

KeizerOpinion

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Police? Parks? How about both

Parks or police? What should be the focus of Keizer's city government?

At recent completed Budget Committee meetings the call for adding at least one cop position to the Keizer Police Department was loud and clear. Also loud and clear was the call for better funding of the city's 19 parks. A vast majority of Keizer residents would opt for adding cops over extra funding for parks.

Law enforcement and parks are both key to a good quality of life for any community. The cost of employees is more than their wages—it is pensions, health care and PERS. Those three take a larger slice year after year. With Keizer's tax base frozen at \$2.08 per \$1,000 there is little wiggle room when it comes to budgeting; some things must be funded. The 'wish to have' items take a backseat to the 'need to have' items.

That's why there is spirited discussion on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board about how to find funding outside the city budget to pay for all the projects and maintenance the board identifies.

One of the ideas getting a closer look is adding one dollar per month to every city water bill. That could raise more than \$100,000 annually that would be dedicated to city parks. This idea needs to be seriously considered. To remain a livable city we cannot shortchange our parks.

In our current national political climate talk is more about tax cuts than establishing new sources of revenue.

editorial

Unlike new funding that benefits a subset of the population, everyone will benefit with parks that are well maintained and adding needed amenities.

How a city's parks and greenspaces and maintained and prized is an important calculation in how potential new residents, new businesses and visitors view a community.

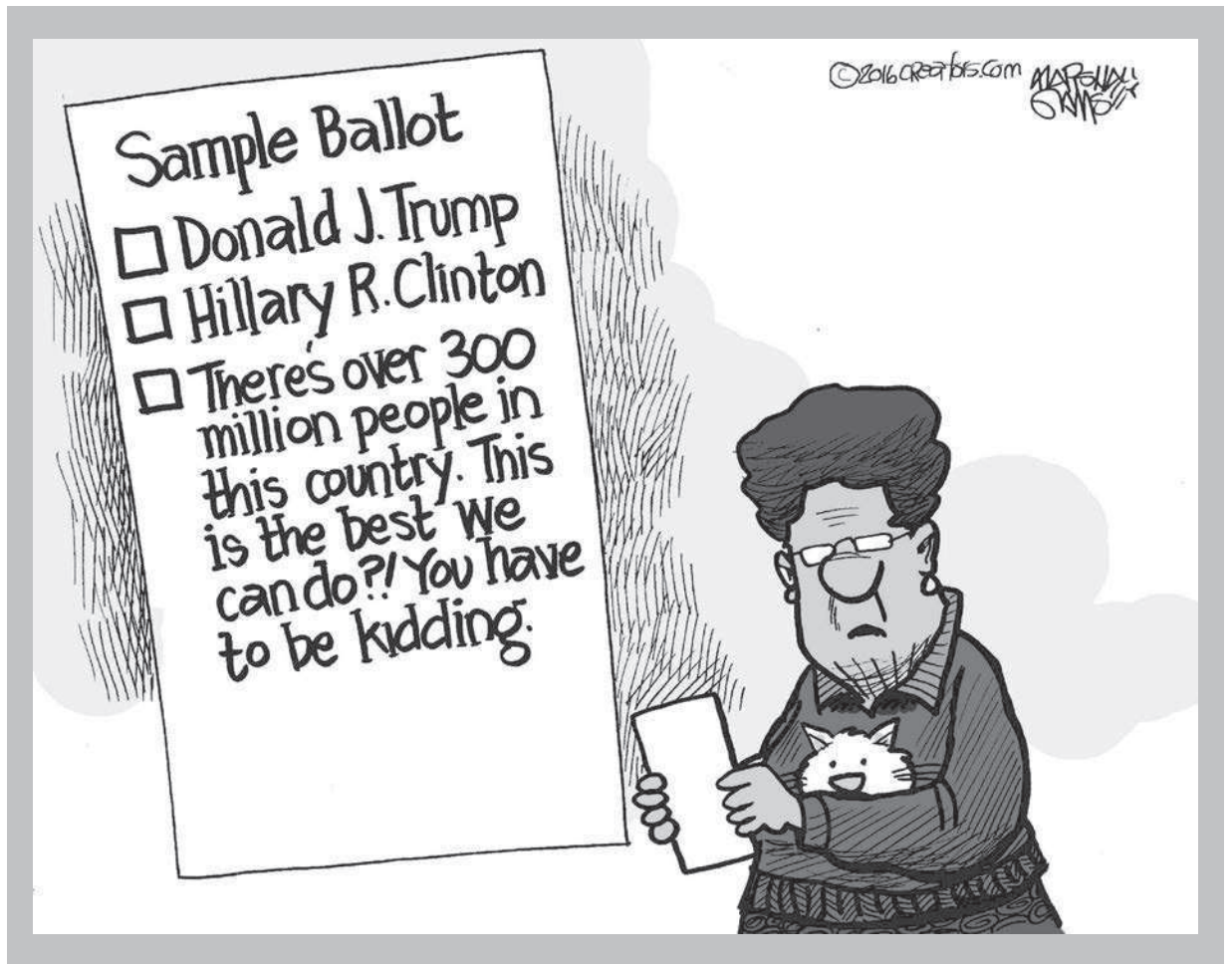
Parks and greenspaces enhance the neighborhoods in which they are located. A family may be more apt to purchase a new home if there is a nice park within walking distance for their children to play and enjoy.

