

# No end in sight for city's rent burdened



By ERIC A. HOWALD  
Of the Keizertimes

A conversation about housing affordability came and went with little fanfare at a meeting of the Keizer City Council Monday, Nov. 16.

Keizer is required by state mandate to hold an annual public hearing on issues of rent burdens in the city and what might be done to alleviate them.

Approximately 54% of renters in Keizer are paying more than a third of their monthly income on rent, and 25% 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.

Councilor Laura Reid said the data illustrating the city's rent burden issues didn't appear to have changed much since the last such hearing in 2019.

Interim Community Development Director Shane Witham said that was likely a result of the time frame in which the information was

given.

"As we move forward, we'll probably see more clearly how COVID has affected the housing situation," Witham said.

Councilor Dan Kohler asked what the options might be for solving the problem of rent burden.

"There's a lot that we don't control, like Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)," Kohler said.

City manager Chris Eppley said creating more affordable housing would likely require investment by the city, working to develop housing vouchers or reducing costs such as System Development Charges (SDCs). Keizer's only option to affect immediate change would be to reduce the SDCs, but the city is already a bargain for developers compared to others in the Willamette Valley.

"Even if you build affordable housing, it may not stay affordable. It's going to continue to be a difficult topic," Eppley said.

City Councilor Elizabeth Smith, a real estate broker, added that the existing market was tight a year ago and tighter now, which is causing home prices to skyrocket.

"Last year at this time, the average sale price in Keizer

was \$300,000. It's \$350,000 now because the inventory has dropped dramatically. With COVID, people are staying in one place," Smith said. "It's a difficult situation, and I have no idea how we're going to fix it, but we need to keep it as a priority of the council going forward."

Witham said the council could also decide it wants to be more aggressive in applying new development standards along River Road North and Cherry Avenue Northeast. The city adopted a new overlay district to encourage mixed commercial and residential properties in early 2020.

"Applying some of the new standards could put a more diverse supply on the market," Witham said.

# Fear and thrills prevalent in horror show *Monsterland*

By TJ REID  
For the Keizertimes

When it comes to consuming horror media, I'm a bit of an oddball. While I love scary novels and listening to spooky podcasts about ghosts, I absolutely hate horror movies and television (with an exception of *Supernatural*, but that's another story). Why this is, I have no idea. Regardless, I knew this was something I had to overcome when the Halloween season rolled around for the first time since I started these reviews; people want scary this time of year, so I am going to review something scary. One thing that caught my eye was Hulu's new anthology series (or miniseries... that's kind of unclear from what I've read) *Monsterland*.

But while I found it well acted and occasionally frightening, *Monsterland* is not really what I expected: Instead of being a story about monsters stalking people across the USA, it is more about the monstrous things that we as humans are capable of with a healthy amount of social commentary to go along with it. The actual monsters are more of a feature than the point, but if you know this beforehand there is still a good time to be had with *Monsterland*.

Perhaps the focus on the potential for evil in humanity shouldn't have caught me off guard (the tagline for the series is "fear the monster inside us all," after all), but it was still a bit of a let down when

the first episode ended and I found myself bummed out instead of terrified. *Monsterland* is a far-from-lighthearted affair that features heavy thematic elements and damaged people in depressing circumstances. It's not what I would call "fun" by any stretch of the imagination, but that doesn't mean it's bad; there are still bouts of terror (and the occasional helping of good old-fashioned body horror and gore) to keep the audience from wallowing in empathetic despair for too long.

Other pluses are the acting, which is well done in every episode, the score, which is impressive, varied, and adds greatly to the tension, and, best of all, the fact that the series treats you like an adult. You're never really

spoon-fed anything in *Monsterland*, and each episode has at least one moment that requires the audience to come to their own conclusions.

It is, in other words, a series that begs (well, let's not go crazy here... let's say "asks politely") to be discussed and argued over long after the credits roll (or long after Hulu has skipped to the next "recommended" series). Or is "best of all" the fact that one episode is set in our very own Eugene, Oregon? I can't decide.

Like all anthologies, *Monsterland* has some episodes that are better than others, but all-in-all the series is worth your time if you're looking for something a little more thoughtful and a little less fun this fall. If a nonstop rollercoaster of thrills and chills is something you're after, however, best look elsewhere.

Review



Submitted  
Nicole Beharie (right) stars in the the new show *Monsterland*, available on Hulu.

**WESLEY**  
We Cancel **TIMESHARES** for You

Every year 150,000 people reach out to us for help getting rid of their timeshare. In 2019, we relieved over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt and maintenance fees. We can help.

Get your free information kit and see if you qualify:  
**855-385-4473**

**dish** BRING EVERYTHING YOU LOVE TOGETHER!

Blazing Fast Internet! ADD TO YOUR PACKAGE FOR ONLY \$19.99/mo. where available

2-YEAR TV PRICE GUARANTEE | \$59.99 MO. | America's Top 120 Package | 190 CHANNELS Including Local Channels!

CALL TODAY - For \$100 Gift Card | 1-866-373-9175 | Offer ends 1/31/21.

# TURN OUR READERS INTO YOUR CUSTOMERS

We have tremendous advertising opportunities for every business and every budget

OUR AWARD-WINNING CREATIVE SERVICES ARE FREE WITH PURCHASE OF ANY AD

## Keizertimes

Call or Email | 503.390.1051 | advertising@keizertimes.com