

KeizerOpinion

KEIZERTIMES.COM

Moving our traffic

editorial

Anyone who has ever had their house remodeled understands that you have to live through the mess of tearing apart and building anew. It is just part of the process.

City streets are no different. To have the clear, smooth roads we want the public needs to accept that means delays and detours. It is the price to pay.

Keizer city streets are getting upgrades and make-overs. That is good for everyone. Drivers who fume now about having to wait in a queue during roadwork will be thankful once the project is completed.

Many people bemoaned the long reconstruction of Chemawa Road between River Road and Keizer Rapids Park last year. There were delays, traffic stops and bumpy drives. The project added sidewalks and bioswales. Today drivers travel a wide street that is safe for bicyclists and pedestrians, especially going into and out of McNary High School. The pain of the construction project was well worth it.

This week Wheatland Road is getting repaved. Sure, the project might cause delays for residents in that area, but once completed people who live on either side of Wheatland will have a repaved, cleanly marked arterial.

Preparation work for the traffic round-about at Chemawa Road and Verda Lane causes delays and long lines—to be fair there are long lines

going east and west during the rush hour. This initial work is child's play compared to the full-blown construction project. That intersection will be subject to closures during construction next year. Again, the pain will be well worth the final result of smooth moving traffic through one of Keizer's busiest unlighted intersections.

The city will assure that the public is aware of traffic changes during construction via signs and notices. Since the round-about was announced social media has been barraged with comments about how unnecessary the change is and how dangerous it will be. Research repeatedly has shown that round-abouts reduce accidents. Round-abouts keep traffic moving and that's what every driver wants.

Traffic round-abouts are a low-tech solution to an urban problem. Cities big and small across the nation have installed round-abouts; the anticipation of chaos is replaced with smooth flowing vehicles.

We may curse road construction delays but it's the price we pay for solving urban traffic issues. Once drivers get used to navigating the round-about they'll wonder how we ever lived without it. Better to go slow through a round-about and keep moving than sit at a traffic light.

—LAZ

Constitutional privacy?

To the Editor:

American colonists fought, sacrificed, and died to establish and preserve the freedoms now guaranteed to us by the Constitution of the United States. The right to privacy has come to the public's attention through various controversial Supreme Court rulings.

Privacy is not specifically mentioned in the Constitution, but over the years the Supreme Court has made decisions that have established that the right to privacy is a basic human right and as such is protected by virtue of the 9th Amendment. Study the Constitution, know your rights, and know what it says and does not say. This information was provided by the Anna Maria Pitman Chapter in Keizer, Oregon, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

Ruby Pantalone
Keizer

Everyone suffers from food fight

To the Editor:

Regarding Food fight escalates (*Keizertimes*, Sept. 4):

It's hard to know which corporation to believe: Haggan or Albertsons. I do know the promised lower—or

letters

same—prices never materialized much to the surprise of the customers and the employees of Haggan.

It seems Albertsons has more to gain as it owns the lone grocery store in Keizer (Safeway) which already had long waits in line.

