

Keizertimes

SECTION A

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Keizer has a reading problem

Roughly 45% of McNary freshmen can't read at grade level

By MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

It's no secret low-literacy levels are a problem in the United States.

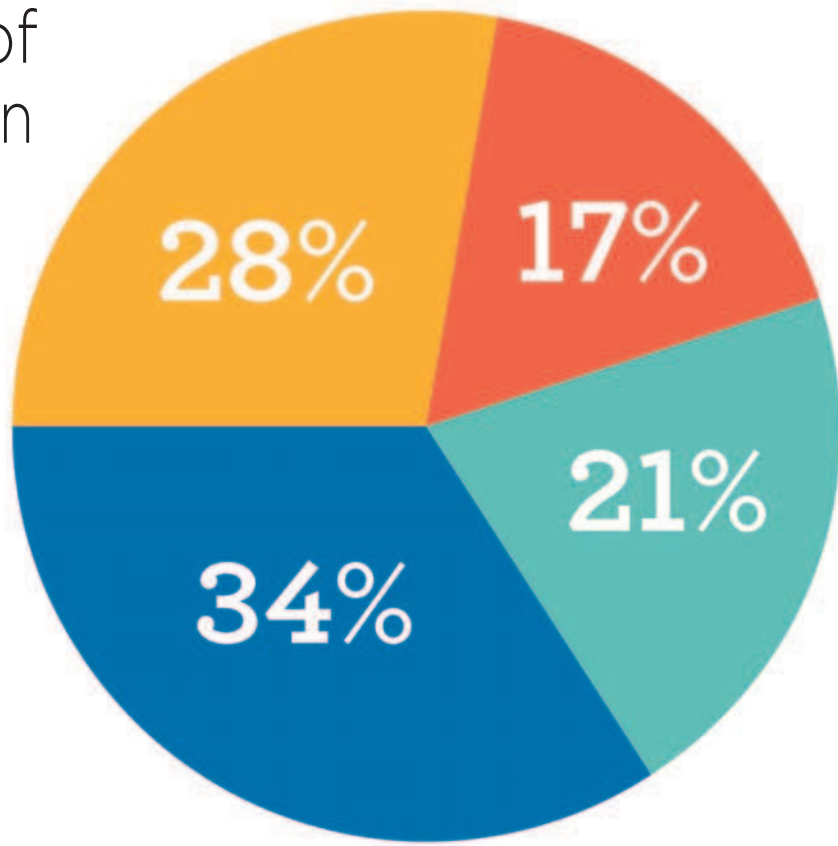
According to ProLiteracy, more than 30 million adults in the country cannot read, write or do math above a third-grade level.

The issue is now hitting close to home at McNary High School with 45 percent of 501 incoming freshman reading below grade level, which caused McNary administration to take action.

"We saw that as a challenge. We wanted to figure out ways to get kids caught up," McNary principal Erik Jespersen said. "We're always going to have kids below grade level, it just is a little more elevated this year."

The issue was discovered by McNary vice principal Susanne Stefani.

Every year, middle schoolers in the Salem-Keizer School District take a Scholastic Reading Inventory Test (SRI). However, the numbers were not initially made accessible to McNary administra-



Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
BR-915	916-980	981-1150	1151-1700+

KEIZERTIMES/Candace Johnson

Reading inventory scores from the McNary High School incoming freshmen class show that 45 percent of students can't read at grade level. Only proficient and advanced level scorers were at grade level or above.

tion, much to the dismay of Stefani.

"It was difficult to pin down someone who could get me a report," Stefani said.

In the spring of 2018, McNary held a forecasting ses-

sion where students sign up for classes for the next school year. Eighth-graders preparing for their freshmen year would have their middle school English teachers send course recommendations for what high

school classes they should be placed in.

At the start of the school year, McNary had literacy tutorial classes for students who were deficient in reading and Please see READ, Page A6

Remedial classes nixed, catch-up falls to regular teachers

By MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

At the start of second semester, which was Jan. 28, the Salem-Keizer School District made the decision to discontinue the literacy tutorials, or any English elective that was a substitute for students that were below grade-level in reading and writing.

"The rest of the district shifted away from this when we transitioned to the Common Core State Standards," said Lillian Govus, who is the director of community relations and communications for the Salem-Keizer School District. "(McNary) had been tracking kids into a below-grade level course that they are discontinuing next year."

While McNary Vice Principal Susanne Stefani was a bit caught off guard, she understood why the decision was made.

"The concern was with lit tutorial, but it was also important to the district that (students) have access to [grade nine] English curriculum along with their peers so Please see CATCH-UP, Page A6



Celts upset Saxons on road

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No Adults Allowed: Love is in the air

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Comment on River Road future Tuesday

An open house and public comment workshop on the Keizer Revitalization Plan is scheduled Tuesday, Feb 12, at the Keizer Civic Center.

"This is not a formal work session, just an opportunity to see what is being talked about," said Nate Brown, Keizer development director.

The Revitalization Plan is focused on Keizer's commercial corridors - River Road North and Cherry Avenue North - and what, if any, action should be taken to streamline aesthetics

and transportation. The plan is being developed with consultants from OTAK, Inc., Johnson Economics and Kittleson and Associates. The open house will run from 6 to 8 p.m.

"There isn't a formal presentation. You can spend as much, or as little, of your time as you desire checking out what you are interested in. We really want people comfortable giving feedback in an informal and comfortable setting," Brown said.

Please see RIVER RD, Page A10



McNary club advocates for inclusion

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First Citizen Vickie Jackson's dedication to the Keizer community is much more than lip service. KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald

Keizer's First Citizen

(Wo)man with a plan

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

There is a framed note inside the meeting room of AccurAccounts, that explains why its owner, Vickie Jackson, was selected as Keizer's newest First Citizen.

To paraphrase, it states: Jackson doesn't make appointments between noon and 1:30 p.m. on Thursday because that time belongs to her community.

"It was given to me on the day I joined Rotary," Jackson said. "It's important to me."

That is the first thing the note signals. Jackson joined the Rotary Club of Keizer in 1990, and she was just the sixth female member of the longstanding Keizer group.

At the time, Jackson was an employee of AccurAccounts and she went to her boss to ask permission.

"She paid for my dues and

we thought it would be a way to promote the business, I might have known otherwise. You join Rotary to give back to the community," she said.

In her 29 years as a Rotarian, Jackson served as treasurer, president (twice, including being the first female president of the Keizer club) and has a legacy of financial donation that amounts to \$5,000 in sustained giving. She also led an effort within the Rotary Club to donate \$10,000 toward a game room at the Keizer chapter of the Boys & Girls Club on Noren Avenue Northeast.

However, those accomplishments barely scratch the surface, which also goes back to her induction into Rota-

ry. Jackson was sixth months pregnant at the time and another member of the club said he expected her to become a stay-at-home mom in the near future.

"There's one way to take a statement like that, but I heard I didn't need to stay home to be part of my child's life, I needed to be involved," Jackson said.

After buying the business from her former boss, Jackson started volunteering one full day a month at Gubser Elementary School after her oldest son, Nicholas, began attending there.

"I would help teachers, read to kids, have lunch with them and go outside for recess with them. That was part of Please see JACKSON, Page A10

"I needed to be involved."

— Vickie Jackson



Submitted Amelie Bell tosses snow in the air after waking up to discover she had the day off school Tuesday, Feb. 5. Check out more reader-submitted photos on Page A4.



South snaps McNary girls' win streak

PAGE A11



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