

KeizerOpinion

KEIZERTIMES.COM

Is it free enterprise or defacing of public property?

A business is going about Keizer neighborhoods painting address numbers on the curb in front of houses.

A flyer is left at the door by a person calling themselves an Address America Independent agent. The flyer asks for a \$5 'donation' to have the house number painted on the front curb as a security service. The flyer says "This is an essential service as FIRE, Police, Paramedics, and Neighborhood Watch personnel will look first to the curb for your address."

The flyer continues on saying the curb painting is a community service project and that the homeowner is free to decline to the representative that calls. But, if a homeowner accepts the offer, they will be charged the \$5 fee and they are invited to 'donate' up to \$20 more.

Painting addresses on the curb in front of one's house is a good idea and makes it easier for public safety personnel in case of an emergency, but the outfit currenting trolling Keizer for business makes it seem like this is a project of our local police and fire services. They are not.

In a health emergency seconds can be the difference between life and death. The less time that police, fire or medical personnel spend trying to locate a specific house, the better for the person in trouble.

The public is not required to have a number in front of their home and homeowners should certainly not feel pressured to pay for something they neither asked for or ordered.

The city has received a number of citizen complaints. Keizer's

editorial

department of public works does not authorize the work, according to director Bill Lawyer, but they do not prohibit the painting of address numbers on curbs.

Keizer residents faced with a flyer regarding curb painting have the freedom to accept the offer, pay the fee and make an additional donation. They are free also to ignore the solicitation.

Over the years there have been a number of organizations that have swept through our neighborhoods citing safety, security and timeliness as reasons to pay up. A homeowner can just as easily paint their own number on the curb in front of their house.

Painting addresses does help public safety personnel more easily locate a home they are looking for. Driving down many streets in Keizer the driver would be hard pressed to see house numbers, especially in the dark. Address number painting would be an excellent project to discuss at neighborhood association meetings, at block parties during National Night Out, or it can be a fundraising project for the police cadets or other youth public safety organizations.

We are not opposed to house numbers painted on the curb, if it is done well. We are opposed to entrepreneurs scaring homeowners into buying something they don't want and paying a fee when they don't know where the money ends up, especially the 'additional' donations the current flyers ask for.

— LAZ

Young talent does Keizer proud

By this time those who live for sales have waited in the dark for doors at local malls and stores to open so they could rush forth and grab their own "must have" item for this holiday gift giving season.

Those who don't want to hassle with the crowds might migrate to e-commerce and order gifts from the comfort of their sofas.

Regardless of what is happening in the world the holiday season will arrive and we will each celebrate according to our own tradition. Some traditions are steeped in the religiosity of the season—church services, being charitable to others, reveling in the warmth and spirit of the holiday—be it Christmas, Chaukah or Kwanzaa.

The season can be enjoyed even more when we look about us and partake in the events that mark the season. It doesn't matter if one has children in school or even in arts programs in one of local schools.

Salem-Keizer schools has some of the best arts programs anywhere and that is never so true as now.