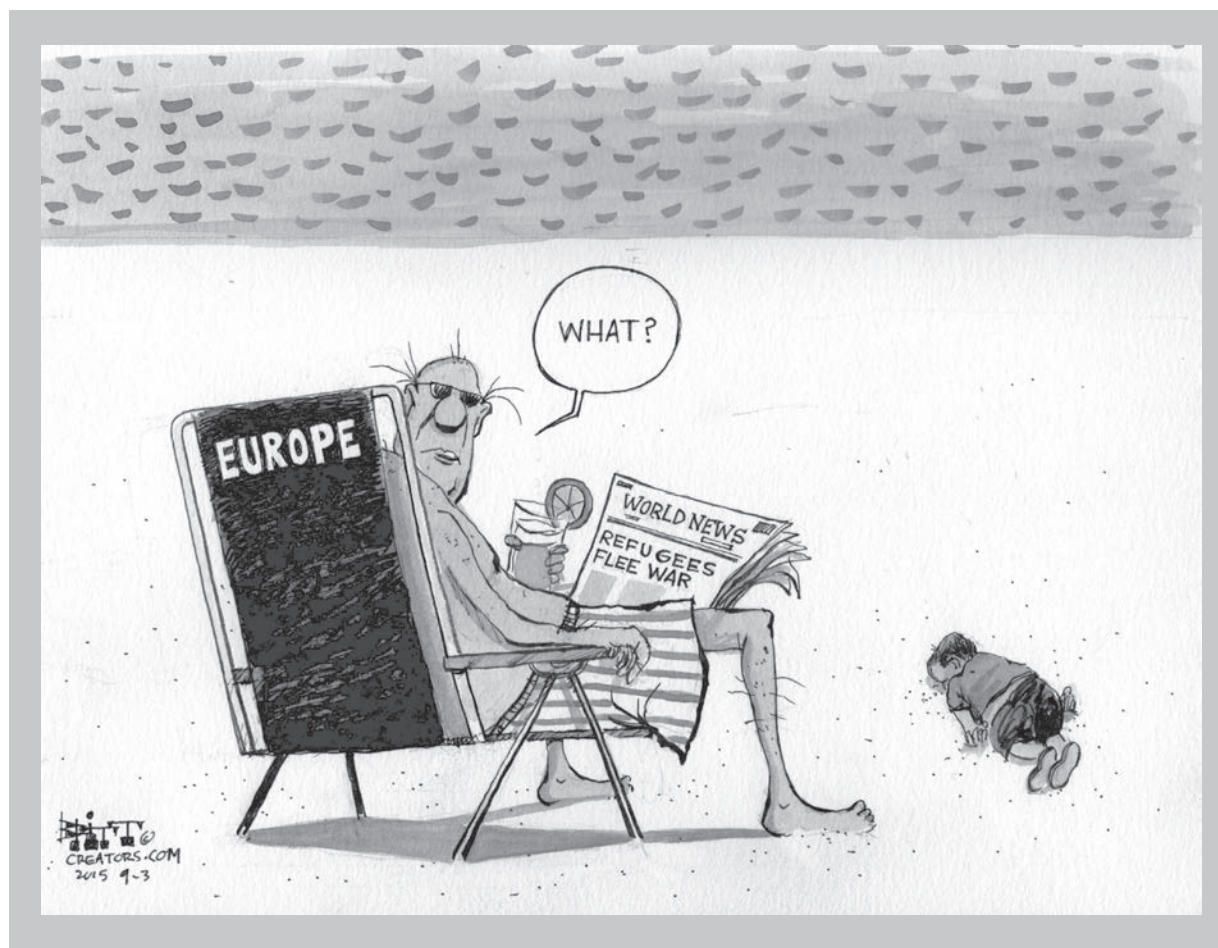
What is not noted in the article is how this will also affect the local small businesses. Will Creekside Shopping Center now become another Schoolhouse without its "anchor"? I do hope it is filled soon, either Roth's, Trader Joe's or WinCo would be welcome. However, when Albertsons sold this particular store it also included the building, and shopping center parking lot which is co-owned by another party. So how will it all affect gaining new tenants? I really hope it doesn't. There are already too many empty spaces in this town.

Tony Grove
Keizer

The *Keizertimes* welcomes all points of view.

E-mail a Letter to the Editor or guest column to:

publisher@keizertimes.com
by noon each Tuesday



Kim Davis is no Rosa Parks

By MICHAEL GERSON

Rosa Parks is an American hero, but her case was not an accident. Other African-Americans had shown similar defiance (ask Claudette Colvin, who refused to give up her seat nine months before Parks). Civil rights leaders had spent years looking for a favorable case to challenge the segregation of Montgomery buses. Parks' trip on bus 2857 was not premeditated, but it was opportune. She was already an activist—known, respected and impressive. Elevating her case was one of the best and most strategic things that the civil rights movement ever did.

Kim Davis—the Kentucky clerk who was jailed for refusing to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples—has been compared by some conservatives to Parks. Presidential candidate Mike Huckabee, with typical understatement, has described her case as “the criminalization of Christianity in this country.” He compares Davis to Lincoln because “he disregarded [the] Dred Scott 1857 decision that said black people weren't fully human.”

