

SAFER grant allows MCFD1 to hire nine firefighters

BY MATT RAWLINGS
Of the Keizertimes

Marion County Fire District #1 (MCFD1) received a much-needed boost when their local option levy was passed in May, which allowed the organization to rehire nine firefighter/paramedic positions and add a dedicated three-person engine company. Last month, the district received further assistance in their goal of improving response times.

In September, MCFD1 was awarded a grant from Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), which allows the district to hire nine firefighters. These positions are funded for three years and applications are being accepted until Nov. 12.

The grant is paid for by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

"It will give us the ability to restore an additional engine company and add three on-duty firefighters per day, which will reduce response times across the district," MCFD1 Fire Chief Kyle McMann said.

After having multiple levies fail in 2020, MCFD1 was forced to cut \$2.4 million from their \$19.7 million budget — MCFD1 is an independent taxing district and receives no revenue from Marion County, the state or federal government. Due to the budget cuts, MCFD1 was forced to layoff 12 full-time firefighter/paramedics, close down fire stations in Macleay and Labish Center and take emergency apparatus out of service.

Due to the lack of personnel, there have been instances over the last year where MCFD1 has been unable to respond to 911 calls — during the ice storm in February, the district was unable to respond to 20 calls for service. But with the new levy, plus the grant, McMann likes the direction that MCFD1 is heading.

"After two years of pretty subpar times at the fire district, I feel like we have turned the corner," McMann said.

McMann admitted that the district applied for the grant multiple times over the last decade, but were denied. He believes this year was different because the need was greater.

"It was most likely accepted because we showed that we really needed the funding," McMann said.

Even though grant funding only lasts for three years, MCFD1 is hoping to retain all nine firefighters that are hired — McMann is hoping that the hiring process will be completed this spring.

"We plan to figure out a way to retain them. We obviously don't want to let them all go after three years," McMann said.

While the levy allowed the district to bring in a three-person engine company for the Middle Grove location, the FEMA grant will allow MCFD1's main station (Four Corners) to be back in-service 24 hours per day with a medic and engine company — the location will continue to be in-service with a swing company until the spring.

"To add another unit we didn't think we were going to be able to do for years is going to help our firefighters and our citizens at the same time," McMann said.



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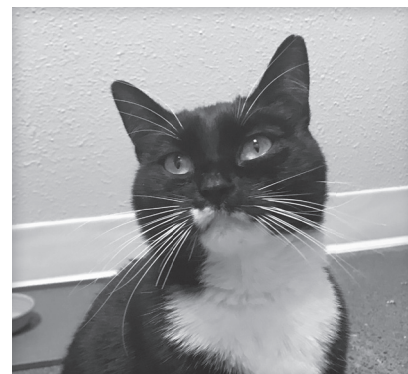
Cats of the Week

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

HISTORY: Rusty is a domestic short hair orange tabby male and Shelley is a black and white domestic short hair female. The two have been together most of their life.

Name: RUSTY
Age: 2

Name: SHELLEY
Age: 1½



PREFERRED HOME: Rusty has a chronic urinary issue and is on a special diet. Both cats are very affectionate but Rusty doesn't do well with young children or other pets.

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503.304.4000 • www.peopleschurch.com

SAINT EDWARD Catholic Church
393-5323
5303 River Rd. N., Keizer
Father Gary L. Zerr, Pastor
Saturday Vigil Liturgy: 5:30 p.m.
Sundays: 8:15 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
La Misa en Español: 12:30 p.m.

KEIZER CLEAR LAKE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
a member of Open Door Churches of Salem-Keizer
REV. ALYSSA BAKER, Lead Pastor
Services are Sunday at 10 am (Nursery & Sunday School for Children)
7920 Wheatland Rd N • 503-393-2402 • www.kclumc.org

Faith Lutheran Church, ELCA
4505 River Road N, Keizer • 503-393-4507
www.FLCKeizer.org
Pastor Linda Matz Easterling
Sunday School - 9:00 am
Worship Service - 10:00 am

Keizer Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
6945 Wheatland Rd. NE 393-6843
www.KeizerChristian.org
Worship and Children's Church • 10:00 a.m.
Office Hours 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Mon. - Fri.

John Knox Presbyterian Church
452 Cummings Lane North • 393-0404
Pastor Peter Blank
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