MCFD1 eyes new levy

District wants to add staff to meet rising demand

Marion County Fire District #1 (MCFD#1) wants to hire two firefighter/paramedics to respond to increasing call volumes.

Doing so would require an operating levy increase from taxpayers, and the district is holding two meetings to take public input on the issue.

The meetings will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 5 at 5 p.m. at the MCFD Four Corners location (300 Cordon Road N.E. in Salem), and Nov. 21 at 5 p.m. at the Brooks Training Center (4910 Brooklake Road N.E. in Salem).

The public is invited and encouraged to attend. Those who would like to provide input but are unable to attend are encouraged to contact Fire Chief Kyle McMann at (503) 588-6535 or kylem@mcfd1.com. All comments are appreciated and become part of the public record.

The operating levy increase is proposed at 28 cents per $1,000 of assessed property value or $4.67 per month ($56 per year) for the owner of a home assessed at $200,000. If approved by the board of directors, the measure would be included on the ballot for the May 2020 primary election.

McMann said that the district started to see response times increase and developed a strategic plan to address that concern. The strategic plan is available on the website at www.mcfd1.com.

"The fact is that we have an aging population requiring more emergency services, and we don't have enough personnel to respond," said Chief McMann. "An incremental increase to our operating levy will help us meet this demand."

The district also is contending with an increase in emergency calls that happen back-to-back, and a sharp decrease in the number of volunteer firefighters serving the area. Volunteer participation has declined 52.4 percent, from 84 response volunteers to 40 since 2013. These issues impact the district's ability to get an effective response force on scene.

"Two more full-time firefighters in the immediate future will help," said McMann. "We will need additional personnel, but want to increase staffing gradually to minimize the impact to our taxpayers. This is the right way forward."

A portion of the operating levy increase also would be used to replace aging apparatus and equipment. Reliable apparatus is necessary to respond to calls, and also to maintain the Fire District's insurance rating which is linked to what home and business owners pay in premiums.

Sails up!

KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald

Shade sails were being installed at the Keizer Rapids Park Big Toy earlier this week. The city plans to keep the sails up for a few weeks before taking them down for the winter.

Holiday dinner talk can be more tolerable after CCC workshop

Chemeketa Community College will host a Better Angels Skills Workshop on Nov. 5. The community event is designed to teach attendees skills for having productive conversations across the political divide.

A limited number of seats are available for this event, which is scheduled from 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. on the Salem campus of Chemeketa Community College, Building 8, Room 215. To request a ticket for the workshop, email: mike.evans@chemeketa.edu.

Launched in 2016, Better Angels is a bipartisan citizen's movement to unify America. By bringing red and blue Americans together into a working alliance, Better Angels is building new ways to talk to one another, participate together in public life, and influence the direction of the nation.

BOY,

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process of turning south on River Road from Sam Orcutt Way when she collided with a 7-year-old boy.

The boy was crossing River Road on a bicycle at the time. The boy sustained a head injury as a result of the collision and was treated by medics at the scene and transported to Salem Health.

At approximately 6:20 p.m., the boy was flown by Life Flight from Salem Health to Legacy Emanuel Medical Center in Portland for further treatment.

The driver remained on scene and cooperated with investigators. Anyone who witnessed this incident is asked to contact Officer Martin Powell at 503-390-3713.

Witnesses sought in hit-and-run near Keizer Station

Keizer police are looking for anyone who might have witnessed a vehicle-on-pedestrian hit-an-run incident Friday, Oct. 25, near Keizer Station.

Police were summoned to the intersection of Stadium Drive Northeast and Chemawa Road Northeast where a 30-year-old, legally blind woman was struck by a passing vehicle.

The victim told police she was crossing the street inside the crosswalk at that intersection when she was struck. The woman told officers a man, who she presumed was operating the car that hit her, briefly stopped and asked if she was OK, but left before she was able to respond.

