



Volcanoes **Out?**

Up to MLB

By **MATT RAWLINGS**
Of the Keizertimes

The Salem-Keizer Volcanoes have been a staple of the community for more than two decades. But due to a new proposal from Major League Baseball (MLB), the future of the organization could be in jeopardy.

As a part of their plan to overhaul the current minor league system, the MLB has recently created a proposal to cut ties with approximately 25 percent of their lower level minor league teams (42 to be exact), including the Salem-Keizer Volcanoes.

If the proposal comes to fruition, the Volcanoes would lose their affiliation with the San Francisco Giants and be forced to play as an independent organization — that is, if they continue to maintain operations.

The Volcanoes are one of two teams in the Northwest League that would be getting the axe under this proposal — with the other team being the Tri-City Dust Devils, who are affiliated with the San Diego Padres.

The proposal would take place after the 2020 season.

“The Salem-Keizer Volcanoes are staunchly opposed to any proposal by Major League Baseball that eliminates Minor League Baseball from the Salem-Keizer area, or any other city in America,” said Jerry Walker, who has been the owner of

KEIZERTIMES/Andrew Jackson

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City council to hold hearing on rent burdens

By **ERIC A. HOWALD**
Of the Keizertimes

The Keizer City Council is hosting a public hearing on rent burdens in Keizer at its meeting Monday, Dec. 2.

Residents can show up at the meeting, at 7 p.m. at the Keizer Civic Center, and sign up to talk about how rent burdens have affected them and what solutions might be pursued. Written testimony can also be mailed to: Tracy Davis, City Recorder, P.O. Box 21000, Keizer, OR 97303, or dropped off at the civic, 930 Chemawa Road N.E. (deadline is 5 p.m. on Dec. 2).

HOW TO TELL IF YOU ARE RENT BURDENED:

If you rent a home or apartment and spend more than 50 percent of your gross household income on rent, you and your family are considered severely rent burdened.

However, you are not alone. Last year, the City of Keizer received a letter from the state’s Department of Housing and Community Services designating Keizer as one of more than two dozen cities that fall into the severely rent burdened category. For the state, it means more

than a third of Keizer’s renter households meet the rent burdened standard.

A more detailed look at Keizer’s rental picture was revealed as the city considered its future housing needs. That study found 54 percent of renters in Keizer are paying more than a third of their monthly income on rent, and 25 percent of homeowners are in the same situation when it comes to their mortgage. Nearly every family making less than \$35,000 annually in Keizer is rent burdened and it includes elderly residents facing rising costs in manufactured home communities throughout the city as well as younger residents just starting out.

When *Keizertimes* asked Facebook followers about their experiences with rent burdens, multiple commenters noted their rent has climbed by leaps and bounds in recent years, often with little or no renovation to the facilities themselves. Some reported their rents had increased by \$500 or more in the past six years and several had taken on additional work to make ends meet. For others, high rent impacted them when it came to making decisions about

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Growth benchmarks could come to fruition

By **ERIC A. HOWALD**
Of the Keizertimes

Earlier this year, the Keizer Planning Commission recommended that the city absorb as much of its growth as possible within its existing boundaries.

However, the commission also tasked city staff with bringing back benchmarks that could show the city is moving toward expanding its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

At the planning Commission meeting Wednesday, Nov. 13, Commu-

nity Development Director Nate Brown unveiled what the benchmarks will be:

“...there are three different paths Keizer could choose: divorce, stay the same, or increase density while sending some growth outside of Keizer”

— Nate Brown,
Keizer Community
Development Director

- Receive a Keizer-specific estimate of expected population growth and begin to address specific deficits that are revealed when that happens.

- Assess regional growth needs that affect both Salem and Keizer, which are the only two cities in the state that share a common UGB.

- Analyze the impacts of growth on infrastructure such

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Dramatic changes proposed at KLL Park

By **ERIC A. HOWALD**
Of the Keizertimes

Youth baseball and softball in Keizer might look a lot different come 2021.

Members of the Keizer Little League Park Long Term Planning Task Force met Thursday, Nov. 21, for the final time, and the potential changes discussed included moving all non-tournament Keizer Little League and McNary Youth Baseball (MYB) games to weeknights while reserving weekends for tournaments organized by for-profit groups.

“It seems like we accidentally stum-

bled on what could be a very reasonable win-win for everyone,” said Matt Lawyer, the Keizer Parks Advisory Board representative on the task force.

While nothing will be set in stone until the city awards a new contract for KLL Park management next fall, the group generally agreed on a document that will be used to draft a request for a proposal. Until now, a single group has managed the park, but the goal of the task force is to cope with a way for Little League and MYB to share the park more equally.

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Deck our walls with coloring contest
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LUCAS joins Keizer Fire District
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No Adults
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Titus is World Cup bound
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