

# Congressmen pack house at CCMS

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
*Of the Keizertimes*

A town hall hosted by Sen. Jeff Merkley and Rep. Kurt Schrader drew a crowd of more than 400 people to Claggett Creek Middle School Saturday, Jan. 13.

The congressmen took questions from the standing-room-only attendees and gave updates on their recent work in the halls of the U.S. Congress.

Keizertimes and the *Statesman Journal* got a chance to speak with both men before the town hall (see related story, Page A1). Keizertimes is presenting the town hall in a question-and-answer format to preserve as much of the legislators' intent as possible.

**Question from Tressen Keller, CCMS eighth grader:** How should college debt affect college dreams?

**Schrader:** The debt students incur these days is criminal. We have worked to at least finance some of the debt. Only 3 percent of federal dollars go to education and that's in stark contrast to our state where over 50 percent are used for education. If you step up after and work in an area in need of expertise, then your loan should be forgiven. We are working to make sure that your college is a heckuva lot more affordable than it is right now.

**Merkley:** I will add that we need to do a lot more to fund Pell grants to keep pace with rising tuition. When our students borrow, they should be able to borrow at the same rate the big banks get.

**Question:** What are the chances of drilling for oil off the Oregon Coast?

**Merkley:** The answer is none. You probably heard that as soon as it was announced, the Florida governor protested and (Sec. Ryan) Zinke said we'll let Florida off the hook because he's Republican. How about we let every state off the hook where the governor protests?

**Schrader:** The West Coast coalition has been pretty united in that it is a no-go for us.

**Question from Richard Walsh, attorney and former Keizer city councilor:** How many Democrats are onboard for the Medicare for All plan and why isn't it part of the (Democratic) platform?

**Merkley:** Our system is so complicated and we have six different systems overlapping in different ways. Wouldn't it be great to have a simple, seamless system whereby simply by living in America you have affordable, quality healthcare.

On the Senate side, a lot of senators have stepped up to talk about it and there are those who want to talk about the steps leading to a simpler system down the road. I think it's important to see how much shift has occurred. There is a tremendous support for that shift. The conversation is going toward that direction and we have to keep pushing.

**Schrader:** The conversation has shifted dramatically.



KEIZERTIMES/ERIC A. HOWALD  
Claggett Creek Middle School eighth grader Tressen Keller asks the first question of the town hall. Anita Navarro, seated on right, got to ask the last question of the meeting.

Healthcare for everybody is where we need to be going. We have to show the Affordable Care Act is working and that more expansion can work.

**Question from Judith Mansfield, teacher:** I have a lot of concerns for my DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) students and tuition for students, and I believe healthcare is a human right. Is there enough will and compassion to counteract and balance what has been going on in the past year and cut it short?

**Merkley:** Is there enough humanity address what is going on? I hope so. I hope the citizens of this country convey to their senators and representatives just how divisive the hate-mongering has been. Life is short, let's take our energy and put it into making things better. The Dream Act is something symbolic of that.

It's totally unfair to be stressing out families who are worried about their kids becoming stateless individuals. Let's make them full members of our community as they have been for most of their lives.

**Schrader:** If you would put a clean DACA bill on the floor of the house it would pass. Why is it not happening? It's bad leadership. Leaders bring people together. There is a lot of compassion in this Congress. Many of them are from the last Congress and they solved

a longterm problem to make sure seniors could receive the healthcare they need, helped write a bill that put in place industry standards to prevent toxins, and they made sure parents and teachers and states had their own say in how kids were educated. It's not happening because of bad leadership, and hopefully this coming election cycle we will see some changes.

**Question:** We have three state highways that go through downtown (Salem) and all east-west traffic goes across one point. We need another bridge. We have idling traffic that sits for hours and pollutes like crazy. Will you be able to give us some help to fund this kind of a bridge for us?

**Schrader:** It's undeniable that the congestion is horrible. Some accommodation has to be had. We are looking for solid direction from this community and a plan that works its way up through the state transportation process and it becomes a priority. The last transportation bill we passed we made I-205 a national priority and we could make this a project of national significance. That gives access to some funding and grant streams that we wouldn't normally have.

