



SHAPE,

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Guard Civil Engineers — the Oregon Army National Guard will be providing all the labor and machinery needed to level and prepare the site, erect and put together the obstacles at no cost to the city.

“They are fired up to be a part of this,” Martin-Vinas said of his students.

The course is slated to feature more than a dozen pieces of obstacle equipment, including a T-rex six post monkey bar bridge, horizontal rope climb, a battle rope station and more. All obstacles are expected to include a QR code that will show people what kinds of exercises they can do when scanned with a smartphone.

While Martin-Vinas plans for his students have one-hour reservations at the facility three days per week, the obstacle course is slated to be open to the public — McNary athletic programs and local businesses will also be able to use the course for physical fitness and team-building exercises.

“Having a unique place where people in our community can come and get some

physical activity is priceless. It will be amazing. And it will be great for the kids,” Martin-Vinas said.

Martin-Vinas is in his third year as a JROTC instructor at McNary. Before coming to Keizer, Martin-Vinas taught in Hawaii, where he would have his students compete in JROTC Raider competitions with other schools — Raider challenges usually consist of individual strength tests (push-ups, tire-drag, obstacle course, etc), distance team running events, first aid events and some form of rope bridge crossing.

Ever since he got to McNary, Martin-Vinas has wanted to properly train his students for the national competition in Daytona, Fla. — he was planning on taking a group of 13 students to Hawaii for a competition last spring, but the trip was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Martin-Vinas is hoping that he will be able to train his students properly on a top-notch obstacle course and hold several competitions with other JROTC programs in the area.

“In Hawaii, I saw the huge benefit for the kids learning to challenge themselves in Raider training,” Martin-Vinas said. “This would hopefully help me train a nationally-winning team. That is my goal. When I saw

the capability of the kids, I knew that there was no reason we couldn't have this here.”

Martin-Vinas initially contacted the Salem-Keizer School District with his thoughts on installing a course at McNary High School. When he didn't get a response, he shifted to Plan B.

While the McNary JROTC program was doing a community service project in February, members of the Keizer Parks Board noticed the diligence and dedication of the students, which prompted multiple members of the board to ask Martin-Vinas how they could assist the program.

“The parks' people were amazed with the kids and asked what they could do to help us,” Martin-Vinas said.

Martin-Vinas presented his proposal to the parks board last month, who gave their resounding approval of the obstacle course. Currently, Martin-Vinas is in talks with the city officials about safety regulations and how liability insurance will be paid for.

“I am hoping the city will be moved by what the project could mean for this town,” Martin-Vinas said.

The McNary JROTC will begin fundraising for the project this summer, with the goal of starting construction by the fall — Martin-Vinas wants the project to be complete before the end of the year.

“This year has been brutal for a lot of my kids. They have missed out for over a year. This is a way to give back. It is something they can be proud of but also enjoy while they are still in school, and after they graduate. Kids will be able to come to this park five or 10 years from now and tell their family about what they have accomplished,” Martin-Vinas said.

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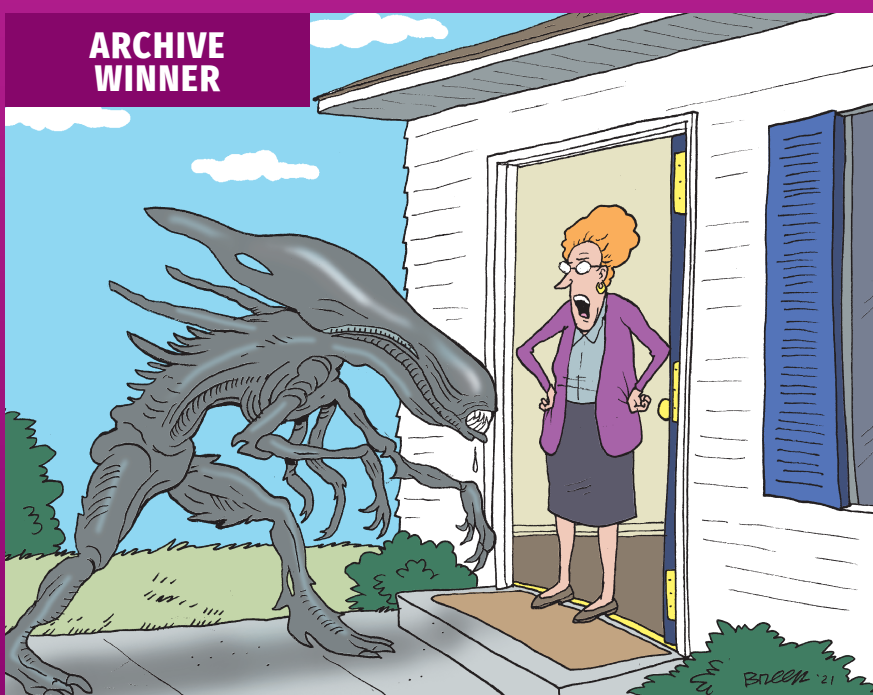
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