PAGE A6, KEIZERTIMES, SEPTEMBER 11, 2020

Gearing up

A group of local cycling enthusiasts, sponsored by Cherriots Trip Share, NW Hub and Keizer United, put together a bike repair event at Keizer Church of Christ Friday, Sept. 4.

RIGHT: Hersch Sangster fits a visitor with a helmet. BELOW: Bentley Nicholoson-Nelson and Emily Loberg, of NW Hub, tune up some wheels.





KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald

PROMISE: About 1,000 students had expected aid revoked

(Continued from Page A1) being reallocated to the 2020 Rebalance Plan– an initiative to close the budget shortfall caused by COVID-19.

"In response to this cut, we really only have one viable option, and that is to cap the program on the basis of expected family contribution (EFC) level," an HECC spokesperson said in an email to Oregon House Rep. Bill Post. He reached out to the HECC on behalf of constituents that had questions about the cuts to the grant budget.

"While we are able to preserve the Oregon Promise grants for the lowest income levels, the new budget limitation to Oregon Promise is expected to impact approximately 1,000 students who have been previously told they were awarded the grant," the statement continued. "We know, despite the fact that we are clear in our communications that award status is dependent on legislative appropriations, that students have made plans."

While this lumps yet another unusual and unfortunate situation on the Class of 2020, the alternatives are taking out student loans or taking a gap year. Farris thinks colleges and universities will experience low-enrollment this year and ramp up recruiting efforts for the Class of 2021.

"The Class of 2021 may feel discouraged right now. However, I believe that all colleges and universities are looking for ways to bring students to their campuses and you will see that in the ways they will recruit over this next year," Farris said.

As students transition to online distance learning, the temptation to coast through their senior year will intensify, but Farris warns seniors to stay vigilant.

"Class of 2021, your senior year may not be ideal, but I feel like you will have a lot of opportunities as you look toward your college options. The important thing is to not get discouraged. You still need to do the hard work that is necessary during a traditional

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senior fall," Farris said. For families who pursue alternative methods of payment for community college this year, there is some hope.

"The state often changes requirements year by year," Farris said. "Some years there is a high EFC limit, other times all students who graduate with a 2.5 GPA qualify."

The HECC said there is potential for the Class of 2020 to get grant money next year, though it is unlikely.

"It has been the case in the past that if a student qualified for the Promise, but was not awarded because they did not meet the EFC, and they attend a community college, we award the student in their second year. This is also entirely dependent on legislative appropriations and we can in no way project or commit in advance that will happen. In fact, it seems more unlikely this time due to the expected difficult 2022-23 budget cycle."

For more information visit oregonstudentaid.gov/oregon-promise-faq.aspx.

SPEND, continued from Page A1

Unfortunately, we have a few things we'd like to use the money for as well," said Tim Wood, Keizer finance director.

A staff memo offered only an outline of how the money would be spent:

• \$280,000 for Keizer Civic Center and infrastructure improvements to further reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and support remote work capabilities

• \$500,000 for community relief agencies and nonprofits to provide financial relief for residents impacted by COVID-19.

• \$150,000 for business grants to provide financial relief for businesses impacted by COVID-19 (about a third of this allocation is already being used to supply forgivable business loans.)

\$50,000 for personal protective equipment (PPE) for city staff and community.
\$150,000 to cover unanticipated staff costs as the result of COVID-19.

PPE purchased with the grant funding would likely be shared with the organizations that use the Keizer Cultural Center.

After the meeting, Wood

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The city is considering a remodel of the customer — service area of the city offices that would offer better

was being considered.

that would offer better coverage and protection of city employees from threats ranging from COVID-19 to physical altercations.

offered more detail on what

"It would look like the Keizer Police Department's customer service area but with shatter-resistant glass rather than bulletproof glass," Wood said. "We are concerned that our temporary sneeze guard isn't substantial enough to meet some of the proposed guidance being given out by OSHA and the Governor's Office."

Wood said the money given to community organizations would be earmarked for financial support to Keizer residents who have been impacted by COVID-19. Whatever funds are earmarked for those purposes would likely be doled out in smaller amounts in exchange for detailed accounting on the part of organizations that receive it. Keeping close track would help the city avoid the money being used for the religious-based activities of organizations such as Salvation Army and St.Vincent DePaul.

"We have already received confirmation from several of the organizations that they can and already are tracking assistance that they provide to Keizer residents. In addition, they have indicated that they will be able to provide a detailed accounting of how the funds are spent," Wood said. "We will specifically designate that the funds are to be used only for COVID-19 financial relief. That, combined with a timely accounting of funds, will significantly reduce the risk that they are diverted for other purposes."

The city is under the gun to qualify for reimbursement of the money, the entire \$1.13 million must be spent by Dec. 30. The city transferred money from the general fund, which is the primary source of police department funding, to cover the upfront costs.

"We will need some help getting the money spent," Wood said.

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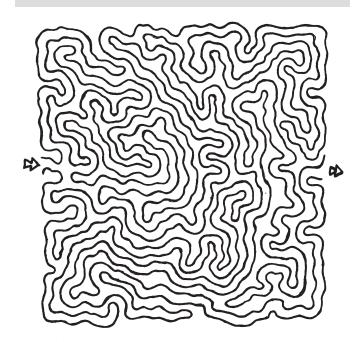
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