

Youth councilor, liaison appointed

The Keizer City Council confirmed the appointments of a youth councilor and a youth liaison to the Keizer Parks and Recreation Board at its meeting Monday, March 6.

McNary High School senior Giancarlo Marcello was named youth councilor and said experiences as a police cadet paved the way for applying to the position.

"I thought this would be another good experience to have," Marcello said.

Marcello recently completed the paperwork to become part of the Chemeketa Scholars program that provides two years of tuition-free college for high school students who maintained a grade point average of 3.5 or better.

Sam Elder, another McNary senior, was named the youth liaison to the parks board. Elder, who recently attained the rank of Eagle Scout, said parks were a particular interest to him after he restored trails as his community service



McNary seniors Sam Elder and Giancarlo Marcello.

KEIZERTIMES/
Eric A. Howald

project.

"I like volunteering and helping out, and it's fun to start up something and then (see) the end result," Elder said.

Both young men were led to the roles by Councilor Laura Reid, a teacher at McNary.

"If the next generation of Keizer leaders are half as exemplary as these young men, we will be in very good hands," Reid said.

Given that the academic

year is half over, both Elder and Marcello will only serve about half the time a normal youth appointee would.

The situation prompted a conversation about adding a deputy youth councilor position for the remainder of the year that would foster succession and strengthen the program in the future.

That discussion will continue at meetings of the Keizer Volunteer Coordinating Committee.

KPD succeeds with DUII patrols despite challenges

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

When a Keizer police officer suspects someone of driving under the influence of intoxicants (DUII), resolving the problem isn't always as easy as pulling them over and administering a field sobriety test.

"I was once told in training that, next to a homicide, DUII's are the most difficult cases to work and prosecute," said Sgt. Trevor Wenning, head of Keizer Police Department's Patrol Unit. "Drunk driving spans all ages and social economic groups and there is an abundance of attorneys ready to pick apart our investigations. We have a vast amount of court rulings, procedures, processes and certain words that need to be spoken, verbatim in some cases, which if not adhered to jeopardizes the case."

Despite such challenges, KPD has been largely successful with its DUII enforcement.

Each year for the past five years, the Keizer Police Department was awarded an Oregon Department of Transportation Grant that covers overtime costs for DUII enforcement.

KPD officers average one arrest for every 5.2 hours worked in DUII enforcement. That's better than the statewide average of one arrest for every 6.4 hours of overtime.

Even with that success, some KPD officers, and likely throughout the country, remain uncomfortable with performing the DUII stops because the bar for conviction has been set high.

"Officers have to provide subjective and objective proof in order to secure the conviction. Subjective proof includes our observations and objective proof would be getting a breath sample or drawing blood for testing. Simply put, these investigations demand perfection at every level of the investigation and that is why some officers are uncomfortable with them," Wenning said.

DUII's still occur so frequently that to alleviate the burden on the justice system, first-time offenders can complete diversion programs. The only ones who can't bypass the court in that manner are those with commercial driver licenses.

Every officer receives 24 hours of DUII enforcement training – 16 hours in administering field sobriety tests and another eight on drug-impairment – but it can still leave them less-than-confident in executing a stop. To bolster that training, some officers are now taking advanced courses on evaluating impaired drivers and recognizing the signs of drug impairment. There's also a four-hour refresher course in field testing every three years, required by the ODOT grant, for officers working DUII patrol overtime.

The legalization of recreational marijuana is also changing the landscape for officers in the field.

"In January 2017, KPD arrested 11 drivers for DUII, two of which were under the influence of marijuana. It is anticipated, and there have been studies to back this in states that have had legal marijuana for some time, that our arrest rate for marijuana impaired drivers will rise," Wenning said.

Since the beginning of 2017, KPD officers have arrested more than 20 suspected drunk drivers. The highest blood alcohol content level registered in those arrests was .23 percent, nearly three times the legal limit of .08 percent. The lowest was .12 percent.

Most of the DUII patrols in Keizer are scheduled between Friday evening and early Sunday morning. Additional patrols are scheduled during "holiday" weekends known to generate festive drinking, like St. Patrick's Day, Super Bowl weekend, Thanksgiving, New Year's Eve, Memorial Day and Labor Day. In Keizer, even the annual Iris Festival warrants additional patrols.



The Keizer Traffic Safety, Bikeways and Pedestrian Committee met March 9. Here's what was discussed:

- Pat Fisher offered an update on potentially adding new wayfinding signs to the bike and pedestrian path along the Salem-Keizer Parkway. The committee hoped the project – estimated at less than \$700 – would qualify for an ODOT grant. However, ODOT reps said the typical grant request for their Quick Fix program was more along the lines of \$4,000 to \$5,000. Committee members talked about adding other items to the request like changing out the bollards that current prevent vehicles larger than bikes from using the bike path. Deputy City Recorder suggested investigating grants available through the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) program the city recently joined.
- The HEAL grant program came up again later during discussions about adding a bike repair and air station in the vicinity of the Keizer Civic Center. Board members have been discussing the project for months, but a lack of funding remains a sticking point. Given the cost, estimated around \$1,500, the board members decided to look at the HEAL grant program for possible funding.
- Chair Hersch Sangster reported that he is in the process of designing family-style bike rides for the Keizer Iris Festival and an event being planned around the eclipse that will pass over the city in August 2017.

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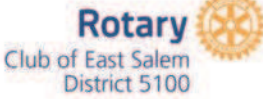
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