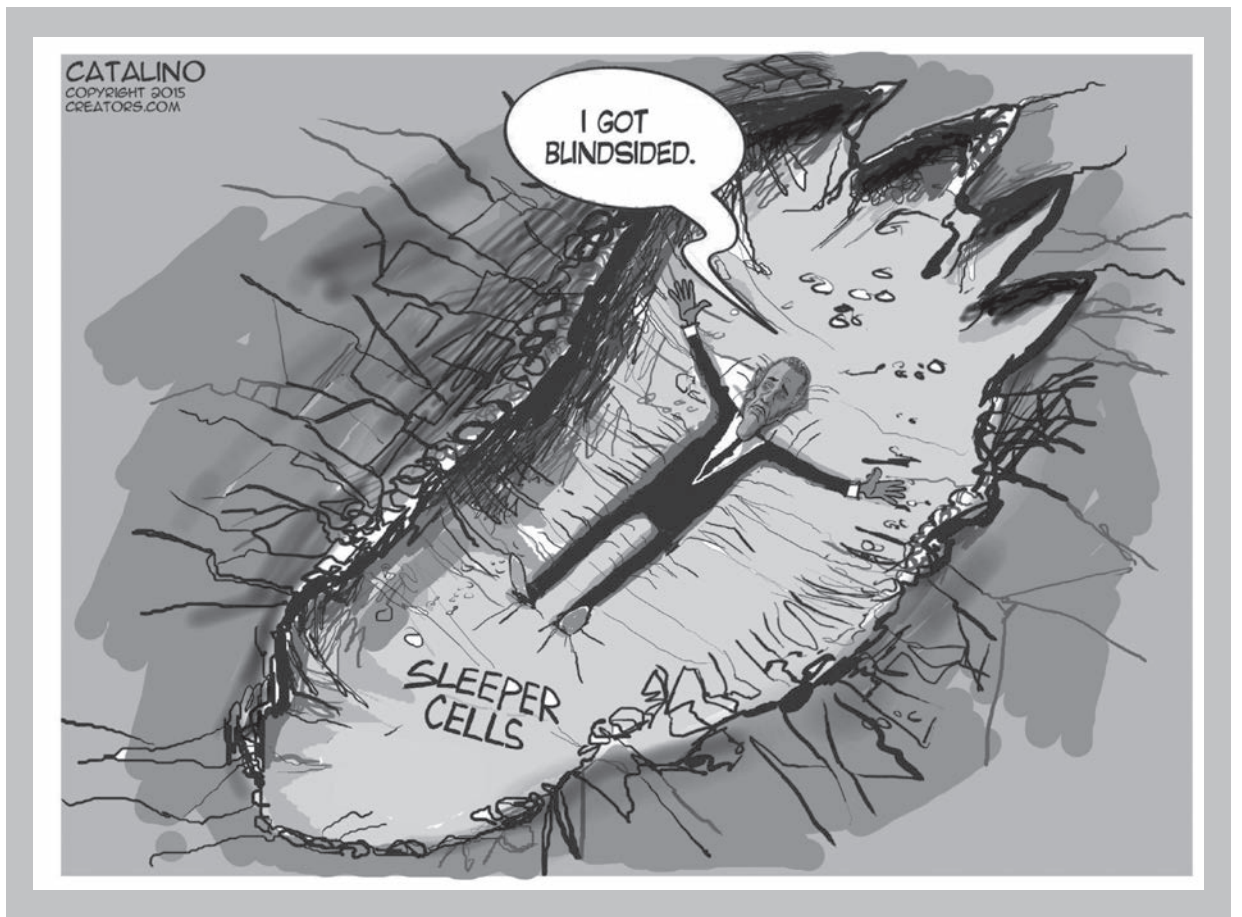
McNary High School just came off the rousing success of its production of *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* (a sell out).

The Whiteaker Middle School choir will join the Willamette Master Chorus for three performances of Vivaldi's *Gloria* in December. We're duly impressed by that—these are sixth, seventh and eighth graders joining professional-grade singers in a classical concert.

Students from Keizer schools will be performing at the state capitol during the holidays. There will be singing at the annual Christmas tree lighting on Dec. 1.

If one wants their holiday season to take on a less 'gimme' mood, they should see our young people embody the spirit of the season whether they are a parent of a school child or not.

—LAZ



The Trump effect, still understated

By MICHAEL GERSON

The presidential candidate who has consistently led the Republican field for four months, Donald Trump, has proposed: forcibly expel 11 million people from the country, requiring a massive apparatus of enforcement, courts and concentration camps; rewrite or reinterpret the 14th Amendment to end the Civil War-era Republican principle of birthright citizenship; build a 2,000-mile wall on our southern border while forcing Mexico to pay the cost. He has characterized undocumented Mexican immigrants as rapists and murderers, and opposed the speaking of Spanish in America.

Republican candidates have proposed: to favor the admission of Christian over Muslim refugees from the Middle East; to "send home" Syrian refugees, mainly women and children, into a war zone; to "strongly consider" the shutting down of suspicious mosques; to compile a database of Muslims and (perhaps) force them to carry special identification showing their religion. They have compared Syrian refugees to "rabid dogs," ruled out the possibility of a Muslim president, and warned that Muslim immigration to America is really "colonization."

There are, of course, Republican presidential hopefuls who have vigorously opposed each of these proposals, arguments and stereotypes. But Donald Trump has, so far, set the terms of the primary debate and dragged other candidates in the direction of ethnic and religious exclusion. One effect has been the legitimization of even more extreme views—signaling that it is OK to give voice to sentiments and attitudes that, in previous times, people would have been too

other views

embarrassed to share in public. So in Tennessee, the chairman of the state Legislature's GOP caucus has called

for the mobilization of the National Guard to round up Syrian refugees and put them in camps. Many Republicans are now on record saying that Islam is inherently violent and inconsistent with constitutional values (while often displaying an ironic and disturbing ignorance of those values).

Vin Weber, a prominent GOP strategist, told me that many Republicans remain in "denial mode" about the possibility of Trump's nomination. "How can you be the leader in national polls," Weber says, "and in the early states, and maybe even in money, and be counted out?" In spite of saturation media coverage, Weber thinks the Trump effect on the GOP is "understated." The attention of commentators has often been focused on the horseshoe aspect of the campaign or on the narrative of insider vs. outsider, rather than on what Weber calls Trump's "transformational message."

That message comes in the context of a long period of political pessimism—more than 10 years in which polls have generally found more than 60 percent of Americans believing that their country is on the wrong track. There has been an angry decline in respect for most social institutions, including government. This has left some Americans more open to radical political answers—more prepared, in Weber's words, "to roll the dice on the future of the country."

