

Manage the future of Keizer

We’ve written many times in this space that those who plan for the future control the future. Though time is a constant and doesn’t really speed up or slow down, events and opportunities can make it seem that time is in the fast lane.

It is inevitable that a serious discussion of an expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) northward into Marion County will take place. The main thrust of those discussions should be an expansion of the UGB along Interstate 5, north of the Volcanoes Stadium, zoned for the types of uses that will bring jobs and tax revenue to the city.

The types of office park and light industrial developments we all see, especially in the Portland metropolitan (think Tualatin and Tigard), are the developments that should be recruited and planned for once (and if) the boundary does expand.

Some salivate at the idea of hundreds, if not thousands, of new homes stretching northward. Constructing that number of homes will prove to be very expensive when it comes to the infrastructure—extending sewer, communications and power lines. It would be better to add only a few small subdivisions to meet the housing needs.

The growth city leaders should be planning for is the growth of jobs. Statistics show that only 1 of 7 employed Keizerites work within the city’s limits. The trend is that people want to live close to where they work rather than commute; in other words, denser residential development. That means more infill in Keizer as well as promot-

ing multi-floor mixed use developments that include condominiums and apartments.

Expanding the Urban Growth Boundary in a one-thousand-foot wide swatch along the freeway north to Perkins Lane or Quinaby Road would be zoned for uses that bring living wage jobs to Keizer. Expanding that way would also preserve the agricultural land that is so important to Marion County’s economy.

Other governments will have a say in whether and how Keizer benefit from a northward expansion of the UGB. The city of Salem as well as Marion and Polk counties will be part of any expansion discussion. It will take leadership from our city to assure that a larger Keizer does not harm those other entities. In fact, it will be a benefit. Hundreds, if not thousands, of new jobs will be filled by people who will have the need to consume goods and services available in Keizer, Salem and the surrounding area.

Housing needs can be met with existing infill codes, new development, redevelopment of existing properties and denser mixed use development.

Recruiting light industries (including non-polluting business that support the agricultural sector), medical, education and business offices will provide jobs and tax revenue.

By narrowly expanding the UGB precious farm land will be preserved and maintaining our legacy as one of Oregon’s food baskets.

With conscientious planning the city controls the future that is of benefit to all impacted. —LAZ

Call for gun control misguided

To the Editor:

A writer to this page recently said “gun control is the solution,” along with his opinion of second amendment supporters. I would suggest he spend some time in Detroit or Washington D.C. The two cities with the most stringent gun laws in the U.S., and the highest violent crime rates. Walk around at night, explore the area. See how secure you feel. Or, spend some time in Canada, where they spent almost \$10 million on gun control. It was an abject failure. The gun control is gone, along with the money and the politicians that passed the law.

Gun control must not have been the solution.
G.I. Wilson
Keizer

Marion Co. Extension District

To the Editor:

On May 19 voters overwhelmingly supported a permanent funding source for Marion County 4-H and the Extension Service. This is an ideal investment in the county’s

