

KeizerOpinion

KEIZERTIMES.COM

Preparing for the workforce

By AMI MACEIRA
McSPARIN

Ask a business owner about the younger generation of workers and the response will be polarized. Some claim younger workers are an essential part of the workforce, while others state younger generations of workers need focus in workplace skills such as communication, building credibility, accountability, and real-world problem solving.

According to Rick Day, business owner of Advantage Precast Inc. in Keizer, this happens for many reasons, such as lack of support in training for employers and younger workers.

Because of growing concerns from business leaders, the local Workforce Board, together with InCite Inc., created the Career Achievement Network to meet the needs of the emerging workforce in our community. The Career Achievement Network, nicknamed theNET, is a career training and placement program offered to participants who are 16 to 26 years old, not in school, and not working. TheNET provides young adult workers with paid work experience at local businesses and non-profits while simultaneously teaching appropriate workplace behaviors such as showing up on time, following through on tasks, and other

guest
column

necessary interpersonal skills that some individuals lack.

Rick Day has been involved with theNET from the beginning by providing youth opportunities to obtain employment readiness.

"We have designated approximately 10 percent [of staff] for programs such as theNET and others to train primarily young people in how to work, and to learn entry level skills, often times leading to careers," said Day.

So far theNET has served more than 135 participants, with 58 participants graduating, and 50 participants gaining direct-hire employment. Additionally, eight of those participants were directly hired at their internship site.

It is theNET's goal for all participants to graduate from the program and gain sustainable employment or enroll in higher education in order to become active members of the community. If you are interested or if someone you know is interested in gaining a paid work experience, please contact us at 503-581-1002 and ask for Ami Maceira-McSparin or Nicole Piechocki. Our next enrollment is April 20.

(Ami Maceira McSparin is an essential skills specialist with InCite.)

Keizer's hidden gem

To the Editor:

Keizer's hidden gem is Rickman Community Garden, Nestled behind Keizer Civic Center, adjacent to Chalmers Jones and Carlson Skate parks, adding beauty and diversity to an urban setting.

Rickman Garden provides 17 raised beds which are rented by individual gardeners responsible for planning, growing, upkeep and harvesting.

Our first gathering of the season will be on Saturday, April 16, from 10 a.m. to noon. Three Master Gardeners will be on hand to share information and answer questions.

The public is invited to attend and bring questions, stroll through the garden and watch us grow.

Rickman Community Garden is a partnership with Marion-Polk Food Share, the city of Keizer and the Rotary Club of Keizer. For more information contact Peggy or Jerry Moore at moore5881@comcast.net.

Peggy Moore
Keizer

Abuse of animals

To the Editor:

Did you know 70 percent of animal abusers often have records of violent crimes? Animal abuse should stop because animals are family, animals die and animals have feelings, too.

One reason animal abuse should stop is because they're family. According to Stop Animal Cruelty, "some animals are not strong enough to take care of themselves. So they just live with it." Therefore, they get abused by their owners every day. A discussion

letters

on debate.org says, "Many people abuse their animals because they don't realize what they're doing." Therefore, they abuse these innocent animals who have done nothing to them.

Another reason animal abuse should stop is because the animals that get abused can die. Some animals are shackled in chains and suffer outside forever. Therefore, they can get a frost-bite and they're left alone. Some people are not giving their animals fresh water, good food, and a good environment. Therefore, they're not healthy and they can get sick. If people choose to own an animal it is their responsibility to take care of them.

The last reason animal abuse should stop is because animals have feelings. Unlike a child that can respond verbally to let you know how they feel, animals cannot talk. Therefore, animals can't say how they feel.

On the other side some people think it's fun hurting animals and think they're useless. However it's wrong hitting an animal because they have feelings and a life.

Animal abuse should stop because animals are family, animals die and animals have feelings, too. Many animals get abused. They get put in fights for money. These animals will die if nobody helps these animals that get abused.

Rogelio Montoya
Salem

(The writer is a student at Walker Middle School.)



The GOP has two fevers

By MICHAEL GERSON

Some Trump-obsessed, hysterical nitwits have overstated the case that the Republican Party may be on the verge of self-annihilation. "If Trump were the nominee," said one, "the GOP would cease to be."

That quote would be mine. The mood of the moment (not to mention the rhythm of the sentence) was irresistible. But the Republican Party would probably not disintegrate if either Donald Trump or Ted Cruz were its nominee. The reality is both less dramatic and (for those who wish the GOP well) more tragic.

On the whole, the Obama era has been the best time to be a Republican since Herbert Hoover left office. The 2014 election yielded the highest number of GOP House members since 1928, and the second highest number of GOP senators. There are currently 31 Republican governors. The GOP controls 70 percent of state legislatures and enjoys single-party rule in 25 states.

Real Clear Politics election analysts Sean Trende and David Byler have put together an index of party strength, based on performance at federal, state and local levels. By their measure, Republicans are doing their best overall since 1928. "The Republican Party," they conclude, "is stronger than it has been in most of our readers' lifetimes."

The overwhelming volume of presidential election coverage creates an illusion that only presidential elections matter. But Democratic decline at the state and local levels has radiating effects—influencing the shape of redistricting, emptying the bench of future electoral talent, and helping undermine the implementation of Democratic initiatives such as Obamacare.

Overfishing oceans has consequences

A few decades ago the nearest sighting of a sea lion for an Astorian involved a 175 mile drive down the coast to the Sea Lion Caves. Growing up in Astoria meant that one could never view creatures that live in the Pacific Ocean except, maybe, but very seldom, a lost seal.