Most people who have moved to Keizer in the past 10 or 20 years say they came here, in part, because of the quality of life and the quaint small town feel. Park of that includes having parks throughout our neighborhoods.

Once an independent source of funding for the city's park is established it will be a short step to starting funding additional police officers. Government operations is not inexpensive, it never has been. We have to pay for the amenities we want, whether we want to or not. It is what a society does. The key is to do what the city has been doing for more than 35 years: have as much as possible at the least cost.

Once tax revenue starts rolling in next year due to all the development in 2016, funding new officers should be a no-brainer, especially when paired with non-general fund revenue for the parks. Let us all choose police and parks.

—LAZ



The good news; the bad news

I slowly study the newspaper each morning. Here's what I learned today:

- The featured national crisis of the day was worry over who you might meet in a public bathroom. In my first 67 years I've been spared a traumatic event in any public restroom. Well, actually, there was Japan. I was shocked to find men and women using the same space. I can't say for sure that it had no effect on my character development. In North Carolina they are nervous enough to risk \$4 billion in federal funding for schools. I admire the resolute... something.

- We are now discovering that pregnant moms who drink lots of diet soda are twice as likely to have an obese newborn. Isn't that something? All the effort it takes to purchase a different soda is wasted.

- Ammon Bundy continues to base his defense on the claim that the federal government doesn't own federal lands. That continues to get a poor reception in federal court.

- "What is the remainder when 999,999,999 is divided by 32?" A 13-year-old Seattle boy won \$20,000 in a national math contest by taking only seven seconds to answer, "31." There is still hope.

- Republicans, after paving the road and putting up the signs, are now scrambling to disavow the oncoming Trump campaign bus. Who

a box of soap

knew that an atmosphere of name-calling, obstruction, and disregard of facts would produce a

candidate like this?

- In Chicago there were eight killed and 34 wounded over Mother's Day weekend. It's hard to divine any kind of meaning in that. We were on the road on Mother's Day and stopped briefly at a farmer's market in Moscow, ID. The featured entertainment was a dozen or so elementary school kids performing as a marimba band. They were good beyond reasonable expectation; polyrhythmic, precise and playing with heartfelt musicality. Raise your kids in Moscow instead of Chicago if you are allowed the choice.

- Research is showing that computer screens change how we think. Reading from a screen promotes tunnel vision—focusing on details of the moment and missing the broad views/ideas. Details stuck in the memories of electronic readers whereas those reading paper copy were more likely to accurately absorb the overall intent/message of the piece.

- They are just about to elect the Philippine version of Donald

Trump. This candidate has said "if you are into drugs, I will kill you." He routinely brags about his Viagra-fueled sexual triumphs and threatens to dissolve Congress and install a revolutionary government if legislators are uncooperative with his administration. It looks as though a Donald Trump test case will be available for us to study.

- Both the published guest opinions discussed the near term future of the Trump juggernaut. In March the *New York Times* said that Donald Trump had received well more than twice the amount of free media (not paid political ads) as Hillary Clinton. Bernie Sanders gets measurable coverage. All others were invisible. If this election is most patterned on an *American Idol* template it seems less impossible that we could get a stupendously unqualified billionaire as president.

- The next several days will be nearly 15 degrees above average. April broke all temperature records. Carl Sagan said that we have never lived in a world so exquisitely dependent on science and technology, nor have we ever made less effort to understand it.

That's what I found out this morning. I hope for a better tomorrow.

(Don Vowell gets on his soapbox regularly in the *Keizertimes*.)

Free speech is not up for debate

By now I'm sure you are all aware that an election is just around the corner. Hopefully you've registered to vote and may have received your ballot in the mail already. I have been out putting up a lot of lawn signs and I know I'm not the only one—you can hardly drive a block or two in Keizer without running into someone's campaign sign.

Personally, I love it. I love seeing people express their opinions like this. I had to laugh, the other day a friend told me that a person had stolen one of my signs from their yard during the night. The funny thing was, my friend's home security camera caught the guy in action. Apparently he had nothing better to do at 9 p.m. than to rip my sign out of the ground and smash it to pieces.