**Question from Michael Hampton, of Keizer:** I am concerned about the destruction of environmental regulations under Scott Pruitt. How

can we maintain what we had?

**Merkley:** The administration proposed Michael Dourson (as the EPA's chief chemical safety nominee). Dourson and his team have spent his entire career saying that, when science says a specific amount (of a chemical) is dangerous, 10 times or 100 times more is not something to worry about. The administration pulled his nomination after the response from citizens. Pruitt is a big challenge because he's undoing so much from the inside.

**Schrader:** Elections have consequences and you get the government you vote in. Everyone needs to step up and be present and active in the next cycle. We saw a bunch of Congressional Review Act (votes used to undo regulations promulgated) by the Obama Administration. That might be a way we can make sure the protections we have stay in place.

**Question from Anita Navarro, Claggett eighth grader:** What does a woman-safe workplace mean to you?

**Merkley:** It's a workplace that doesn't involve leadership by a whole number of individuals that we have heard about in the last few months or people who practice any sort of harassment in the workplace. Women and men deserve a workplace where your participation and your advocacy and salary is completely dependent on your contributions and professional work. That is a message we are hearing a lot and it's one we need to keep sending until every workplace is free of harassment.

**Schrader:** Frankly, it's a conversation that we should have started long ago.



**5 YEARS AGO**  
A noble deed  
A McNary high school alum will perform at President Barack Obama's inaugural ceremony in Washington D.C. with the University Festival Choir. "It is a great honor... Not everyone can say they sang for a president," Alex Noble said.

**10 YEARS AGO**  
Teen avoids serious injury in rollover  
A 17-year-old girl escaped a rollover accident with only minor scratches. She was unable to climb out of the truck when officers arrived; Keizer Fire employees extricated her from the truck and transported her to a local hospital for minor injuries.

**15 YEARS AGO**  
Celt swimmers crush new Titans  
McNary didn't take it easy in its first ever dual versus West Salem. McNary's swim teams demolished the Titans-- the boys won 128-40 and the girls won 118-42. This is the Titans first-ever swimming season.

**20 YEARS AGO**  
McNary girls stop losing streak with win over Sprague  
The McNary girls basketball team stopped an eight-game losing streak against varsity teams Friday with a big win at home against Sprague, 49-61.

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6:30 PM  
Enjoy a full service dinner by candle light, while watching a romantic movie. Admission is \$27.50 PER PERSON includes movie, 4 course dinner and drinks. Reservations available at web site.

**UFC 220 - Sat, Jan 20**  
**Miocic vs Ngannou**  
HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE FIGHT  
9 FIGHTS IN ALL ON THE HUGE SCREEN  
Live Fights at 5:00 (21 & Over) - Tickets \$13  
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Saturday, JAN 28, at 11:00 am  
**Sensory Sensitive Show** ONLY \$2  
Special showing for kids and adults with Autism or other sensory sensitivities.

**Today in History**  
President Gerald R. Ford pardons Tokyo Rose. Although the nickname originally referred to several Japanese women who broadcast Axis propaganda over the radio to Allied troops during World War II, it eventually became synonymous with a Japanese-American woman named Iva Toguri, an American citizen born in Los Angeles. Toguri and other women broadcast sentimental American music and phony announcements regarding U.S. troop losses in a vain attempt to destroy the morale of Allied soldiers. — January 19, 1977

**Food 4 Thought**  
"Never do a wrong thing to make a friend or to keep one."  
— Robert E. Lee, born January 19, 1807

**The Month Ahead**  
**Through Sunday, January 21**  
Salem's Riverfront Park is home to the first seasonal ice rink 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. 116 Marion St. NE. Cost is \$12 ages 3 to 12 and \$15 13 and older for each 90 minute session (includes skate rental).  
**Friday, January 19-Saturday, February 10**  
Pentacle Theatre presents Brian Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa*. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Visit pentacletheatre.org for show dates and tickets.  
**Tuesday, January 23**  
Keizer Public Arts Commission story pole design meeting, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Keizer Civic Center, 980 Chemawa Road N.E. Target audience: special interest groups (art associations, etc.)

