

## DREAMING OF A PUBLIC LIBRARY

### New effort to bring a public library to Keizer begins

By ERIC A. HOWALD  
*Of the Keizertimes*

Keizer newcomers typically have a number of questions when they arrive, among the most frequent is: where's the library?

Depending on who is answering, there are two potential answers. The first answer involves the all-volunteer Keizer Community Library, which has performed as valiantly as anyone could ask for three decades but still has limited hours, space and resources. The second answer is: Salem.

For Keizerite Jane Herb, neither of those answers pass muster.

"The Keizer Community Library has been resilient, and it's a great start, but we are so close to being a public library — one full time position away from meeting the qualifications," said Herb, who started organizing a grassroots effort last year to establish a public library in Keizer and, potentially, some of the outlying Marion County areas like Brooks and Gervais.

Previously, city officials formed three different task forces to explore the possibilities of a Keizer library, the last made its final recommendations as the bottom fell out of the economy in 2008.

Herb is building on some of the earlier efforts, but she's also casting a much wider net. She's found a number of local supporters to serve as an advisory board and is enlisting the help of the EveryLibrary Institute, a national political

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Keizer is the largest city in Oregon without a public library or branch. A group of local residents is attempting to reinvigorate talks of establishing a library district to cover Keizer, Brooks and Gervais. This is what a local library might look like based on averages of the libraries serving the next largest cities of Keizer, McMinnville, Ledding and McMinnville. Keizer is the next largest city with a library. McMinnville is the city smaller than Keizer with a library.



### LIBRARY CARD

**Location:** 1 central library

**Operating expenses:** \$2 million annually

**Expected annual visits:** 217,000

**Annual borrows:** 24,000 reaching about 65% of the district

**Associated Programs:** 602 annually (storytimes, author visits, education, etc.)

KEIZERTIMES/Andrew Jackson

### A brief history of Keizer library efforts

Keizer has a somewhat fraught history of investigating what it would take to establish its own public library.

In the summer of 2000, the Keizer City Council rejected an attempt to place a measure on the ballots would

have extended the Salem Area Library District into Keizer. The main concern was that there was no assurance a Keizer-based branch would be established. Instead, it commissioned a task force.

In 2001, the first Keizer Library

Task Force came back with a split recommendation. One faction wanted a traditional library that met the threshold of membership in the Chemeketa

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## Residents plead for better traffic mgmt



By ERIC A. HOWALD  
*Of the Keizertimes*

A larger-than-normal crowd turned out at a meeting of the Keizer Traffic Safety, Pedestrian and Bikeways Committee to talk traffic Thursday, Feb. 13.

"We believe there is a problem. We want someone to acknowledge it and help solve it," said resident John Henry Maurice. "During my time on this committee, many people came over and over again to talk about the problem. We need a solution that is multifaceted and broad-based."

In 2019, members of the committee heard from most sectors of the city about speeding on neighborhood streets. Some of those involved are hoping a more united front pushes city officials to take action.

Carol Doerfler, president of the West Keizer Neighborhood Association, said speeding in neighborhoods is about more than safety alone.

"This has to do with property values. I have a neighbor who said they never would have bought their house if they knew how people sped down the street," Doerfler said. "I think for the city to ignore

this is just not right."

In response to many of the complaints, the Keizer Police Department took action of some sort. While traffic officers — there are only two and a sergeant — deploy in problem areas and others that are known to be longtime trouble spots, radar trailers and speed signs that notify drivers how fast they are traveling were deployed in almost every instance.

Keizertimes spoke with KPD traffic officers last month about speeding in neighborhoods. Lt. Trevor Wenning said they respond to many complaints by deploying unmanned controls and sharing data collected with concerned residents. Frequently, the data does not support the perceived need for enforcement. However, once those tools are put elsewhere in the city, the problems return, according to residents.

"When the trailers leave, the solution goes away," said Ken Gierloff, a resident of southeast Keizer.

Gierloff, a longtime participant in the Southeast Keizer Neighborhood Association (SEKNA), said one solution that bore fruit in the past was

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## KFD planning for more growth over next decade

By MATT RAWLINGS  
*Of the Keizertimes*

Last week, the Keizertimes reported on the massive increase in call volume that Keizer Fire District has gone through during the last 10 years.

In 2019, KFD received 5,678 calls for service, nearly a 32 percent increase from the 3,866 calls they received in 2009.

But in order to keep up with the consistent increase in call volume they have received over the last decade, KFD hopes to have logistical changes come to the department in the years to come.

"We're going to need to have a plan for the future, because if we go without for another 10 years, we could potentially have a 30 percent higher call volume and if we're already running 15 calls a day, we would be running more than 20 (calls per day) in 10 years," Keizer Fire Chief Jeff Cowan said. "That's the kind of growth we're dealing with."

According to Cowan, the department re-modeled its upstairs rooms, which allowed

them to house 16 people instead of 10. However, it has become clear to KFD staff that the size of the station — especially when it comes to dining, dishwashing and laundry — isn't made for that many people.

"Math and history shows us that we probably just need to double the size of the station,"

Cowan said. "When you have more people, you also need more of the other things. You need 50 percent more stuff if there's 50 percent more people."

The current size of the station could also be an issue for KFD's medical equipment.

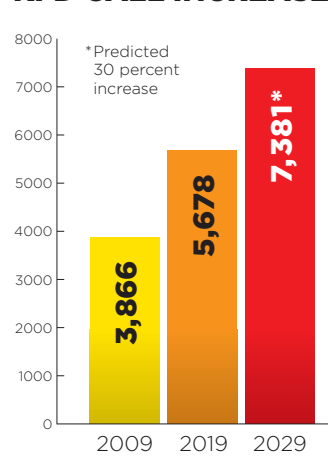
Brian Butler, who is the Division Chief of Operations with KFD, shared that the district would like to purchase a fourth medic unit in the near future to better handle the increased call volume.

They still plan to have three medic units in service during a typical day, but this way, if one of the medic units is out of service, they will be able to have one on reserve.

However, there would currently be no spot

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### KFD CALL INCREASE



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## #MiyakoCon5



Rebeca Ernst, Leti Ernst, Kierra White and Ellora Thiebaud cosplayed as some of their favorite characters at MiyakoCon 5 Sunday, Feb. 23, at Keizer's Quality Inn & Suites.

KEIZERTIMES/Lauren Murphy

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