In the larger scheme of things, what's one yard sign, right? But that got me to thinking: It's an example of how our country is shifting from being able to have honest dialogue about our differences, into a place where people are actually afraid to express themselves for fear of retaliation. We have a very vocal minority that uses fear and shame to "silence" the majority. We are seeing this all across the country, at political rallies, universities and even in our grocery stores and it's not exclusive to one party or any "side of the aisle."

from the capitol

By BILL POST



As your state representative, one of the issues that is dearest to my heart is ensuring that our right to freely express our deeply held beliefs is protected. I disagree with many of my

colleagues but that doesn't mean I have to demonize them. I am committed to finding the areas where we do agree and working collectively to get things done for you, the voters in my district, and ultimately for all of Oregon.

So what does all this mean? It means celebrating that your neighbor put up a lawn sign for the guy running against the candidate whose sign is in your yard—maybe you can chat about it and agree to disagree, but at least you could speak about your differences and maybe learn a thing or two.

Our government may not be perfect, but ours is the best system the world has ever seen and it functions on the premise that each of us can believe what we choose and have the freedom to respectfully express that belief.

Turning in your ballot by May 17 is one way to ensure those freedoms are protected and to participate in this incredible government our founders called "the great experiment."

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



Strategy: Speak. Repeat. Repeat again

Any Keizerite who watched the GOP debates may remember that Donald Trump quite often used nicknames on his competitors.

He referred to Marco Rubio as "Little Marco," Jeb Bush as "Low Energy Jeb," "One in 41" for Kasich and, and for his biggest obstacle, "Lying Ted" for Ted Cruz, among other derogatory labels he pinned on those who have stood in his way to becoming the Republican nominee. Now that he's the presumptive GOP standard bearer, he has turned his attention to who he anticipates will be his chief competitor in the race for president, Hillary Clinton, whom he calls "Crooked Hillary."

In all cases, Donald Trump has used the most basic means to persuade, that is, message repetition. As we all know when we think about the matter, repetition is used everywhere as we find it when we read advertisements in newspapers, listen to the radio, and watch television. So, politicians repeat the same messages endlessly.

Any 101-level text will inform the student of psychology with this learning. It seems too simplistic that just repeating a message should increase its effect, but that's exactly what psychological research finds again and again. Repetition is one of the easiest and most widespread methods of persuasion. In fact, it's so obvious that we sometimes forget how powerful it is. Further, people typically rate statements that have been repeated just once as more valid or true than things they've heard for the first time.

All this is what psychologists call the illusion of truth effect and it arises at least partly because familiarity more often breeds liking (as opposed to contempt). As we are exposed to a message again and again, it becomes more familiar. Because the way our minds work, what is familiar is also true. Then, too, familiar

gene h. mcintyre

things require less effort to process and that feeling of ease unconsciously signals truth.

We are yet

to witness full-blown campaigns between Trump and Clinton but it's anticipated that on the Trump side, as he's proven to date, there will be no limits on his use of abusive language. Meanwhile, Hillary is no patsy and will fight as hard as she has fought in previous campaigns. It is predicted to get very tiresome as has happened in all previous presidential campaigns but it could turn at times (almost) entertaining as has been, from the number of followers he's inspired, the case with Trump to date.

It is most likely to be Trump vs. Hillary. She has already suffered the slings and arrows of Trump abuse where he's repeatedly called her "Crooked Hillary" and a player of the "woman card" to which she has smartly replied in the latter case, "Deal me in." One personal handicap that Hillary suffers from is her preference for a zone of privacy around her and her inclination to be less than transparent. For example, on campaign planes most politicians will interact for the entire flight with news people aboard: Hillary is known to keep to herself and not engage with the other passengers.

Jill Abramson, a respected journalist, who's been the executive editor of the *New York Times*, and now writes for *The Guardian* while she also teaches part time at her alma mater, Harvard, has followed both Clintons for years and argues that Hillary Clinton's not crooked; rather, Abramson argues that she's fundamentally honest and trustworthy. Abramson argues also that Hillary has not been influenced

by Wall Street money, influenced by any campaign donation, money given to the Clinton Foundation, or by speaking fees for her appearances before Wall Street firms. Yet, Abramson says that while Hillary ranks way up there on the truth-o-meter she's accurately criticized for not being willing to practice openness and quickly release the transcripts from her Wall Street presentations.

The period following the Civil War (1865-1900) much of the nation's wealth in the U.S. kept getting concentrated in fewer and fewer hands with workers becoming serfs while government officials did the bidding exclusively for rich guys' benefit.

Those who pay attention to their U.S. history lessons learn that Roosevelt's tough determination, breaking the trusts, regulating the railroads and other monopolies by the rich, saved the our democracy and helped to build an American middle class that's lasted almost to this day with, more recently, those with great wealth and through Citizens United taking over the place again.

Donald J. Trump may possess the brains and ability to be an effective president and surprise the doubters but he should drop the showboat routine and sound more like a seaworthy rescue ship that can navigate rough waters at home and abroad without capsizing.

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

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