

# KeizerCommunity

KEIZERTIMES.COM

## McNary adds music teachers

By DEREK WILEY  
Of the Keizertimes

McNary is rethinking how it serves students with its music programs.

Through the Contemporary Music Project (CMP), the high school is offering classes in guitar, piano, pop music performance, recording and producing, all based around contemporary pop, rock, jazz, hip hop and R&B styles of music.

"We want to provide more elective opportunities for our students," McNary principal Erik Jespersen said. "We want kids to have a great experience in their core classes but we also want to think creatively about how we can provide really cool elective opportunities for our kids as well."

CMP started out of discussions between McNary and Whiteaker Middle School choir directors Josh Rist and Andy Thomas.

"Josh and I started talking last summer and kind of dreaming," Thomas said.

"It's kind of one of these things that just fell into place. We didn't push hard on this. You can push on things and try to make it happen and typically it won't or if it does it's not the right thing.

We didn't force. We just had conversations and it just started naturally falling into place."

Thomas, who has taught at Whiteaker for the last 11 years, will start each day at the middle school directing the a Capella group before school and then leading the boys choir during first period. He'll then teach five classes at McNary.

"The cool thing about this scenario is I'm getting to create a curriculum that goes six through 12," Thomas said. "I like that element."

Thomas, who was named the Salem-Keizer School District's 2017 Music Educator of the Year, receives calls every year asking him to apply for high school jobs.

"I always keep an ear open but life has taught me when you have a good thing going select very carefully changes. Whiteaker has been an amazing for 11 years.

"The admin, the people, the Keizer community, so for me to get to do this is a win-win-win. I get to develop a new program, a program that I love, stay in the Keizer area. We just have this new innovative thing we're going to be doing. It's all really exciting."

Keizer is also getting a new



KEIZERTIMES/Derek Wiley  
Andy Thomas is leading the Contemporary Music Project at McNary High School while Rebecca Hollen is directing choirs at McNary and Whiteaker Middle School.

music teacher in Rebecca Hollen, the former choir director at Walker Middle School, who will split her time between Whiteaker and McNary.

Hollen will teach three choirs at the middle school



and the girls choir at McNary.

The first CMP Music Festival, open to sixth through 12th graders, is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 27.

McNary will also host a cabaret fundraiser, talent

show, battle of the bands and coffee shops.

"Creating contemporary music is more prevalent in our society than ever and the schools aren't giving kids this type of a program," Thomas said. "It's an exciting time for

more kids to get involved with the arts and kids that aren't traditionally in band, choir or orchestra. They're out here in this school and we want a place for them. This is a perfect venue."



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## Shred day



PHOTO/Lyndon Zaitz

Craig Williams, manager of the Keizer OS Federal Credit Union branch, accepts documents for shredding at the 2018 Shred Day event held at the Volcanoes Stadium. More than 13,000 pounds of paper were accepted along with 500 pounds of food donated for the Marion-Polk Food Share and nearly \$500 in cash. Four hundred fifty-nine cars came to Shred Day.

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We are honored to have Dr. Michael Murray as our Chief Science Officer. Dr. Murray is the author of over 40 books, including The Encyclopedia of Natural Medicine. Additionally, he is responsible for bringing some of your favorite products to North America such as Turmeric, Glucosamine, Ginkgo Biloba, and more. His expertise is a resource for our customers, who can be sure they're getting expertly crafted formulas for optimal health benefits from Enzymedica. As we look to the future, we hope you'll join us as we strive to continue bringing natural health and wellness innovations to the world.



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