"We're going to have to do things," says Trump with menacing vagueness, "that we never did before." And if disrespect for institutions is common, Trump is its perfect vehicle—combining the snark of Twitter with the staged anger and grudges of reality television.

But in all this, it is easy to miss Trump's policy ambition. He would spark trade wars with China and Mexico and scrap the world trading system—which Republicans have helped construct since World War II—replacing it with an older kind of mercantilism. He would make the seizure of Middle Eastern oil the centerpiece of his regional strategy—turning a spurious liberal charge into a foreign policy doctrine, and uniting the Arab world in rage and resentment.

And Trump would make, has already half-made, the GOP into an anti-immigrant party. Much of Trump's appeal is reactionary. He has tapped into a sense that an older America is being lost. In a recent poll, 62 percent of Republicans reported feeling like "a stranger in their own country." This is a protest against rapid and disorienting social change, against an increasingly multicultural country, and against the changes of the Obama years.

It does not take much political talent to turn this sense of cultural displacement into anti-immigrant resentment. Only a reckless disregard for the moral and political consequences.

As denial in the GOP fades, a question is laid upon the table: Is it possible, and morally permissible, for economic and foreign policy conservatives, and for Republicans motivated by their faith, to share a coalition with the advocates of an increasingly raw and repugnant nativism?

(Washington Post Writers Group)

Head wins over heart regarding refugees

Divided as we Americans are over President Obama's plan to resettle 10,000 Syrian refugees by next year, there are many other concerns we share. Primarily because there may be Jihadist terrorists among those seeking safety and they will die without hesitation for their cause due to the promise of heavenly rewards. The terrorists are dedicated to destroying America as they see us as modern day "crusaders," coming to drive Islam out. Then, too, Americans are Infidels seen as worthless because they are non-believers and can be destroyed by true believers without guilt or moral compunction.

Persian Gulf states are afraid that the refugees' arrival will cause huge social disruptions and plunge them into greater turmoil than what's already underway. The European nations of southern climes are currently on the economic "ropes" and anxious already whether they can remain stable enough to see any future. Northern European nations are most willing to accept refugees but are edgy about how many terrorists will attack the native population to revenge the bombings of ISIS.

Regarding Iraqi and Syrian refugees, there's a struggle in me over whether to follow my heart or my head. When I deliberate on the fleeing refugees my humanitarian side says, "Let's give these people a new chance" while my rational side urges, "Don't be silly, these people cannot be trusted." Then there's the question of why these people won't stand and fight which may be explained by the spread of Wahhabism so certain other Saudis, especially the royal

gene h. mcintyre

family, will not die for the cause. The bottom line in my thinking on this matter is to confess a fairly

deep-seated fear that so many young, male single refugees coming here harbor a desire to bring about not only my demise but the demise of everyone I care about and love.

In the 1980s I was an American civilian working for the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) in Saudi Arabia, and having also traveled widely in the Middle East during those years, the experience afforded a front-row seat to getting acquainted with Arab customs, traditions and the practice of Islam there. Saudi Arabia is the most conservative of the Islam nations, yet other nations in the Middle East maintain a fairly strict following of Islam's code of conduct. It is difficult for an American to see how the females in the population put up with being what we'd call second class citizens at best, while the males they get perfectly assimilated.

Meanwhile, the men can break the code as long as they keep quiet about it. I got to know several Arabs quite well, including many who worked for ARAMCO but hailed from other nations in the Middle East, including many a Palestinian for whom the Saudis have great sympathy and hire

them often for no other reason than to free them from what's perceived to be the Israeli yoke. There are Muslims working there also from, for example, Pakistan and The Philippines.

In several Arab nations the fighting age men are disinclined to fight for their nation but have been ready of late to join up with the likes of al-Qaeda and ISIS operatives. This is most important in understanding Saudi Arabians. Saudi Arabia's oil revenue is a source of money to support the extremist Sunni Wahhabism; it is the money establishing madrasas wherever possible, dedicated to the spread of the Muslim around the world.

Politicians ask why we Americans let these people use our troops to fight their battles with those who would like to get control of oil in the petroleum-rich nations of the Gulf States. The reason I can give to answer that question has to do with the fact Saudi Arabia and its immediate neighbors are very rich from oil sales and can afford to hire others to do their dirty jobs. Before ARAMCO was nationalized in the 1970s, it was mostly Americans and the British that established and maintained the oil fields and managed the enterprise. The American and British managers still do most of that work with figurehead Saudis pretending to be in charge. The get-your-hands-dirty work remains the prerogative of Muslim men recruited from third world nations.

This question of the refugees is a tough one in which to find one's way. Nevertheless the final score in my mind's struggle is head 1, heart 0. (Gene H. McIntyre's column appears weekly in the *Keizertimes*.)



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