

KeizerCommunity

KEIZERTIMES.COM

Making Keizer work

A Keizertimes series pulling back the curtain on the people who keep the city running smoothly.

Service called for third-gen firefighter

By DEE MOORE
For the Keizertimes

Each day for Ryan Russell begins with the known and the unknown. He knows what he's planned for the day but those plans could change in —just moments. Russell is a Keizer Fire Department (KFD) division chief and shift commander heading up one of the three shifts on rotation at the department.

He began his career as a third-generation fire volunteer in 1996 on the Southern Oregon coast where he grew up.

"I wasn't sure out of high school. I was one of those kids who didn't know what they wanted to do," Russell said.

He soon realized that fighting fires was more than just a volunteer activity, it was a calling.

"Getting into it when you are young it was exciting, it becomes a second family," he



Dee Moore for the Keizertimes
Ryan Russell is a division chief with the Keizer Fire District.

"To be a firefighter a person needs to be committed and adaptable. There are a lot of days when you come into the station and not know what's going to happen. I think I've always been pretty flexible, go with the flow," Russell said.

He enjoys the fact that it is often never the same. But, the most important part of fire fighting is teamwork and this is the part of the job that appeals to Russell the most. It's the most satisfying.

"It's always challenging," he said, "but the teamwork is always rewarding. Doing it with your crew and being able to accomplish the job."

"It's teamwork, working with a good team and good people toward a common goal. Any job when you are called on to help anyone in their time of need is always rewarding."

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Wild about Keizer history

By DEE MOORE
For the Keizertimes

It's the small forgotten personal stories of Keizer's pioneers and founders that keeps drawing Tammy Wild back into the past. A little fact here, a personal story there, a picture of a long gone business or a faded wedding gown, these are all clues for this historical sleuth.

"I can't go anywhere that I am not connected," Wild said. These connections tie this Midwestern transplant to the community's past and builds a bridge to its present and future.

She is the co-author of the book *Keizer*, a pictorial history of the town published by Arcadia Publishers as part of their "Images of America" series. Through her efforts and building on the research of author and historian Ann Lossner's work as well as that of Ginger Riley Powers, co-author of *The Keizer (Keizur) Story*, Wild has pieced together captions and stories to go along with the photos that were donated or loaned to the Keizer Heritage Society.

"It was definitely a community project," she said of the book and all the help that she has received.

Sitting down to talk with Wild is being invited on an intimate whirlwind tour of the city's past. Tales of love and loss as well as devotion and charity, are all told breathlessly and with great enthusiasm. It's hard not to get caught up in her excitement.



Dee Moore for the Keizertimes
Tammy Wild is an education assistant at Forest Ridge Elementary and a volunteer at the Keizer Heritage Museum.

"My grandma lived on Fillmore Street between Elizabeth and Delight Streets. The streets were named by the founders after their wives and daughters." She smiles at this discovery it's another piece of the puzzle.

"People don't realize what they have," Wild said. She is

referring to old family photos, letters and cards which will often as not reference or show a place long forgotten.

During the day she works for the Salem-Keizer School District as an assistant helping children with special needs. After hours she is an avid his-

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From keyboards to wrenches, he keeps civic center humming

By DEE MOORE
For the Keizertimes

The first thing that you see as you walk into facilities maintenance technician, Dan Collingham's office at the Keizer Civic Center is a desk chair lying on its back atop a large island in the middle of the room.

All around the island are tools and more tools.

The room is enormous with high ceilings and cabinetry occupying every open space that isn't home to a large tool or ladder.

It's like a garage or a tool shed with good lighting, a desk and a computer and every conceivable device known to mankind for making repairs.

Collingham describes himself as a jack-of-all-trades but master of none. He knows a little about everything and he is always ready to learn something new.

He is a very personable fellow who doesn't meet a stranger. The talk flows easily as he mentions that the chair is the latest in a list of things

he needs to get done today.

"There is not one person of the city that I don't interact with," Collingham said.

This ability is perhaps his real skill. It has definitely helped him connect with and mentor the youngsters from peer court who perform their community service hours with him.

"I try to mentor them, give them positive encouragement," he said.

Most of these youth are middle school or high school

age. He tries to maintain this connection when he sees the kids out and about. He wants them to know that there are people who care.

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Dee Moore for the Keizertimes
Dan Collingham is a jack-of-all-trades at the Keizer Civic Center.

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