letters

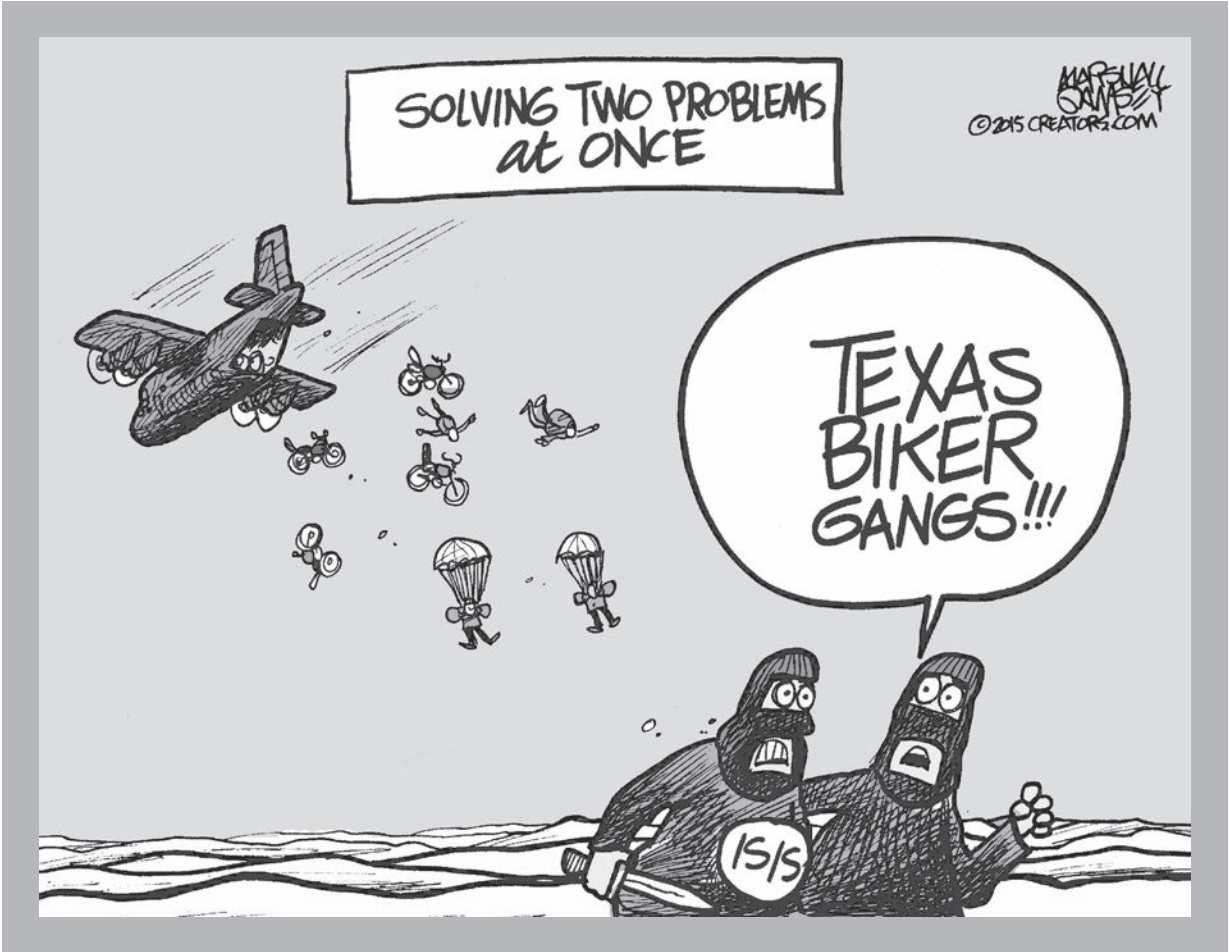
economy, youth, families, communities and natural resources.

Created in 1911, the Oregon State University Extension Service provides the public with practical, research-based information through one-on-one advice, workshops, hotlines, 1,500 publications and educational videos. Extension faculty translates and adapts research for local uses by farmers, foresters, families, gardeners, kids and seniors.

With each county tax dollar the Extension Service leverages an additional \$6 in state and federal funds, grants and volunteer service.

Thank you Marion County voters, campaign volunteers and local government leaders for your vision and support.
Cara Fischer
Salem

The *Keizertimes* welcomes all points of view.
E-mail a Letter to the Editor to: publisher@keizertimes.com by noon each Tuesday



Kicker is money you deserve back

from the capitol

By BILL POST



Just recently we turned a corner in the legislative session and the revenue forecast was announced. This estimate shows how much in taxes the state government is planning to receive, so they can really start figuring out the budget for the next two years. While I am not on the Ways and Means committees that handle the budget bills, we are all part of the discussion. After all, there should be approximately \$2 billion in additional revenue—what do we want to do with it? That’s a big question.

Personally, the K-12 education budget is very important to me. Earlier this year you may remember that along with my Republican colleagues, I voted to increase funding for schools to a total of \$7.5 billion dollars. Unfortunately the majority party passed a budget at \$7.235 billion. The thing is, we really didn’t need to vote on the education budget before we knew how much revenue we were going to have, but again, the majority insisted. Rep. Mike McLane stood on the House floor during that debate and said that passing an early, inadequate budget was a ploy to get your income tax kicker.

Well, now there is HB3555—along with the dreaded emergency

clause, keeping you from having the chance to vote on it, the bill will take away your kicker refund.

You already paid your taxes. You, the voters, said if the government overtaxes you, they should give you the money back. This is the only accountability program our state revenue has and was enacted by us, the voters. But the majority party seems to have no regard for the will of the people and wants to take away the first kicker refund we’ve had since 2007.

People argue that it’s only a couple hundred dollars per person. I don’t care—it’s your money and you deserve to get it back.

One member of the majority party said on the house floor recently, “You can’t have fully funded schools and a kicker.” We knew that was the plan from the beginning to get your money—holding kids hostage

to increase the amount of your hard earned money they take. I completely disagree. Our state government needs to be more responsible with your tax dollars and live within their means just like you and I have to do on a personal level.