Bluntly put: Whatever their intentions, these people are doing great harm to the cause of religious liberty and to the reputation of their faith. Davis' defiance is the wrong test case for the protection of religious freedom.

The Supreme Court's far-reaching Obergefell decision legalizing gay marriage will have radiating consequences for people who hold traditional moral views on marriage and family. Some challenges will concern religious institutions—colleges, social service providers, aid organizations—that interact in various ways with government. Other controversies

other views

will concern the ability of closely held businesses to refrain from providing services.

But there is no serious case

to be made for the right of public officials to break laws they don't agree with, even for religious reasons. This is, in essence, seizing power from our system of laws and courts. The proper manner to change the law, in this instance, is to work for the election of a president who will appoint Supreme Court justices with a different view, and for the election of senators who will confirm such justices. Or to propose and pass a constitutional amendment. Davis may be impatient with this system, but it is the one we have. Personally assuming the role in Rowan County, Kentucky, of a Supreme Court majority is not an option. The available alternatives are to implement the law (as public servants across red America have overwhelmingly done), or to resign in protest (as some have done as well).

Huckabee will need to look elsewhere than Lincoln for inspiration on this issue. This is from Lincoln's speech on the Dred Scott decision in 1857: “We believe, as much as Judge Douglas, (perhaps more) in obedience to, and respect for the judicial department of government. We think its decisions on constitutional questions, when fully settled, should control, not only the particular cases decided, but the general policy of the country, subject to be disturbed only by amendments of the Constitution as provided in that instrument itself. More than this

would be revolution. But we think the Dred Scott decision is erroneous. We know the court that made it, has often overruled its own decisions, and we shall do what we can to have it to overrule this.”

Lincoln may be overstating his case. As a conservative, I believe that facts and circumstances matter, and often complicate simple rules. A sheriff or magistrate in New Hampshire in the late 1850s would have been justified in choosing to look the other way rather than enforce the Fugitive Slave Act. Some Northern juries flatly refused to implement that law.

But those were choices made at the foggy extremes of political theory. Whatever your view of Justice Anthony Kennedy's ruling on marriage, granting a wedding license is not in the same category as participating in a legal system that supported chattel slavery. It is, rather, participation in a legal system supporting liberal notions of individual rights. Davis believes that one of those rights is misapplied and misused. That is not the moral or legal equivalent of turning over Dred Scott to the slave catchers.

The Davis case is important, but mainly as a warning. Over the next few years, some religious institutions will be subject to legal challenges that are encouraged by Obergefell. This will not amount to religious persecution, but it will raise serious questions about the nature of religious pluralism. Some religious people will properly contend for their rights and interests.

But it is worth remembering: Legal arguments are not won by elevating bad cases. And public arguments are not won with unhinged historical hyperbole.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

A wall on the border — with Canada?

gene h. mcintyre

Presidential candidate Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin said on NBC's *Meet the Press* that he wants to build a wall between the U.S. and Canada.

A wall separating the state of Washington, and all the other U.S. states along the border, would greatly hinder commerce between U.S. and our closest neighbor: Oregon alone does close to \$6 billion in trade with Canada. Further, it would surely damage relations between the American people and the Canadians who are our trading partners and allies in all things terroristic. Walker says he represents New Hampshire voters who want a line of security between themselves and the Canadians. What I'd like to know is this: Was Walker speaking for just one screwball or several of them in the Granite State?

If our government was silly enough to build a wall between the two countries it would have to keep in mind that the border between the U.S. and Canada is 5,525 miles long (the border with Mexico is a mere 1,989 miles long). Some of our northern border traverses mountainous areas where snow and ice are deep and hilly conditions so treacherous that it would most probably result in loss of lives just to locate the border.

Without going to war over North America's northwest, the border line was established at latitude 49 degrees. What that means is that the southern tip of Vancouver Island should be inside the U.S. Whatever the case, my first venture to a foreign land from my home in Oregon was a trip by ferry across the Strait of Juan De Fuca to Victoria, British Columbia. It had

a reputation for being a touch of old England but I found that true only of the Empress Hotel's tea time at mid-afternoon.

Otherwise, the city and surrounding countryside are a feast for the eyes of any traveler who seeks scenes of great beauty.