Now, residents and visitors alike need travel no further than a visit to Astoria's East Mooring Basin to see and hear a noisy cacophony of literally hundreds of them. These same animals that kept themselves and their families way down south are in Astoria to raise their voices in what sounds more than anything else like three thousand humans at an outdoor symphony, bellowing their approval at the stage with hoarse throats.

Those in charge of Astoria's port facilities see the huge animals as a big problem. They are viewed that way because they are destroying the docks onto which they haul their bodies for rest and relaxation, depriving the port of collections from boaters who can no longer use space there to moor their boats.

As an aside, the East Mooring Basin was added to Astoria boat moorages in the 1950s but was a bit of a failure because its design did not protect small craft from the Columbia River's very strong current that whips through the newer boat moorage at speeds not unlike being in open water. There is also a West Mooring Basin that's much older but where the typical fisherman wants to moor his boat when not in use because it offers near total protection from the swift-moving Columbia River.

Whatever the case, with the sea lions around in abundant numbers

other
views

Consider: If Republicans had fielded a strong presidential nominee this year, who managed to win a winnable election,

the party's success would have been more comprehensive than any since 1980. The tragedy is not that Republicans are on the verge of self-destruction; it is that they were on the verge of victory, and threw it away.

This singular failure is not a small thing for the GOP. The patient is brimming with health and vigor in every way, except for the missing head. Either of this year's likely Republican failures would complicate the job of candidates down the ticket and help alienate demographic groups that are essential to future national victories.

At the presidential level, the GOP has two arguments in desperate need of defeat—two ideological fevers that need to break. The first is the Tea Party claim that ideological purity is the key to presidential success. Republicans, in this view, have lost recent presidential elections because their quisling candidates, John McCain and Mitt Romney, could not turn out 4 million "missing" conservative voters.

That number, it actually turns out, is a myth, rooted in the slow reporting of vote totals after the 2012 election. "There's no magic formula," says Dan McLaughlin of *RedState*, "no cavalry of millions of conservatives waiting just over the hill to save the day." A Custer-like loss by Cruz—who has shown little ability to expand beyond his narrow ideological appeal—would demonstrate this point.

The second fever is less common

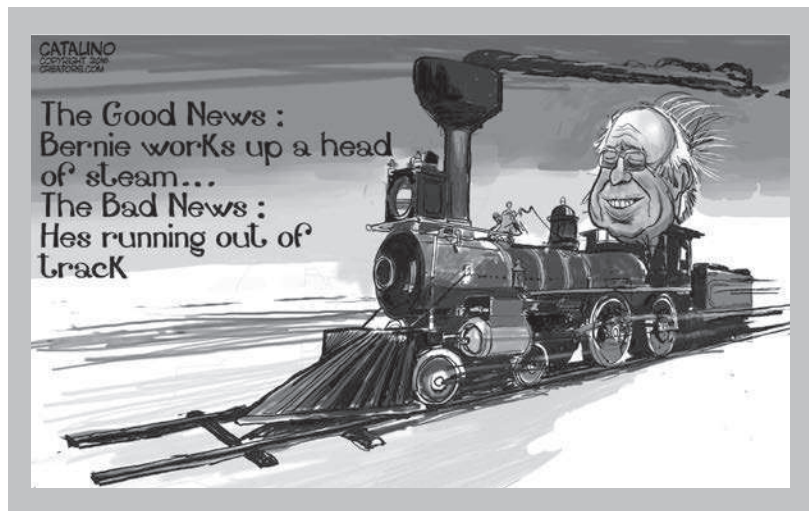
in the U.S. than in Europe, but it is a particularly vicious strain. This is the claim by right-wing populists that Republicans need to completely reorient their ideology in favor of nativism, protectionism and isolationism in order to appeal to working-class whites. This was the message of Pat Buchanan's presidential campaigns starting in the 1990s. With Trump, it is back in full force.

The problem? Aside from the fact that protectionism is self-destructive economic policy, and isolationism is disastrous foreign policy, an attempt to pump up the white vote with nativist rhetoric manages to alienate just about everyone else. Trump has secured his stagnant plurality in GOP primaries by earning record-level disapproval from the rest of America. If Trump were the Republican nominee, winning states such as Ohio, Pennsylvania and Michigan would require an increase in the white working-class vote so vast that the math is essentially impossible.

This is now the subject of many conversations among Republicans: Is it better to lose with Cruz or to lose with Trump? Both the arguments for Tea Party purity and for "white lives matter" nativism are in need of discrediting defeat. Unfortunately, they seem to be the two available choices.

Eventually, Republicans will require another option: A reform-oriented conservatism that is responsive to working-class problems while accommodating demographic realities. This is what makes Paul Ryan so attractive as the Hail Mary pass of an open convention. But, more realistically, it will be the work of a headless Republican Party, reconstituting itself in a new Clinton era.

(Washington Post Writers Group)



Keizertimes

Wheatland Publishing Corp. • 142 Chemawa Road N. • Keizer, Oregon 97303
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SUBSCRIPTIONS
One year:
\$25 in Marion County,
\$33 outside Marion County,
\$45 outside Oregon

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY
Publication No: USPS 679-430

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to:
Keizertimes Circulation
142 Chemawa Road N.
Keizer, OR 97303

Periodical postage paid at
Salem, Oregon

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