

VOLUNTEER of the Week



presented by

TED PLUMB

Ted Plumb is currently volunteering in the Property and Evidence area which is in the Support Services section at the Keizer Police Department

"There are many facets to this work area and, as such, I perform a host of tasks. As an example, the Police lobby has a secure bin where individuals can drop off unneeded medical prescriptions. Before the current restrictions were put in place due to the pandemic, the bin would have to be emptied at least once per week. The medications are then packaged securely in boxes. When we accumulate a certain quantity of boxes, we then transport them to the Covanta facility in Brooks. The boxes are loaded onto a conveyor system by police staff and myself. We monitor the delivery of the boxes via a video monitor system all the way to the drop area of the furnace. This is an example of the many tasks I've been able to perform over my years volunteering."

Why Ted volunteers?

The opportunity to volunteer in the law enforcement field came in 1997. The tasks were simple at first but as I was able to take on more duties, I was able to grow as a volunteer. My goal each day is to make everyone else's day a little brighter. If I can make someone smile, then my goal at the time is accomplished. Plus, I get to work with a really great bunch of folks.

How would you get others to volunteer in their community?

Ted recommends that a person should first look at themselves and ask, what can I do and, second, what would I like to do. Know what your strengths are and what you enjoy. Not every volunteer opportunity is for everyone. Then, seek out the organization, company or business and ask where they might be able to use a volunteer.

SKPS board member makes pitch for zone voting

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Technical difficulties sidelined a planned conversation about changing the election of school district directors Tuesday, March 9.

Connection errors interrupted the meeting and, once the virtual meeting was re-established, members of the Salem-Keizer Public School Board of Directors tabled the issue until a special session could be held Wednesday after press time.

On Tuesday, March 8, Director Jesse Lippold Peone, the current representative for Zone 5, told attendees of a virtual NAACP forum that he intends to propose an amendment that would elect school board directors by zone rather than the current at-large system. At-large voting in the Salem-Keizer School District means that candidates must live in the zones they represent, but are voted on by all eligible voters in the district. Lippold was representing only himself during the meeting, not the entire school board at the forum.

Lippold Peone told attendees that at-large voting leaves the district at risk for structural racism.

"Right now, a person can live in east Salem and never campaign there," Lippold Peone said. At-large voting is also creat-

ing outsized campaign costs for an unpaid, nonpartisan position. "Campaign costs have grown to \$63,000 for one candidate. It creates huge barriers when one candidate might have more name recognition or more money."

If the board approves a change to zone-based voting at its next meeting, it could change how school board directors are selected as soon as the May 2021 cycle.

County Clerk Bill Burgess, who oversees Marion County Elections and offered insight into how soon changes could be made, saw no problem with the timeline if the election method is changed.

"If it happened next week, we would have time to adjust ballots for military members before they are printed and mailed in early April," Burgess said. If the change were made in a later meeting, it likely would not take effect for two years.

About 145,000 registered Marion County are eligible to take part in school board elections. Zone-based voting would lead about 20,000 voters in each area of the school district deciding who represents them on the school board.

"When we have BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) communities live in specific areas it leads to less effective representation of those areas," Lippold Pe-

one said.

Levi Herrera-Lopez, who ran against Lippold Peone for the school board seat in 2017, also spoke about his experiences during the forum.

Voting by zone would "lead to less influence from special interest groups," Herrera-Lopez said. "To reach a significant amount of the registered voters, you need at least \$10,000 to pay for mailers. That's where special interests come in (when they pay for expenses like mailers)."

Zone voting is expected to reduce the financial barriers that keep some members of the community from running for elected office.

Voters in smaller zones would also stand a better chance of holding their school board directors accountable for the decisions they make and the votes they cast, Herrera-Lopez added.

In past school board meetings, challenges to zone voting were raised based on the need to redistrict once 2020 Census results are available.

Lippold Peone called the argument "a red herring" and said he couldn't think of any reasonable argument against the change.

The Salem-Keizer NAACP is supporting the change to zone voting.

April 13 return for HS, MS students

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

On Friday, March 5, Oregon Governor Kate Brown announced an executive order for public school students to return to the classroom.

"The science is very, very clear: with proper safety measures in place, there is a low risk of COVID-19 transmission in school. Oregon parents can be confident about sending their children back to a classroom learning environment," Brown said.

Brown directed all Oregon public schools to offer universal access to in-person instruction on or before the weeks of March 29 for K-5 students and April 19 for students in grades 6-12. SKPS assistant superintendent Kraig Sproles notified the school board on Tuesday, March 9 that the district is ahead of schedule in meeting those dates.

"We have a point of celebration about getting our kids back in school," Sproles said. "We were a little bit ahead of that trajectory."

Last week, SKPS welcomed back K-1 students into their school building for hybrid, in-person learning.

"We had lots of kids in our buildings this last week, which was really, really exciting," SKPS superintendent Christy Perry said.

Earlier this week, second and third students made their return to schools — fourth and fifth grade students will come back

next week.

"I don't think we can underplay how much work that has been done for our teachers and our principals," Sproles said. "We have been preparing for this moment for many, many months and it has paid off."

SKPS was the first large district in the state to have their elementary students return to school.

"It was really encouraging for our secondary leaders and teachers to see the amount of success we had with bringing back our elementary students. It gave us a little bit of a leg up when it comes to planning," assistant superintendent Iton Udosenata said.

After having some uncertainty a couple of weeks ago,

Udosenata told the board that secondary schools (middle schools and high schools) do indeed have the capacity to serve students in a hybrid model — meaning that students would attend school two days per week and then do online learning for the remainder of the week.

Secondary school staff members are scheduled to return to their classrooms by Monday, April 5 and students will come back for in-person instruction beginning on Tuesday, April 13.

"We are really looking forward to bringing our secondary students back," Udosenata said.

Spring forward

Daylight Savings Time begins at 2 a.m., Sunday, March 14.

You need to advance your clocks by one hour, in essence, losing 60 minutes in the process.

You should also plan to

change the batteries in all your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide monitors at the same time.

While there is a move to eliminate daylight standard and savings times, that has not changed yet.



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