One fact that caught my fancy right away as a Canadian employee was the Canadian health system. As a temporary worker I was neither charged for nor was I denied health care, which came as a pleasant surprise. I needed minor surgery while working in British Columbia for which I paid 0 Canadian dollars. Also, when I needed the body adjustment I was not required to wait for it while the care afterwards was no less than what I've experienced in Salem and the hospital here. Because I was employed there for a relatively short period of time with taxes withheld, the Canadian government refunded every cent of my taxes paid me while I worked there.

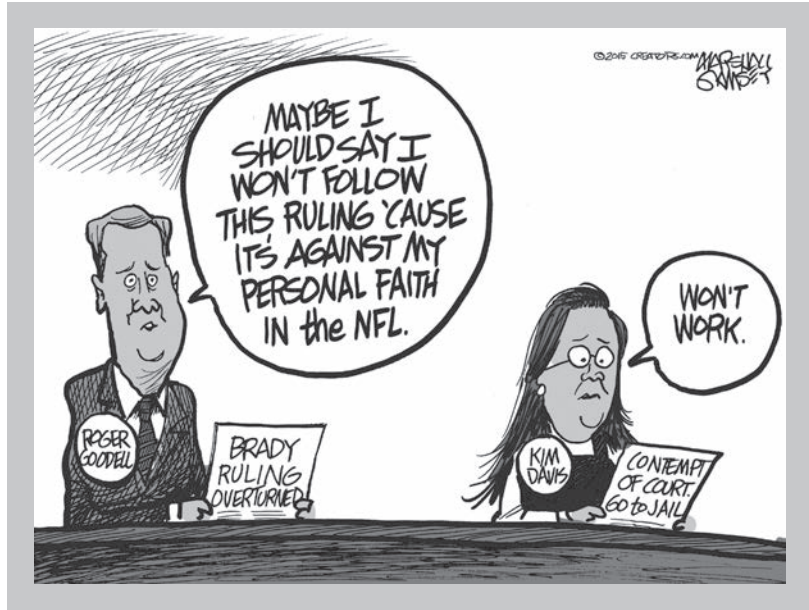
Every Oregonian who knows their geography realizes that the Columbia River has its origin in Canada. If the U.S. built a wall across northern Washington state, the Canadians, who are not inclined to resort to war like we are, could dam that river at its border crossing. Thereby, hydro power available at the amount we pay for it would no longer be handy and we'd have to resort to fossil fuels big time while we'd make every effort possible to establish wind turbines up and down the Oregon Coast and install solar panels on most every roof

top. Then, too, think of the business establishments that fly little Canadian flags to welcome thousands of tourists from our northern neighbor.

It's surmised that Scott Walker's home in Wisconsin probably has a tower so he can climb to peer in the direction of Canada to see whether those folks are organizing an invasion force to conquer the United States with their 38 million to our 320 million citizens. Since Walker sees a wall to prevent them from taking advantage of us with some stealthy plan of sneak attack and sees the wall as what he calls a “legitimate issue,” he probably loses a lot of sleep just waiting for the stomp of jackboots, the thunder of tank tracks and the screams of bloodthirsty Canadians invading Madison.

In 1945, at the end of World War II, the United States stood tallest among admired nations in the world. It maintained that status until the mid-1960s when we took over militarily for the losing French in Vietnam and ultimately lost, too, while alienating many nations for attempting to destroy what was then a mainly agricultural land occupied by farming families whose leaders were toying with communism. More recently, our forays into the Middle East have turned millions upon millions of Arabs against us, providing us a “black eye” worldwide. Now we've got a guy who wants to lead our nation by alienating one of our best and most loyal friends, Canada. Henceforth, the way we're going we better pray that “under God” is more than a catchy phrase in the pledge of allegiance.

(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. Howard
news@keizertimes.com

ADVERTISING
Paula Moseley
advertising@keizertimes.com

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Andrew Jackson
graphics@keizertimes.com

LEGAL NOTICES
legals@keizertimes.com

BUSINESS MANAGER
Laurie Painter
billing@keizertimes.com

RECEPTION
Lori Beyeler

OFFICE INTERN
Allie Kehret

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