Jefferson calls it a career after 23 years with Keizer Police

BY MATT RAWLINGS Of the Keizertimes

When he was 17 years old, Eric Jefferson admitted that he didn't think highly of police. However, it was the influence of former Salem cop Paul Wilson, who was a Student Resource Officer at South Salem High School, that caused Jefferson to change his mindset.

"I was one of those kids that could have gone either way on the railroad tracks, but he saw something in me and kind of kicked butt around to make sure I was staying in line," Jefferson said. "He was the one that pushed me into the career field that I went to."

After three decades as a police officer, including 23 years with the Keizer Police Department (KPD), Jefferson officially retired from what he called "a rewarding career."

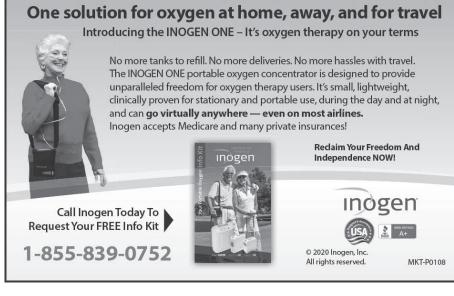
"It was where I could go to work in the civilian world to fulfill that need to be a part of something important, something more than a normal job," Jefferson said. "I really fell in love with the work, because it's one of the few jobs in the world that there is not one instance of one day that is the same, ever. In 30 years of doing this work, you touch a lot of lives."

Jefferson graduated from South Salem in 1985, then served for four

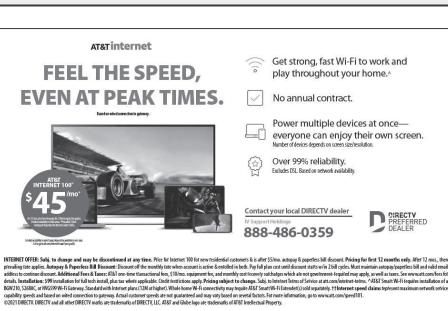


Keizer Police officer Eric Jefferson, along with his K9, Buster, chats with community members at KeizerFEST in August. Jefferson retired in November after 30 years as a cop.

Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes







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