

# MUDDY,

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**CR:** Oregon State Police investigated the incident to determine the potential for any criminal charges. The scope of their investigation included ORS 166.370, which includes an exception for a person who is licensed to carry a concealed handgun.

*(Editor's clarification: Eppley told other media outlets he possesses a concealed carry permit. Even if the law provides exceptions, city personnel policy would have required Eppley to have had permission from either himself, the chief of police or the human resources director to carry a gun inside the civic center. Nothing confirming or denying permission for Eppley to have a firearm in the civic center been made public. Yet, Eppley told an investigator that he likely asked people to whom he showed guns that they not to say anything because he was violating city policy.)*

**KT:** If the council chooses not to address the question of violating Oregon law regarding weapons in public buildings, are its members concerned about the precedent (regarding accountability) it sets for all future Keizer city managers?

**CR:** Oregon State Police investigated the incident to determine the potential for any criminal charges. The scope of their investigation included ORS 166.370. The City of Keizer's expectation is that all current and future employees will continue to comply with all applicable laws in the State of Oregon as well as all city policies and rules.

**KT:** Why did Mr. Eppley's disposal of evidence not appear to trouble city council members?

**CR:** City staff cannot comment on the thought process of individual Council members, and the basis for the question appears to be speculative because it assumes that council members were not troubled by disposal of the evidence.

**KT:** Given all the now-known ways Mr. Eppley violated the trust of the council and the residents of the city he served, what fears kept the council from simply terminating his employment rather than presenting him with an opportunity to resign? (Please be as specific as possible. Do not shy from quoting legal precedent.)

**CR:** Again, city staff cannot comment on the thought process of individual council members, and the basis for the question appears to be speculative because it assumes that council members had fears. Furthermore, to the extent individual council members may have had concerns regarding terminating Mr. Eppley's employment, the answer to the question would likely involve attorney-client privileged communications.

In general, it is typically better to allow the employee to resign as it reduces the employer's potential liability.

**KT:** Will city policies or civic center policies be updated as a result of this incident? If so, how?

**CR:** In accordance with the personnel policy manual the City of Keizer will continue to prohibit "Being in possession of guns and weapons on city property, including parking lots or in city vehicles unless approved in writing by the city manager, chief of police or human

## EPPLEY GUNSHOT FALLOUT

resource director. This prohibition does not apply to authorized possession of guns and weapons by law enforcement personnel, nor does it apply to the lawful possession of concealed weapons in an employee's locked vehicle parked in a city parking lot."

**KT:** There are residents who no longer feel safe entering the Keizer Civic Center, even with Mr. Eppley gone. What actions will the city take to ensure residents feel safe when they have concerns to raise or need to do business with the city?

**CR:** The basis for the question appears to be speculative because it assumes that residents do not feel safe. Notwithstanding that appearance, the City of Keizer provides multiple ways for members of the public to raise concerns and to conduct business with the city, most of which do not require residents to enter the Keizer Civic Center, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**KT:** What actions will the city council take to regain the trust of the public?

**CR:** City staff does not have authority to respond on behalf of the council, and the basis for the question appears to be speculative because it assumes a loss of

the public's trust. Notwithstanding the above, the council continues to expect staff to strictly enforce city policies and applicable laws, including the prohibition of possession of firearms on city property unless an applicable exception applies. Staff will review the policies and provide additional training as appropriate.

**KT:** Given that numerous current and former KPD officers witnessed Mr. Eppley's actions and did not report it, what actions will the Keizer Police Department take to regain the trust of the public?

**CR:** Again, the City of Keizer does not comment on employee personnel matters, and the basis for the question appears to be speculative because it assumes a loss of the public's trust.

Notwithstanding the above, all city employees continue to be expected to serve the citizens of Keizer to the best of their ability and it is our hope that over time, members of the public who may have concerns will reflect back on both the actions taken by the city and the ongoing services provided and will see that we have been both responsible and professional in our response.

## Keizer students make the grade at Connections Academy

Willamette Connections Academy recently announced the school's first honor roll for grades K-12. The state-wide tuition-free online public school is recognizing hundreds of students across Oregon for outstanding academic achievement during the first semester of the 2020-21 academic year.

Keizer students who were recognized include: Baylee Whetten, sixth grade; Dario Gonzalez, kindergarten; Paityn Polston, fourth grade; Xzavier Moore, first grade; Brody Bateman, first grade; Clara Seitz, ninth grade; Nicholas Maheu, 10th grade; Kate Collins, 12th grade.

"On behalf of the administration, teachers and counselors at Willamette

Connections Academy, we congratulate all the students who earned a spot on the honor roll," said Chris Long, Willamette Connections Academy Principal. "There's no question it has been a challenging year for everyone, so we're thrilled to recognize this year's list of Honor Roll students."

The school's honor roll qualifications vary by grade levels. Students in kindergarten through 8th grade are eligible for honor roll if they have received "A's" in all their classes during the first semester of the academic year. To qualify for the honor roll, in 9th through 12th grades, students needed to achieve a GPA of 3.75 and above.



## Cat of the Week

**Name: Priscilla Age: 7**

**HISTORY:** Priscilla is a sweet, older girl with lots of love, purring and biscuits to share. She also possesses an endearing snaggletooth.

**PREFERRED HOME:** She is looking for a home without loud sounds, no children under 8 years old and without dogs. Car rides aren't something she enjoys and may swipe or nip if she becomes overwhelmed or upset.



WE HAVE MOVED >>> Our new location is 4157 Cherry Avenue, Keizer <<< 503-362-5611

## VOLUNTEER of the Week

presented by



### JASON LEWIS

#### Where and how do you volunteer?

"My volunteer work over the years consists of assisting the Keizer Chamber of Commerce with IT & website assistance, the Keizer Rotary Club with various projects, including the Arboretum project with Wilbur Bluhm. In July of this year, I will become the Keizer Rotary President-elect and then the club President next year. I've spent many years volunteering at our church, Lakepoint Community and prior to that New Hope Foursquare, in technical capacities for sound and video as well as leadership development."

#### What does volunteering do for you?

"If you have heard of the different love languages then you will know what I mean when I say that gift-giving and serving/helping others are high on my list. I also love to problem solve. If there is a technical problem that I can help with then I feel that it's not a wasted day."

#### How would you get others to volunteer in their community?

"I would encourage people to read the Keizertimes and see which organizations are helping out the community. Joining an organization like Keizer Rotary that helps the entire community, or committees that support a cause of your choice, like McNary Athletic Booster Club are great ways to get involved. There are opportunities from music and the arts to food shares and services for children. The spirit of volunteerism in this community is contagious and the camaraderie leads to lasting friendships. Finding a way to give back is rewarding and since many hands make light work, the more the merrier!"