

Teenager killed by train



Photo courtesy GoFundMe
Isaac James Garcia, 14, was killed as he was struck by a train Friday, Dec. 30.

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

A 14-year-old Keizer boy was struck and killed by a train passing near Keizer Station Friday, Dec. 30.

Isaac James Garcia, a McNary High School freshman, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Keizer Police Department officers responded alongside members of the Keizer Fire District to the report of a northbound train striking an individual about 6:45 p.m. between Chemawa Road Northeast and Tepper Lane

Northeast.

The train is owned and operated by Portland & Western Railroad and had about 30 cars at the time. The train had an engineer and conductor on board who cooperated with members of Marion County CRASH Team, comprised of individuals from KPD, Oregon State Police and the Marion County Sheriff's Office.

Classes resumed at McNary High School after winter break on Tuesday, Jan. 3 and Principal Erik Jespersen said extra

“This is a terrible event but it's also an opportunity to reinforce our relationships with students.”

— Erik Jespersen
McNary principal

counseling staff were on hand to guide students through the loss.

“This is a sharp reminder that often times the teachers are the emotional support that our kids need and depend on. This is a terrible event but is also an opportunity to reinforce our relationships with students,” Jespersen said. “We are a tight knit community in Keizer as evidenced by the show of support not only within the walls of McNary, but also with our friends from both Claggett Creek and Whiteaker Middle School.”

In addition to the school's regular counseling team of Kim Pittsley, Melissa Miller, Ben Handrich and Spencer Doyle, two Claggett Creek Middle School counselors, Kelly Greer and Erin Nichols,

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New
councilor
sworn in
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Check your privilege at the door



Photo Illustration

A view from the ground at a mid-Valley warming center

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The lessons in checking my privilege begin before I arrive at the Community Action Agency (CAA) Warming Center in North Salem.

I left the house early intent on picking up a more-sugar-than-coffee coffee from my favorite spot downtown, a few blocks from where I will spend the next four hours checking in some of the area's homeless residents for the night.

As I drive, I think back to my day off, which I spent digging into a video game I got for Christmas and watch-

ing beautiful, and unexpected, snow blanket my backyard. In retrospect, it seemed like a day spent gaming was a way to avoid thinking about what such cold temperatures meant for those living on the street.

I'd signed up for a shift at the temporary Warming Center, located at the old Oregon Department of Energy (ODE) office on Marion Street Northeast, the day after the call for volunteers went out. Temperatures were expected to be in the high teens at the time the activation was planned, but it had warmed a few degrees since the initial decision to

open the center. The coldest temperatures were now expected in a few days and CAA organizers are planning to extend the number of days the warming center will be open to accommodate the new forecast.

By the time I cross the Salem-Keizer border, I've given up on the pursuit of coffee. I left early because I didn't want to show up at the Warming Center with a better cup o' joe than what we'll be serving to warming center visitors — decaf coffee and hot water for tea, cocoa and bouillon. The more I think about how I spent the hours leading up

to my shift, froufrou coffee takes on an air of unnecessary opulence.

It means I arrive at the warming center half an hour early, but I check-in anyway in hope of being able to assist in set-up for the evening. There is already a small line of homeless people waiting outside.

Organizers have already laid out sleeping pads, about an inch-and-a-half thick, on the floor. There's approximately 80 of them and I'm told by CAA Deputy Director Cyndi Astley they are expecting to fill up this evening.

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Catch-and-release Third time's the charm in pulling car from Willamette

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

A crew from Wiltse's Towing spent a good chunk of its afternoon fishing a 2012 Honda Civic out of the water near the boat ramp in Keizer Rapids Park Wednesday, Dec. 28.

There's a decent chance the car would have gone unnoticed for some time had it not been reported to the Keizer Police Department a day after it went into the drink.

On Thursday, Dec. 22, 19-year-old Ernesto Gomez

Gonzalez, of Tigard, reported that he'd accidentally driven the car into the Willamette River the previous night about 11 p.m.

“He told the officer that he was with a girl and he accidentally drove the car into the river while he was trying to find the exit to the park,” said Deputy Chief Jeff Kuhns, of the Keizer Police Department.

Gonzalez said he and his passenger escaped through a window and a friend came to the park to pick them up.

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KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
A crew from Wiltse's Towing works to pull a 2012 Honda Civic from the Willamette River.

Parks survey kick off January 9

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The Keizer City Council and Keizer Parks and Recreation Advisory Board are hosting a joint work session Monday, Jan. 9. The topic is a parks survey and parks board members are hoping to pack the room.

“I would love to have to do this three times because we run out of space,” said Matt Lawyer, a parks board member.

The work session begins
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KHT auditions
January 14
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Quilts on display
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McNary sweeps
Forest Grove
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