

# KeizerCommunity

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## A year later, St. Monica's is home to 11 families, 16 kids

By LAUREN MURPHY  
Of the Keizertimes

In 2018, Catholic Community Services (CCS) opened the St. Monica Apartments on Appleblossom Avenue, a complex that serves single mothers in the community. Since then, it's been filling in a gap the organization discovered among its other programs.

The idea for the apartments stemmed from the Taaffe Homes, which CCS has been involved with since the 1980s. Father Charles Taaffe saw a need for affordable housing for young mothers (ages 12-20) and wanted to provide highly structured shelter, connection to community services and parenting guidance.

However, the Taaffe Homes were missing a subset of young mothers that, "didn't want to live in a Taaffe home but had significant needs around parenting skills and around having a safe place, having some coaching, having the support that they needed to be able to be really good parents," said Josh Graves, the executive director of Catholic Community Services. St. Monica's was born from that need.



KEIZERTIMES/Lauren Murphy

The St. Monica Apartments, a project of Catholic Community Services, fill a gap in the low-income housing need and supports residents with other services.

"It's not a transitional living program," Graves said, "It is truly affordable housing."

He said there is no expectation that a family move out of the apartments once they move in.

The complex has the capacity to hold 12 families and currently houses 11 families, with 16 children in total, ranging from 1 to 8 years old.

"There's a lot of kids, and that's what it's for," Graves said. In addition to providing

residence services, the community teaches residents how to be good tenants and what makes for a good landlord. St. Monica's offers a family coach that works with all of the families as needed. The family coach works with residents on parenting skills and connects them with resources.

"We're really working hard to connect to people with existing services and, then, if they have a need that doesn't fit with those ... then we try to fill the gap," Graves said.

There are two "rules" that preside over St. Monica's, the first is the Golden Rule, treat others how you would want to be treated.

"The second rule is one we made up. We call it the Iron Rule," Graves said. The Iron

Rule states that CCS won't do things for people that people can and should do for themselves.

"We'll do everything we can to support a person in developing their own strength, their own guidance in their own strength. But we also, we expect people to do everything they can for themselves and then we coach them along the way," Graves said.

CCS serves the community, regardless of religious affiliation.

"One of the things we pride ourselves on is there is no expectation of people being Catholic or having a specific faith background," Graves said.

Contact the reporter at reporter@keizertimes.com



KEIZERTIMES/Matt Rawlings

McNary's Riky Galvin and Brayden Menan during dress rehearsals for Hello Dolly!

## Curtain falls on Hello Dolly!

The McNary High School production of *Hello Dolly!* closes out with performances on Friday and Saturday, Jan. 17 and 18.

Show times are 7 p.m. on Friday and 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturday. Tickets are \$10 for the general public and \$8 for students and will be available at the door or online at mc-

nary-theater.ticketleap.com.

In late 19th century New York, matchmaker Dolly Gallagher Levi takes a trip to Yonkers to seek a wife for the well-known "half-a-millionaire" Horace Vandergelder. However, it becomes clear that Dolly is hoping to be one the one that Vandergelder chooses as a spouse.

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