

# Keizertimes

SECTION A

JUNE 29, 2018

\$1.00



## The Absent Village

There are up to 5 displaced children in a typical Marion County foster home and community support is at a low point

By CASEY CHAFFIN  
*Keizertimes intern*

Two weeks ago, three siblings came to the Department of Human Services Child Welfare Office for foster placement. Immediately, several Child Welfare staff began trying to find one foster home for all three kids, because sustaining remaining family ties is a priority. Other work was cast aside, and they spent an entire day searching for a placement.

They were unsuccessful. “We ended up separately placing them in three different homes and out of county,” said Gwen Slippy, Marion County’s Foster Parent Recruitment, Retention and Training Specialist. No Marion County

foster homes had the space.

This is a day in the life of the DHS Child Welfare Office. As of the latest DHS Child Welfare count, there were 603 kids in foster care in Marion County. 204 of those kids are in “child specific” homes, meaning they’ve been placed with certified relatives or with other people in their lives who certified their home for fostering. That leaves the remaining 399 children to be placed in 77 general-certified homes—an average of about five foster children per home.

According to DHS policy, single foster parents may have up to four children, including their biological children, in the home. Couples may have

up to seven children in the home. Due to an extreme shortage of certified foster parents, these higher numbers are the new normal for those fostering.

These circumstances are especially difficult when a single foster home takes on multiple children who aren’t related to each other. In this instance, “It could be that that foster parent is working four different cases, which means four different caseworkers, four different attorneys, four different visits per week. Not

### FOSTER CARE

The foster care system in Marion county is struggling to meet demand. This is the first part of a continuing series in the *Keizertimes* investigating the state of local foster care and shedding light on ways to get involved. Check back next week for another installment.

every home is that way, but to give that perspective for some homes, that’s the craziness of Please see FOSTER, Page A4



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald  
Karlee Miller, whose left leg was amputated when she was 5 years old, pushes a weight sled across the gym at CS Defining Fitness on River Road. Miller is training for the 2020 Paralympics.

## Paralympic hopeful trains in Keizer

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
*Of the Keizertimes*

Karlee Miller has to deal with the loss of a leg in addition to all of the other challenges that face teenage girls, but she tries to make the best of it.

She likes to let her T-shirts speak for her in regard to the missing leg. She has one that reads, “What are you looking at you two-legged freak” another states that the shirt “cost an arm and a leg.”

“But I got it for half price,” said Karlee with a smile and laugh.

Karlee’s left leg was amputated well above the knee at the age of 5 as the result of cancer that first infected her muscles and then moved to the bone. She’s been cancer-free for the past 11 years, but a combination of her own inner determination and a Nike sponsorship has her sights set on a lofty goal: competing in swimming events at the 2020 Paralympic Games.

Karlee discovered competitive swimming only few years back – and it wasn’t love at first lap.

“After the first day, I didn’t want to do it anymore. My parents had me keep trying and, eventually, I learned to enjoy it,” Karlee said.

She’d tried other sports from running to softball, but one call by a coach soured her on the idea of both of them.

“The coach pulled me out of the game when I was on base because he wanted a faster runner,” Karlee said. She quit softball in the middle of the season because the decision stung so much.

Karlee took up swimming about four years ago and began swimming competitively at 14. She had to figure out how to do it without the aid of prosthetic because, although there are models that are made for use in the water, the amputation left her with so little left of her

Please see OLYMPIAN, Page A8

## Sidewalk projects move ahead on parallel tracks

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
*Of the Keizertimes*

Members of the Keizer Traffic Safety, Bikeways and Pedestrian Committee are shifting into overdrive as they hone in on two potential projects to submit for state funding.

The group met Thursday, June 14, and continued dis-

cussions regarding what improvement projects in Keizer would be the best contenders for funds being made available through a transportation package approved by the Oregon Legislature in 2017.

At the recommendation of Mike Jaffe, transportation program director for the Mid-

Please see TRACKS, Page A4

## A little bit country



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald  
Nora Krehbiel, Julia Lopez and Rick Krehbiel check out a chicken at the Willamette Lutheran Retirement Community Country Fair Friday, June 22. For more photos, See Page A4.



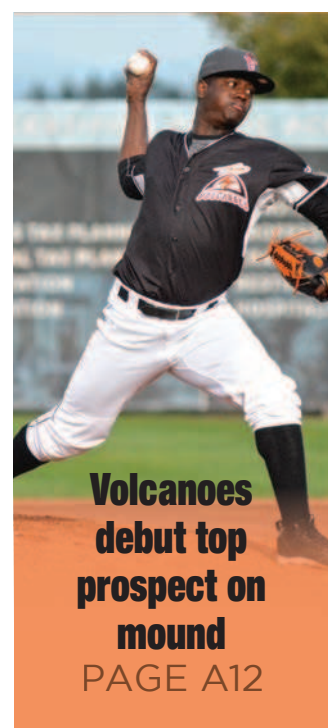
Happy Independence Day!

KLL All-Stars win district title  
PAGE A12



McNary senior awards

PAGE A10, A11



Volcanoes debut top prospect on mound  
PAGE A12



**THE BMW OF SALEM PRICE MATCH PROMISE**

The Ultimate Driving Machine®

You should be shopping for your next new BMW at BMW of Salem. Because that’s the only place you’ll find the BMW of Salem price match promise. We’ll match the price on any identically equipped BMW from any of our competitors.

Special lease and finance offers will be available by BMW of Salem through BMW Financial Services.

**BMW of Salem**

1151 Van Ness Ave NE, Salem, OR 97301 . (855) 408-6768 . BMWofSalem.com

Present any BMW dealer’s unexpired new vehicle advertisement for verification. Other Lithia dealerships do not qualify. The competing offer must be available for immediate purchase at the advertised price. The competitor’s vehicle must be identically equipped as our in stock vehicle used for comparison.