

# KeizerCommunity

KEIZERTIMES.COM

## Family Literacy Night a hit at Keizer Elementary

BY MATT RAWLINGS  
Of the Keizertimes

Coming into the school year, it was a goal of Keizer Elementary principal Christine Bowlby to increase family involvement at the school.

The event that Keizer hosted earlier this month showed how that plan is coming into action.

Back on March 4, more than 100 families showed up to participate in Family Literacy Night, which was dedicated to having parents and kids participate in reading and other fun literacy activities.

Along with getting families to read together, Bowlby also wanted parents to come away with teaching tools that they could use at home.

“Parents are the kids’ first teachers. Our goal was to have parents walk away with some strategies that they could do at home to help improve their kids’ reading,” Bowlby said.

Teachers and staff had been working on planning this event since the beginning of November.

“Of course we are hopeful to see all of our Keizer families there, but to us, even getting just a handful is worth the planning,” Keizer teacher Taylor Miller said. “Not only did we see some parents that we have not seen much in the regular year, but we also saw the excitement in kids’ faces when they got to show their families some fun reading activities.”

Families were greeted with free pizza and beverages to start the evening. Then, kids and parents got the opportunity to engage in multiple different literacy stations.

“The best way to fully help a child succeed is to work hand-in-hand with their parents and get them as involved as possible. We wanted to create a night where families could come, hang out together, gather new ideas or games they could use at home to help



their child, and most importantly, build community within the school,” Keizer teacher Shawna Kirch said.

“This gave parents a night to not only enjoy some pizza with their kiddos, but also mingle with their teachers, participate in some fun literacy stations and have some tools to use at home to help and encourage at home reading.”

“Educating kids is a partnership between the parents and the school.”

— Christine Bowlby

One of the fun activities kids got to participate in was a sight words card game — which featured the top 100 most commonly used sight words in the English language. Each participant is given a card face down and whoever flips it over the fastest and reads the word first gets the point — games were also available for Spanish speaking students.

There were also flash cards available with reading and comprehension questions for parents to quiz their children — families were able to take the questions home for practice.



More than 100 families showed up for Family Literacy Night on March 4 at Keizer Elementary.

KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings

Making sure that every student had a book by the end of the evening was a big point-of-emphasis for Bowlby.

“We have some families that don’t have a large library for their kiddos for a variety of different reasons, so we wanted kids to be able to walk away with a book at the end of the evening,” Bowlby said.

Having one family involvement night per year is

common practice for Keizer, and other schools in the district — often dedicated to a variety of different school subjects like math and science.

In January, Keizer even held a Family Coding Night, where kids and parents got to learn about how to program computers.

While these events are mostly utilized for educational purposes, Keizer also held a Family Movie Night

earlier this month.

“It’s all about getting our families comfortable with coming into a school and knowing that this is a partnership. Educating kids is a partnership between the parents and the school,” Bowlby said.

Because of the success of this event, Keizer is already talking and planning on doing Family Literacy Night next year and making it even better.

“As a teacher, I love to see the parents hanging out and learning with their kids. We see their children every day, but we don’t always get the opportunity to build relationships with their parents,” Kirch said. “Elementary kids love to see their teachers outside of school time and love to share what goes on at school with their parents. Events like this build community and bring everyone together.”

## Keizer Police Department hosting Coffee with a Cop at Starbucks

The Keizer Police Department will partner with Starbucks at 4943 River Road N on Saturday, March 30 to host the Department’s sixth Coffee with a Cop event from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

This event provides citizens and law enforcement personnel the opportunity

to meet and engage in conversations in a casual and positive environment. Officers will greet customers at the door, at the coffee counter, and at the drive-thru window.

There are no agendas or presentations, and citizens are welcome to bring any

questions or concerns they have, or simply come in and say hello while grabbing their morning coffee.

For more information call or email Keizer Police Department Community Outreach Specialist Dorothy Diehl at (503)856-3472 or diehid@keizer.org.

## Annual book sale at Salem Library

Friends Of The Salem Public Library will be having their annual Spring Book Sale on Friday, April 5, Saturday, April 6, and Sunday, April 7. The Friday and Saturday sale will go from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Sunday is

Bag Day when participants can purchase a bag of books for \$4 from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The sale will be located at the Salem Public Library 585 Liberty Street SE.

More than 20,000 books will be available for purchase and deals include hardcovers for \$1.25, paperback for 75 cents, children’s and teens books for 50 cents, and more.

For more information, you can visit salemfriends.org.

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### puzzle answers

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