

# Graf stepping down from Volcanoes

**SPORTS,**  
continued from Page A12

By **MATT RAWLINGS**  
*Of the Keizertimes*

For just over a year, Salem-Keizer Volcanoes President of Business Operations Mitche Graf brought energy and excitement back into the organization.

The Volcanoes had a 12 percent increase in attendance in 2019, along with bringing in new concession vendors and a brand new sound system in the stadium.

But on March 16, Graf announced that he would not be returning for the 2020 season.

“The Walker’s gave me an opportunity of a lifetime to run a professional baseball franchise, and for that, I am forever grateful,” Graf said. “Getting to know the best fans in Minor League Baseball has been not only an honor, but rewarding as well. The passion that this community has for their Volcanoes is something very special and I have been blessed to have be a part of that family for a short period of time.”

The main reason Graf cited for leaving the Volcanoes was that he didn’t have the time or the bandwidth to keep up with his other companies. Graf has been a successful entrepreneur for the past three decades. He is currently looking at expanding his catering company, while also owning a manufacturing company and a publishing company.

Additionally, Graf will be releasing two books this year. “I was having to get up at 3 a.m. to make sure I got everything done,” Graf said.

However, Graf said he



Mitche Graf, the president of business operations for the Salem-Keizer Volcanoes, will be stepping down from his position.

wouldn’t be leaving if he didn’t think the organization was in good hands.

Volcanoes owners Jerry and Lisa Walker made their 22-year old son, Mickey, the CEO of the organization last fall, and Graf believes that he is the right man for the job.

“I wouldn’t step away unless I felt that I was leaving the team in a better position than when I came aboard, and I know that Mickey Walker and the outstanding team we have assembled will ensure that this season is the best on record,” Graf said. “The Walker’s have a really

good handle on what is happening and having Mickey in the executive office has been a blessing.”

“The Walker’s gave me an opportunity of a lifetime to run a professional baseball franchise, and for that, I am forever grateful.”

— Mitche Graf

Eventually lost the game to Hillsboro, Graf was proud of how the organization was seeming to gain some momentum.

“Our fan-base was rabid. The energy in the place was palpable. I remember looking around the stadium thinking about how this was a culmination of all the hard work this staff had put in over the last nine months,” Graf said.

Graf was also proud of how all the Volcanoes seasonal employees served customers faithfully during the season.

“It can be a challenge to get seasonal employees to buy in. So when everyone that was here on the last day said they wanted to come back, that was huge. It signaled a shift in culture,” Graf said.

Even though it was only a 14-month stint with the organization, Graf feels like he had a meaningful impact on the Volcanoes.

“My goal when I came in was to re-energize the franchise. I think we were able to accomplish that. The mindset is different and I believe the momentum will continue in 2020. I wouldn’t have left if I didn’t feel confident in that,” Graf said.

Graf says that he will still be serving as a senior advisor to the Walker family moving forward and that he plans to be at several games this season.

**PRE-PLANNING YOUR FINAL ARRANGEMENTS IS A GIFT ONLY YOU CAN GIVE YOUR LOVED ONES.**

**CALL TODAY!**

**RESTALLAWN MEMORY GARDENS & RESTLAWN FUNERAL HOME**  
Salem, OR 97304  
503-585-1373  
www.restlawnfh.com

**FARNSTROM MORTUARY**  
Independence, OR 97351  
503-838-1414  
www.farnstrommortuary.com

**KEIZER FUNERAL CHAPEL**  
Keizer, OR 97303  
503-393-7037  
www.keizerchapel.com

**Tax Problems: RESOLVED**

There are many ways we can tackle IRS or State tax relief together:

- ✓ Tax Levies & Liens Release
- ✓ Wage Garnishment Release
- ✓ Stop Penalties and Interest
- ✓ Tax Debt Negotiation & Settlement
- ✓ Resolve Back Taxes
- ✓ Payroll Tax Negotiation
- ✓ Tax Preparation & Bookkeeping Services

*“They stopped my garnishments in less than 2 days after filing them. This saved me \$84,276 with the IRS and \$13,500 with the state of California. They saved my emotional and financial well-being.”*  
— Wage Garnishment Client

Call us now for your **FREE** tax consultation & evaluation!  
**844-945-2056**

Arnhem Tax Services | Best Company | The Credit Review

Arnhem offers a money-back guarantee designed to help you avoid wasting money on ineffective tax services. We will gather all crucial information from you as necessary and work with tax authorities to give you the best chance of reducing your tax debt. If for any reason that does not work out, and the government notifies us they refuse to reduce your overall tax liability or monthly payments by any amount, we will gladly refund you the full fee you paid for our services. In trying to reduce that debt, Money Back Guarantee does not apply to Bookkeeping and Tax Preparation Services.

**WE TAKE PRIDE**  
in being staffed better than any other senior living community

**Come See the Finest in Senior Living**  
CALL (503) 390-1300

The Village at Keizer Ridge  
ASSISTED LIVING & MEMORY CARE

1165 McGee Ct NE • Keizer, OR • VillageAtKeizerRidge.com

**State Farm**

**Sam Goesch**  
Ins Agcy Inc

Sam Goesch CLU, Agent  
3975 River Road North  
Keizer, OR 97303  
Bus: 503-393-6252

State Farm, Bloomington, IL  
1211999

Introducing our Turnkey Shopping Experience

CHOOSE | RELAX | ENJOY

Choose Your Hearth Product  
Relax While We Handle All of the Details  
Enjoy the Warmth and Ambiance!

**HEAT & GLO**  
No one builds a better fire

*Pictured: The Phoenix Trueview Gas Fireplace with Stafford Interior Panels*

Trade Ally of **EnergyTrust** of Oregon  
As an Energy Trust of Oregon trade ally, we can help you access cash incentives to make it easier to improve your home’s energy efficiency.

**Home FIRE STOVE GRILL CITY**

1695 Market St NE,  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-364-6339  
www.homefirestove.com

CCB# 48630