Another thing that’s been happening a lot this session is the passing of redundant bills—or what we call *stacking*. Currently there is already a law that prohibits drivers from impeding traffic. Well, we just passed another bill this year to prohibit drivers from camping out in the left lane, impeding traffic. Additionally, SB385 adds municipal courts into the list of other buildings where firearms are not allowed. Currently, judges can prohibit anything from their courtrooms—so the bill is entirely unnecessary and simply another way of stripping us from our second amendment rights.

I want to thank each of you who have taken the time to contact my office and share your thoughts and opinions. I really appreciate your input.

(Bill Post represents House District 25. He can be reached at 503-986-1425 or via email at rep.billpost@state.or.us.)

Use school money wiser; give back kicker

gene h. mcintyre

The impression from the last several decades is that when school districts are given a blank check with taxpayer money they cannot be depended upon to use it for the betterment of learning opportunities for the students in the schools under their authority. Conversely, if a bond is put to voters and it stipulates that if passed it will, for example, serve capital construction costs to address overcrowding, earthquake withstanding improvements, or earmarked for other specifically designated uses, then, if the facts are provided in compelling detail and verifiable, its passage is recommended.

However, if a lump sum without any requirements is given to a school district or every school district in the state, it comes to mind from reading about such monetary provisions over the years that the superintendent and his/her deputies and all those persons in the district’s central office will too often receive big raises in salary and the headquarters building will receive an upgraded location or facelift with furnishings to match the newly-obtained wealth. Under open-ended circumstances, then, the observer must look high and low (usually without success in such a search) to find any benefit coming to school buildings, classrooms, AV equipment, materials or teacher salaries.

Then there are the salary, retirement and fringe benefits, including free housing and a free car, that add up to something between a half and three-quarters of a million dollars for the presidents at Portland State University, OSU and the University of Oregon. Their headquarters staff are not denied big salaries either when the money rolls in. Meanwhile, the professors, the most important employees at a university, are paid meagerly. Regarding the presidents, with hundreds of thousands of dollars given them each month, and freebies all over the place, why should we further surrender our money to them by way of the kicker?

Now we have one Tobias Read, a current Oregon legislator from Beaverton, introducing legislation

to suspend the projected \$473 million kicker tax rebate that would then be given in part to the schools and colleges

while the other part would be placed in a state rainy day fund. Rep. Read says, “House Bill 3555 gives us an opportunity to invest in the things that reflect our values as Oregonians and to turn around years of cuts to our schools, colleges and universities.”

We are already paying precious amounts of our earned incomes to support our schools and colleges only to realize by way of our state high schools, for example, the worst graduation rates in the entire nation and where, also, there’s the troubling failure to successfully address the hundreds-long list of drop-outs while inordinate amounts of time, energy and resources can go to buying artificial turf for football fields which serve as a playing area for a few dozen students in a school with a couple thousand student population.

Then, too, at two of our largest universities, UO and OSU, the sports programs have gotten to be the most costly among all university activities, Phil Knight notwithstanding. Meanwhile, we’re giving tax-

payer funded athletic scholarships to athletes who come mainly, with few exceptions, from out-of-state and who receive a free-ride to a college degree along with many other perks denied other students who must pay full fare out-of-pocket and, if they’re able to pay their way to graduate, leave the school deeply in debt while sports players trundle blithely off to the NBA, NFL, etc. for million dollar salaries.

Finally, the principle in this matter of giving taxpayer money that’s ordered by law returned when the economy’s positive numbers align just so, brings to mind charitable contributions. The best advice is that it’s ill-advised to give to organizations with a bad track record in spending as much as it’s considered misplaced-giving when the organization spends most of the money on overhead.

These cautionary standards relate to our schools and colleges, too, as they do as they please unless controlled by specific mandates. It’s hoped that a majority of Oregon’s legislators believe as is outlined for consideration here and will not pass Representative Read’s proposal. Governor Kate Brown, too, should veto the Read proposal should it ever get to her desk.

(Gene H. McIntyre’s column appears weekly in the *Keizertimes*.)



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Wheatland Publishing Corp. • 142 Chemawa Road N. • Keizer, Oregon 97303
phone: 503.390.1051 • web: www.keizertimes.com • email: kt@keizertimes.com



EDITOR & PUBLISHER
Lyndon Zaitz
publisher@keizertimes.com

NEWS EDITOR
Craig Murphy
editor@keizertimes.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Eric A. Howald
news@keizertimes.com

ADVERTISING
Paula Moseley
advertising@keizertimes.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Andrew Jackson
graphics@keizertimes.com

BUSINESS MANAGER
Laurie Painter
billing@keizertimes.com

OFFICE INTERN
Allie Kehret

LEGAL NOTICES
legals@keizertimes.com

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