

## VOLUNTEER of the Week

presented by



**ROLAND HERRERA**

### Where and how do you volunteer?

Most of my volunteer work has been centered around our youth. coaching, mentoring and recognizing the accomplishments of our future leaders. As part of the Latino Action Committee we award grants for Latino students to further their education and return to help others. I enjoy my daily "park patrol" at Country Glen Park and projects with my neighbors. I serve as a city councilor, state director (League of Oregon Cities), and commissioner with Oregon Judicial Fitness Commission. I am also a volunteer interpreter.

"You don't need a reason to help people"

### Why do you volunteer?

Because I live in Keizer and that's what we do in Keizer.

### What does volunteering do for you?

Volunteering gives me a sense of community. Helping others feels damn good.

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

I tell folks about the benefits of volunteering. I believe it makes you a better person. Volunteers don't always have the time, but they have the heart.

# City council addresses crisis in Ukraine

BY CHARLES GLENN  
Of the Keizertimes

The March 7 Keizer City Council meeting featured two proclamations from Mayor Cathy Clark - one which officially addressed the ongoing crisis in Ukraine.

Clark presented the proclamation directly to Youth Councilor Miranda Coleman, who serves alongside the other members of the city council and is of Ukrainian descent.

When the crisis began in Ukraine, Coleman reached out to Clark to ask for support. Clark responded with a proclamation condemning the actions of the Russian Federation and voicing support for the local people of Ukrainian and Russian heritage.

"All the people in our community - Ukrainian, Russian, human - together we stand for peace," Clark said in her proclamation.

Coleman was given an opportunity to speak to the assembled council-members and guests, in which she talked about her Ukrainian heritage and how the crisis has impacted her community.

Coleman's great-grandparents emigrated from Ukraine in the early 1900s. In the 1940s, her family relocated to Oregon from North Dakota, but through all of that they maintained many of their cultural traditions.

"Ever since I was a little girl, it has been instilled in me to be proud of my



Mayor Cathy Clark and Youth Councilor Miranda Coleman, middle, and the Keizer City Council with the Ukraine proclamation. PHOTO BY CHARLES GLENN

Ukrainian heritage," said Coleman as she delivered an emotional address to the council. "We did this by making ethnic foods and performing the arts such as dance and music, but this isn't about me - it's about Ukraine and the millions of people who are suffering."

Coleman went on to laud the courageous efforts of Ukrainians to defend their homes, and to make an appeal for others to help in any way possible.

"We must stand for them, we must

pray for them, and we must advocate for them," she said. "They are just as important as any of us and they deserve to be recognized as such."

Coleman said she was moved by Clark's proclamation and thanked the council.

"I would like to thank you immensely for the show of support for Ukraine," she said. "It means the absolute world to me, and it makes me so proud to call Keizer my home."

# COVID rent assistance applications closing

BY JULIA SHUMWAY  
Of the Capital Chronicle

Time's running out for Oregonians affected by the COVID pandemic to receive state help in paying rent.

The Oregon Housing and Community Services Department will close applications for rent assistance on Monday, Mar. 14.

People who are falling behind on rent or owe back rent can apply for aid through an online state portal until then and receive up to three months of future rent and utilities and one year of back

rent and utilities. They'll also be protected from eviction until the state aid arrives once they apply

After the state portal closes, aid will still be available through local organizations. Information about those programs can be found by calling 211 or visiting the 211 website.

Applications reopened in January after the Legislature added \$100 million to the fund during a special legislative session in December. The agency estimates more than 11,000 tenants have requested more than \$125 million since

applications reopened.

During an earlier round of aid from May to December of 2021, the agency paid about \$289 million to more than 40,000 Oregon households.

Not everyone who applies will receive help, agency spokeswoman Delia Hernández said in an email. The agency is making decisions based on who needs the help most.

Under a law passed in December, the COVID rental assistance program must end by September. At its current rate, the state housing agency expects to finish all payments by the end of June.

It's possible Oregon could receive more federal funding for pandemic-related housing assistance. The U.S. Treasury sent Oregon \$289 million for rent assistance last year and the state expected additional funding as the federal government redistributed funds from states that didn't spend all their rent assistance money to states that did.

Gov. Kate Brown asked for more money last fall, but the U.S. Treasury hasn't yet released more to states.



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