The woman walked to a nearby business and the employees there called for medics who responded and treated her before she was taken by private vehicle to Salem Health for treatment of minor injuries.

Investigators are seeking the identity of the driver who struck the woman. Anyone with information is asked to contact Officer Jorge Miranda at 503-856-3475.

One death in I-5 crash that backed up traffic to Keizer

Numerous local law enforcement agencies, including the Keizer Police Department (KPD), responded to a fatal car crash near Woodburn on Interstate 5 Saturday, Oct. 26.

About 4 a.m., Oregon State Police (OSP) troopers and emergency personnel responded to the report of a four vehicle crash on I-5 at milepost 269.

A preliminary investigation revealed that a black 2019 Mazda sedan, operated by Valeria Villasenor-Sibrian, age 23, from Salem, was traveling southbound on I-5 when it rear-ended a silver 2013 Toyota Scion, operated by Artemio Jaen Davila, age 24, from Beaverton.

Davila's vehicle left the roadway, went underneath the cable barrier in the median, and was struck by a northbound gray 2013 Hyundai Santa Fe, operated by Vanessa Underwood, age 55, from Salem.

Davila suffered fatal injuries and was pronounced deceased at the scene. A passenger in Davila's vehicle left the location on foot and was not located.

A fourth vehicle, a white 2017 Dodge Ram pickup, operated by Theresa Peters, age 52, from Salem, was traveling northbound and struck the Hyundai Santa Fe.

Five passengers were transported to the Salem Hospital, three with serious injuries.

I-5 northbound and one lane of I-5 southbound were closed for approximately six hours. At times during the investigation, traffic was backed up to the Keizer exit on I-5.

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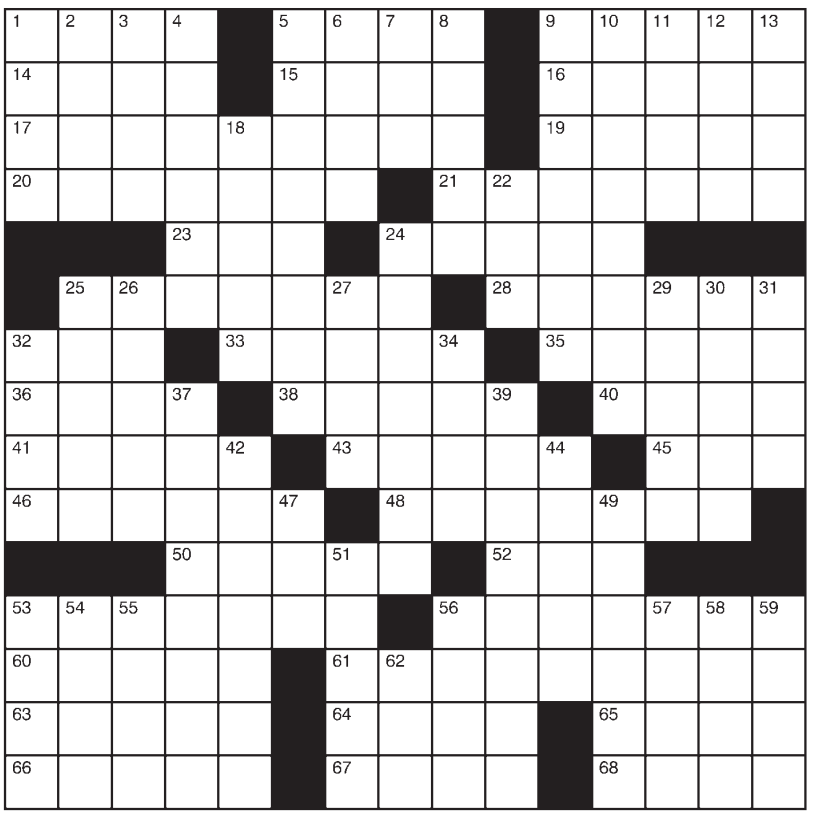

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