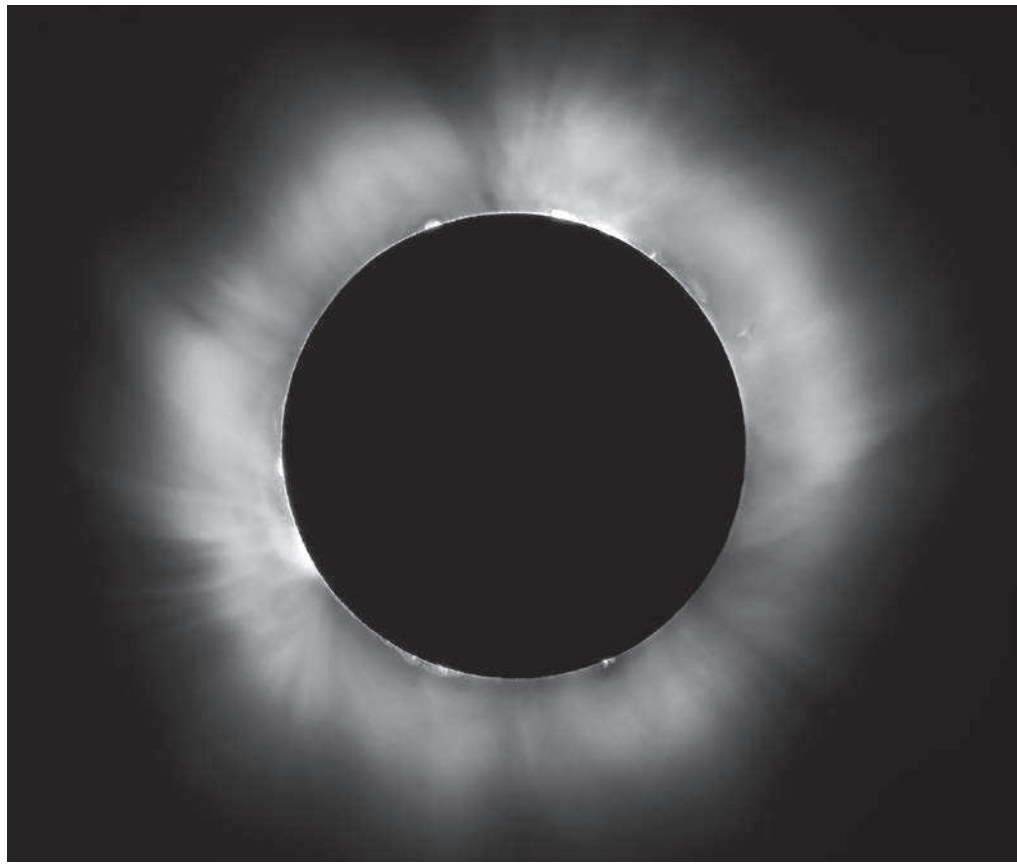
Foundation members and volunteers are reserving open spaces in the park for dry camping, and hope to provide concerts, games, eclipse education, workshops for making pinhole projectors and selling eyewear designed for safe viewing.

“We are looking forward to welcoming people from out of town, but people from the community will also be welcome to come and view the eclipse at the park,” said Bradley.

Prices for camping and safety glasses are still being determined. While the paper shades the Parks Foundation will sell are suitable for viewing, Claysmith said welders’ goggles (with a rating of 14 or higher) will also do the trick for a more sustained experience.

In addition to the actual eclipse viewing, one Keizer resident is hoping to ramp up the excitement the weekend before the event. Allen Barker is trying to work out the logistics of holding the first ever Keizer Cribs Race, a bed race, to benefit Keizer Parks. A bed race features teams of six racing modified beds along a prescribed course.

Barker would like to see a race route travel from near



A total solar eclipse captured in France in 1999.

Luc Viatour/www.Lucnix.be

“All you have to do is cross your fingers and hope for a clear day.”

— Chris Claysmith
Astronomy instructor

Keizer Station all the way to Keizer Rapids Park, but he’s open to modifying it based

on availability and traffic needs.

“The idea would be to not only bring in bed teams from around the region, but also some of the area drone teams to come and film the races and parts of Keizer when the teams aren’t racing,” Barker said.

A contest for the resulting films would offer its own prizes while the films themselves became property of the city to use for promotional purposes.

With entry fees starting at about \$1,500 per team, all

of it going to Keizer parks, a tidy sum could be collected if the idea gains traction.

“If we can pull it off, I really want it to be something that benefits the entire city,” Barker said.

As the ideas continue to swirl, the eclipse is shaping up to be a major event, and possibly a major boon for the local economy.

“The best part is you don’t have to go anywhere,” said Claysmith. “All you have to do is cross your fingers and hope for a clear day.”

PARKS,

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“I’d been getting a lot of calls from people asking if we had any pickleball courts. I had no idea what that even was, but I started doing some research and then got another call from a guy who said we could fit two pickleball courts on a tennis court if there was enough room. We came down here and measured and then added the stripes to the court refurb,” Johnson said.

While it can seem like an unneeded expense, Johnson views it as precisely the opposite.

“A lot of the calls about pickleball were from retired people, people we don’t get enough of in our parks. Those courts are a way to draw new users into the fold,” he said.

Bringing new users into the parks serves two purposes. Primarily, it shows there is a need for the spaces Keizer is providing, but it also increases safety.

“If somebody comes to a park looking to vandalize something and they find people already there, they are going to go somewhere else, or at least spend more time thinking about what it is they planned to do and whether they should do it,” Johnson said.

And there are more than enough community-inflicted wounds already. Cleaning graffiti is a daily chore for the seasonal workers. Wooden picnic tables are also a prime target.

“The minute those tables show any signs of wear, someone

flips them over and jumps on them until they are flattened,” he said.

He prefers tables with galvanized metal legs that stand up to the weather and the most punishing abuses. A cheaper, wooden table might last three to five years with favorable weather, but the more costly metal-legged ones are expected to last 20.

Johnson is loathe to prioritize one park over another, but pressed he said Meadows Park in north Keizer and Witham Park in east Keizer are ones he has his eyes on.

“Meadows needs a new play structure, better pathways and a sheltered picnic area. Witham

has a great community garden, but nothing else for an area of the community that is pretty densely populated,” he said. “We could easily put some irrigation in, a shelter, horseshoe pits, a small court and you’d have a neat little park

— if we had the money.” Johnson isn’t looking for a monetary windfall as far as funding, he chose to stick in Keizer because he enjoys the way the city gets things done. But the Keizer park system has reached critical mass and, as he said, he’s running out of tweaks.

“It’s hard to talk about adding new things when you can’t maintain the things you’ve already got, but I really think that most of the residents would be willing to pay a little more if it meant they didn’t have to volunteer their time to take care of a park. There’s still a lot of volunteers in this city, but they plug in in different ways than they used to.”

“The bathrooms are needed, I want them, but I don’t have the manpower to maintain them.”

— Robert Johnson
Parks supervisor

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Salvation Army opens new store

The Salvation Army has opened a new Family Store (Thrift Store) at 642 Lancaster Drive N.E. in Salem.

Three days of festivities are planned to celebrate the opening that began with a ribbon-cutting Thursday, Aug. 18.

Raffle drawings will be held throughout the weekend. Those interested in registering can either stop by the store or enter online at The Salvation Army’s Facebook page, “Portland Family Stores.” No purchase necessary and participants need not be present to win. Prizes include an Xbox One console and televisions.

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