Free admission all day at Hallie Ford Museum of Art, 700 State Street. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Friday, January 26**  
Oregon Symphony in Salem presents Brahms' First Symphony. 8 a.m. Smith Auditorium on Willamette University campus. Tickets range from \$35 to \$50; students, \$10. orsymphonysalem.org.

**Friday, January 26 - Saturday, January 27**  
First Taste of Oregon, Columbia Hall (2330 17th St.) at Oregon State Fairgrounds. Hours: Friday, 4-10 p.m., Saturday, noon-10pm. Adults \$10, Seniors \$8 Children under 6 are free Designated Drivers \$10, Group discounts available, please call.

**Saturday, January 27**  
Cherry City Roller Derby, Season 9, Bout 8: Dolls of Anarchy vs Rydell Belles, 7 p.m. at The Mad House, 1335 Madison Street NE.

**Saturday, January 27 - Sunday, January 28**  
2018 Oregon Wedding Showcase, Jackman-Long Building, Oregon State Fairgrounds. Hours: Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is \$10; free parking. oregonweddingshowcase.com.

**Sunday, February 4**  
Blind Boys of Alabama at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 2:30 p.m. The grammy-award winning group bring their unique style of gospel music to Salem. Tickets are required to attend the performance, and they're likely to go fast. The recommended donation for a ticket is \$20. For more information on tickets contact musicguild@stpaulsoregon.org

**Wednesday, February 14**  
Assistance League of Salem-Keizer's 47th Annual Lasagna Lunch, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The luncheon will feature a member's secret lasagna recipe including vegetarian options as well as take-out and delivery services for those who can't make it. The event includes musical entertainment and benefits the philanthropic service programs of Assistance League. Tickets are \$25, available for purchase at als-k.org. Takes place at Willamette Heritage Center in Salem.

**Saturday, February 17**  
Cherry City Roller Derby, Season 9, Bout 9: Dolls of Anarchy vs Panty Raiders, 7 p.m. at The Mad House, 1335 Madison Street NE.

**Tuesday, February 27**  
Keizer Public Arts Commission final story pole design meeting, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Keizer Civic Center, 980 Chemawa Road N.E. Open invite.

**Saturday, March 10**  
Cherry City Roller Derby, Season 9, Bout 10: Rydell Belles vs Thrill Kill Kittens, 7 p.m. at The Mad House, 1335 Madison Street NE.

**Sunday, March 11**  
In the Steps of Sousa. Elsinore Theatre, Salem. Elsinore Theatre, 3 p.m. Single tickets: premium seating is \$30; main floor/balcony seating is \$20; Students K-12 (main floor/balcony) are seated for \$10. Season tickets are available from Elsinore Theatre. salemconcertband.org.

Add your event by e-mailing news@keizertimes.com.

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### THIS WEEK'S MOVIE TIMES

**Downsizing (R)**  
Fri 6:45, 9:15, Sat 9:00, Sun 7:00

**Blade Runner 2049 (R)**  
Sun 7:40

**Thor Ragnarok (PG-13)**  
Fri 2:00, 4:15, 6:25, 8:55  
Sat 2:30, 4:00, 6:30, Sun 2:05, 4:30, 5:50, 8:20

**Star (PG)**  
Fri 4:30, Sat 12:30, Sun 12:00

**Only The Brave (PG-13)**  
Sat 12:55, Sun 5:00

**Man Who Invented Christmas (PG)**  
Fri 3:55, Sun 12:50

**Daddys Home 2 (PG-13)**  
Fri 1:55, 6:00, Sat 2:05, 5:20, 7:20, 10:00  
Sun 1:50, 3:50

**Bad Moms Christmas (R)**  
Fri 8:00, Sat 9:15

**Despicable Me 3 (PG)**  
Sat 3:30, Sun 12:20

**My Little Pony (PG)**  
Fri 2:05, Sat 12:00, Sun 2:55

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Enter digits from 1-9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

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## Web Poll Results

Who would you support for president in 2020?

**43% - Neither**

**41% - Donald Trump**

**16% - Oprah Winfrey**

Vote in a new poll every Thursday!  
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