



File

Celebrate with Mom at KFD breakfast

The Keizer Volunteer Firefighters Association will hold its annual Mother's Day Breakfast from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, May 12 at the Keizer Fire Station 661 Chemawa Road NE.

The menu will include pancakes, eggs, and ham. Attendees will also be served milk, coffee and orange juice.

The cost for this year's breakfast is \$6 for adults and \$3 for children under the age of 12. All proceeds from the event will go to programs and events sponsored by the Keizer Volunteer Firefighters Association.

5 residents of SE Keizer: KeizerFEST isn't welcome

It's not often a declaration during public testimony shocks the members of the Keizer City Council, but members of the Southeast Keizer Neighborhood Association (SEKNA) pulled out a doozy on Monday, May 6.

Joe Tillman, SEKNA's messenger and a volunteer in city committees, read a brief statement that left no room for interpretation: "Due to the blatant disregard of the concerns of residents and businesses, KeizerFEST is no longer welcome in the neighborhood. We really thought this would be a wonderful thing and it has been less than so."

Tillman told the council that a vote was taken at the last meeting of SEKNA and it was unanimously decided to deliver the message to the council. When asked how many members of SEKNA attended the last meeting, Tillman said four, until he was corrected by a member of the audience that there were actually five members in attendance the night the vote was taken.

Sherrie Gottfried, an employee of The Grass Hut II, was the audience member who offered the correction. The Grass Hut has had longstanding disputes with the Keizer Chamber of Commerce, the organizer of KeizerFEST, over the closure of roads leading to their business during the annual event. KeizerFEST headquarters are located at the Keizer Lions Club property which sits cater-corner to Grass Hut II.

At an April meeting of the Keizer City Council, Gottfried presented information to the council about lost business and concerns over disability parking. She said that the given reasons for closing the street, for safety and ADA parking, did not comport with what happened in the space. Closing the street led to accidents and near-misses and there were never any signs put in place to delineate where handicapped parking was available.

Moreover, Gottfried's documents show Grass Hut II lost about a third of its regular foot traffic during KeizerFEST

weekend and about 20 percent of its expected revenue.

KeizerFEST organizers plan to reduce the size of the closure this year and that appeared to alleviate some of Gottfried's concerns until the SEKNA vote was presented to the council.

Council members appeared stunned by the announcement that KeizerFEST wasn't welcome, but Councilor Marlene Parsons leapt to the defense of the Keizer Chamber and chided SEKNA for representing the vote as having more weight than the five people who attended its most recent meeting.

"The Chamber has worked with businesses to get a positive result. I think what needs to happen is a conversation with all 37,000 residents of Keizer. I think that needs to happen with the citizens and you guys in the forefront of that," Parsons said.

"I know that they are working hard to please everybody and every neighbor," added Mayor Cathy Clark.

Council takes first steps toward charter review

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The Keizer City Council took the first steps toward forming a city charter review committee at its meeting Monday, May 6.

The council wants the committee to take a fresh look at the city charter with one goal being the removal of anti-LGBTQIA language that has been in place since 1993.

The council determined that the committee will be comprised of seven members, two of whom will be appointed city councilors and the re-

maining five will be registered Keizer voters. The council still has to adopt a resolution that formally creates the committee, but those interested in volunteering will apply through the city's Volunteer Coordinating Committee.

"We have a tremendous wealth of expertise in our community and the opportunity to bring them in for a short-term project," said Mayor Cathy Clark.

Councilor Roland Herrera, one of the most ardent supporters of removing Section 44, the anti-LGBTQIA sec-

tion, said he would like to see a focus put on diversity as the committee is formed.

"We had one group look at the charter after this language was added and they recommended no changes," Herrera said.

While the revising or removal of Section 44, is a priority, the task force is expected to look at other potential changes that would bring the city charter in line with others

in the state. Voters will have to approve any proposed changes, but the city can place a measure on the ballot at a reduced cost in 2020.

Section 44, which was approved by Keizer voters in 1993, prohibits the city from: extending minority status to individuals based on sexual orientation and expending funds that "promote homosexuality or express approval of homosexual behavior." Voters

approved the measure with a 55 percent majority.

The Oregon Legislature has already passed a measure making all such local provisions unenforceable, but then returned to the issue in 2017 with a statute putting any local government that tried to enforce on the hook for court challenges. Despite the neutering, the language has remained in the city's founding document for 25 years.

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