

McNary grad numbers leap

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

After recording their best graduation numbers in more than a decade in 2019, the McNary High School class of 2020 again posted some of the best numbers in the Salem-Keizer School District.

McNary's four-year senior cohort graduated 91.21% of students in 2020, just over 10% higher than the district average. It was the second year in a row that McNary graduated more than 90% of their senior class.

"This isn't a blip. We have been tracking these numbers for the last six years and we have seen consistent growth year in and year out," McNary principal Erik Jespersen said. "It's validating to know that we are going in the right direction as a collective school."

One of the biggest sources of pride for Jespersen was seeing the four-year graduation rate for Latino students.

When Jespersen took over as the McNary principal during the 2014-15 school year, Latino students, which represent approximately one-third of the McNary student body, had a 73% graduation rate. During that same year, white students posted an 86% graduation rate.



Please see GRAD, Page A5
Eloisa Moreno shows off her diploma in the much-delayed 2020 McNary High School commencement ceremony.

The best Volcanoes alum ever
PAGE A8

Emerging artist
PAGE A2

Chick-fil-A gets council greenlight

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Construction of a Chick-fil-A near Keizer Station moved one step closer to reality at a meeting of the Keizer City Council Monday, Feb. 1.

Councilors approved changes to a master plan that removes a proposed auto lube business to accommodate additional parking for the fast food restaurant.

"We're super-excited to be part of the community and see this project get going," said Steve Schwartz, development manager for the Atlanta-based chain.

Asked by Mayor Cathy Clark what prompted the restaurant to choose Keizer, Schwartz said it was partly based on the success of locations in the Portland area.

"Keizer had great commuting patterns and was very business friendly as well," Schwartz said. He commended Shane

Witham, Keizer's interim community development director, in particular. The 128-seat location could create as many as 80-100 jobs for the area, Schwartz said.

Chemawa Station. The major changes to existing plans for the area also known as the "jug handle" included:

- Reducing the number of buildings on the jug handle from four to three.
 - Increasing the number of parking spaces.
 - Moving a water feature to accommodate a pedestrian plaza near Chick-fil-A.
- 7-Eleven has already been approved for the jug handle, the business has also applied to own and operate a 12-pump fueling station on the site.

The Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz are joint owners of the property that extends to the water tower near Keizer Little League Park.

Further development is expected, eventually, south of Ulali Drive to the water tower.

But what about traffic?

As the city council approved plans for a Chick-fil-A, the burning question on the mind of Councilor Laura Reid was traffic.

"What will be done about lines and managing them?" Reid asked. After the addition of an In-N-Out in December 2019, traffic around that site swells to the main roads on a regular basis and illegal U-turns to get in line are becoming a regular occurrence. With the

Please see TRAFFIC, Page A6

"We're super-excited to be part of the community and see this project get going."
— Steve Schwartz, Development Manager

If things go according to plan, the Chick-fil-A will be located in a space between Chemawa Road Northeast and Ulali Drive Northeast. The space is south of Keizer Station and will become the first development in an area identified as

Peace poles to be placed in four parks

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

The installation of Peace Poles in four Keizer parks got eager approvals from the Keizer Public Arts Commission and Keizer City Council in recent weeks.

The arts commission gave its blessing at a meeting Jan. 19. The council gave the project a final stamp of approval Feb. 1.

"I am genuinely excited about this, and I'm glad I get a chance to vote on this," said Councilor Ross Day. The project was approved in a 6-0 vote. Councilor Elizabeth Smith was absent.

Pat Fisher, longtime volunteer for the city, proposed

Please see PEACE, Page A6



Thanks, in part, to a dedicated Rotarian, Keizer's first Peace Poles are going up soon.

Submitted

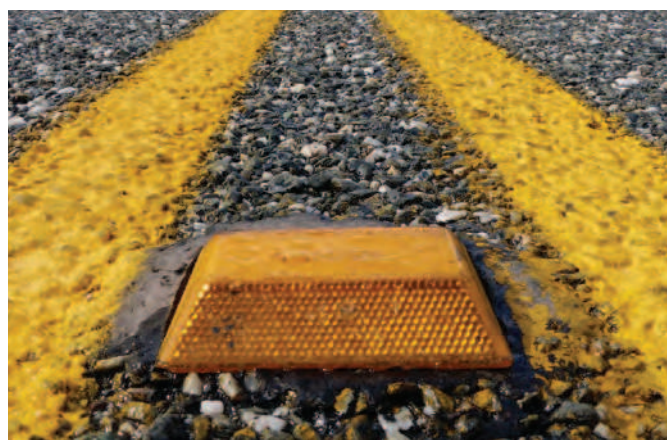
Fix in the works for striping

After two ineffective shots with reflective beads, Keizer Public Works is working on a new solution for the hard-to-see lane striping on Keizer's main drags.

"We put out feelers to get an estimate on installing reflectorized pavement markers (RPMs) for Wheatland Road North and River Road North. It came back at \$7,000," said Keizer Public Works Director Bill Lawyer. "I'm going to move forward with formal quotes, I was definitely surprised at the number."

Lawyer unveiled the plan at a Keizer City Council meeting Tuesday, Jan. 19.

RPMs are the square, raised reflectors found in other areas near and far. Lawyer plans to have the devices installed on all of River Road and Wheatland



File

Reflecting pavement markers for hard-to-see lane stripes are planned on Keizer's main streets

Road, and Lockhaven Drive North from River Road to the railroad tracks.

The city will need to issue a request for proposals and then figure out a time when weather is most likely to cooperate.

Councilor Dan Kohler asked why Cherry Avenue was not included on the list.

"I'm not including Cherry right now because it's getting close to being resurfaced," Lawyer said.

Pixar delivers with Soul
PAGE A3

OCCU
It's different here.
OCCU on River Road
PAGE A3



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