



KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings  
Hannah Ebner looks to toss the ball to first base after fielding a ground ball.

## CELTS,

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Cluster to score with a sharp single between third base and shortstop on the next at-bat. Alexa Cepeda then followed with a sacrifice fly to left field, putting McNary up 3-1.

Bend pitcher Lena Zahniser was able to hold McNary without a run in the third and fourth innings. The Lava Bears even cut the deficit to one in the top of the fourth. But the Celtics offense began to break out in the bottom of the fifth.

Danner and Kate Ronning began the McNary threat with back-to-back one-out singles, which was followed by an RBI-double to center field by Cluster.

Schwab capped off the inning with a two-run single up the middle to extend McNary's lead to 6-2.

In the bottom of the sixth, the Celtics continued to pour it on.

McNary got six runs on five hits in the inning as they ended the game early once they gained a 10-run lead.

It is the second time in three years that the Celtics have been crowned league champions. But that didn't make the accomplishment any less enjoyable.

"It honestly feels so good to win league. We have all just gelled really well together," Ronning said.

The Celtics will host their first round playoff game on Monday, May 20. The opponent has still been undetermined. But one thing is for sure; this team has loftier goals and expectations that go beyond just winning a conference title.

"We want to win state. That is the ultimate goal. But we mainly just want to go out there and just play our best for each other," Danner said.

Wise also added: "I think we could make a good run in the playoffs. We have the hitting, the speed and the pitching."

"They just have a lot of faith and trust in each other."

## Volcanoes host first FanFest



Submitted  
Tony Torcato, a veteran of the San Francisco Giants, autographs a baseball for visitors at FanFest.

### BY HERB SWETT For the Keizertimes

Nearly 600 fans of the Salem-Keizer Volcanoes got a preview of the 2019 season by visiting the team's first ever FanFest event on Saturday, May 11 at Volcanoes Stadium.

Mitche Graf, the new president of the team, met the fans and told them about the expanded sound system and the new food concessions. He directed them to the table where former players in the San Francisco Giants organization were signing autographs and set aside time for aspiring anthem singers to be auditioned.

"It was a great turnout," he said, considering that the Volcanoes had never had such an event before.

Graf, who lives in Canby, owns a manufacturing company and catering and consulting businesses. His wife, Tami, will share in his duties with the Volcanoes.

Leading off for the autograph signers was Tony Torcato, who played for the Giants as a utility outfielder

and corner infielder for four seasons and shares a distinction with Mickey Mantle — a lifetime batting average of .298.

After Torcato came Daniel Turpin and Joe Paterson, both of whom were drafted by the Giants after pitching for Oregon State University. Neither reached major league baseball or even played long in the minors.

Between 15 and 20 people auditioned for anthem singing and several food vendors passed out free samples.

Leading the Volcanoes will be a partly new staff. Mark Hallberg is the new manager and last year was the fundamentals coach. He played in the Arizona Diamondbacks organization as a shortstop, second baseman and third baseman.

The new batting coach is Doug Clark, who played 14 professional games after being drafted from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Returning to coach the pitchers is Dwight Bernard,

who pitched briefly for the Milwaukee Brewers and the New York Mets. He has been coaching for several minor league teams since 1986.

Nestor Rojas succeeds Hallberg as fundamentals coach. A native of Venezuela, he was a backup catcher for several minor league teams and has coached and managed in the Giants organization since 2003.

Also from Venezuela is Victor Cairo, the bullpen catcher. He was a reserve catcher for the Volcanoes for part of last season.

None of them showed up Saturday, because they were on duty with the Giants organization. Broadcasters for radio station KYKN, however, did show up; they will be providing play-by-play this season after an absence of over a decade.

This year's season will start June 14 with a home game against the Boise Hawks. Regular-season play will conclude Sept. 2 with a home game against the Eugene Emeralds.

## ATHLETE of the Week



presented by



### JOEL DUTCHER Senior at McNary High School

After placing 14th at the Mountain Valley Conference District Tournament, Dutcher placed second at the Special District 3 Regional Tournament on Monday, May 6 at the Oregon Golf Association Golf Course in Woodburn.

Dutcher shot one-over-par (73) with five birdies, qualifying him for the state tournament for the second straight season.

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