

KeizerOpinion

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Food carts? You bet

The Keizer City Council must take the side of free enterprise and approve the operation of food carts in the city.

Keizer is decidedly not Portland, but food carts are a huge part of the culinary experience in our neighbor to the north. Let us not hamper the entrepreneurial spirit of someone who thinks they can make a success of a cart that sells food that might not be available anywhere else in Keizer.

There are two areas of the city where food carts should be allowed: along River Road and at Keizer Station. A pod of carts on River Road (where exactly needs to be negotiated between cart owner and land owners) would add an element of vitality that is missing.

There should be a waiver of the city's code that addresses color of brick and mortar buildings to allow carts to be painted and decorated with panache which would be a vibrant addition to the city's core.

editorial

There are a number of cuisines that could be served at a food cart that is now not available. Pho is a very popular Asian dish but it not available anywhere in Keizer. Imagine the foods from around the globe that could be served, enriching the fabric of life of our community—Korean, Argentine, Indian. The list goes on. A certain winner would be a food cart that serves pizza by the slice. You cannot find pizza by the slice anywhere in town, including grocery store deli counters.

The addition of food carts to Keizer's business mix would benefit all. Food carts would certainly be competition for existing restaurants but that is what capitalism and free enterprise is all about.

Approval of food carts in Keizer is a good bet for competition and appetites alike.

—LAZ

When love fails to conquer

By ERIC A. HOWALD

Andrew was the first friend I made at Auburn University.

It had been two weeks since leaving home for college, and I'd found a job at the on-campus housing department. There were a number of other students working there giving tours and filling a myriad number of other functions, but I was put in office out of view from the scuttle of daily operations.

Andrew was the first student who went out of his way to come and introduce himself. It's something I remember vividly because Andrew wore a pink turtleneck with bib overalls, one strap unhooked.

A year later, we were sharing an apartment on campus. Andrew, an interior design major, handled decorations, and I would proudly boast that ours was the best appointed set of rooms on campus.

I found a bit of smug satisfaction in rooming with a gay man. A few months before my departure for college, one of my favorite relatives and I were talking about the mostly unrealistic possibilities I might be facing as far as roommates.

"What if they put you with someone who is gay?" she opined. "Ewww."

To my knowledge, I had never had close contact with a LGBTQ person. It wasn't something I feared, and I had trouble understanding why she felt it would be so potentially offensive. I said nothing.

However, Andrew's sexual preference was something I omitted from conversations with anyone beyond my mother, father and sister. I could have cared less what anyone thought of me, I didn't want judgement levied on Andrew.

Even in the conversations I would have on the subject, I started to discover there were huge gulfs of ignorance and intolerance. Some people coded it differently, but there were moments when I wondered how we might ever bridge the gaps.

To my great surprise and relief, LGBTQ-positive views are spreading at meteoric speed. Twenty years ago, the idea of gay marriage becoming a social norm seemed like a moonshot, but it's happening. Then, of course, a man with an assault rifle murders 49 people at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Fla., and I'm questioning just how far we maybe haven't progressed.

Within hours, the labels were flying, but labels are reductive by nature. They allow us to distance ourselves from the social "others" that we share

the planet with. It makes it easier for us to say, "I'm not that," and then go about our merry business.

In addressing the nation after the shooting, President Barack Obama reminded us that doing nothing is still a choice. It reminded me of talking to that relative so many years ago and making a choice with my silence. I thought it was better to stay quiet than risk whatever minor umbrage my own thoughts might have incurred.

In the years since meeting Andrew, I've amassed many more LGBTQ friends. They are some of my closest confidants, and I'm infuriated that they might view this incident as reason to be something less than their true selves. I'm reasonably confident that they won't, but I also volunteer at McNary High School with students interested in creative writing where, every year for five years, I've had at least one LGBTQ student. I'm less certain they are able to digest an incident like Orlando with the benefit of the perspective granted by time and perseverance.

I wish telling them there are more good people than bad ones was enough to settle their minds and hearts, but I lack concrete evidence to prove such claims.

According to fivethirtyeight.com, there were 15,351 violent, anti-LGBTQ hate crimes reported between 1995 and 2008. A little more than two percent of the population identifies as LGBTQ, but they account for 17.4 percent of the total reported. At that rate, LGBTQ individuals are more than eight times more likely to be victimized than any of the other group. And it's easy to imagine a lot of these types of crime aren't reported at all.

That's an inordinate amount of hate slung at people who are only trying to be themselves. We can create all the safe spaces that we want but, eventually, LGBTQ individuals are going to need to venture beyond them. I would fear less for their safety if we could offer something more than hopeful assurance that they or someone they love won't be gunned down in hatred.

As someone who makes his living on the protections granted by the first amendment, I'm obligated to support rights of speakers who say things I don't agree with. But those protections don't extend to a thrown fist, the heel of a boot or the bark of a gun.

Speaking out against such virulent hate seems like the ultimate in tepid defenses, but it is my choice.

moments of lucidity



Will Orlando drive us from our corners?

By E.J. DIONNE JR.

It only compounded the horror that the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history called forth talking points that had been composed long before 50 innocents were murdered early Sunday.

The immediate reactions on social media to the killings at Pulse Orlando, a popular gay dance club, etched a portrait of our national divisions, our mutual mistrust and our inclination to know what we think even when we lack all the facts.

Even before President Obama spoke Sunday afternoon, there were declarations of great certainty that he would attribute the massacre to guns and not "Islamism"—and would therefore feed support for Donald Trump.

Trump did not disappoint. At 12:43 p.m., he turned to his communications medium of choice and tweeted: "Appreciate the congrats for being right on radical Islamic terrorism, I don't want congrats, I want toughness & vigilance. We must be smart!"

It is no day for partisanship, but how could Trump even think of using a moment of national trauma and mourning as an occasion to tout his own genius—or to reach sweeping conclusions on the fly?

But it's entirely true that those of us who have long believed that our scandalously lax national gun laws make sickening slaughters inevitable had predictable reactions of our own.

I freely admit that I identified entirely with Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) when he declared: "This

other views

phenomenon of near constant mass shootings happens only in America—nowhere else. Congress has become complicit in these

murders by its total, unconscionable deafening silence."

Note that phrase "near constant." We are far from alone in the world in confronting terrorism. What is different about our nation—enragingly, dispiritingly, depressingly different—is that from Virginia Tech to Sandy Hook to Orlando, attacks of this sort happen here again and again and again.

Why can we never include a reappraisal of our weapons laws as part of democracy's arsenal of responses to terrorism and mass violence?

Why are those who tout themselves as being the toughest among us in calling out terrorism inspired by Islam so timid as soon as any plausible answer is labeled "gun control"?

Nonetheless, those of us who hold these views must find ways of reaching out to fellow citizens with whom we have been battling for decades. Terrorism terrorizes advocates of gun control and supporters of gun rights alike.

And those on both sides of the gun issue will want to know why three FBI interviews with the killer, Omar Mateen, did not raise more alarms in light of evidence of his apparent terrorist sympathies. What we know so far underscores the challenges of

fighting terrorism in a free society.

When the president did address the nation, his sobriety and restraint reflected the reaction of a man who had been required too often to speak about the unspeakable and whose calls for action have gone unheeded.

He gave his critics who despise his views on guns nothing, turning the tables on them by saying simply that failing to act to keep deadly weapons out of the hands of those who would use them against innocent fellow human beings "is a decision as well." And it is.

He also did something important, showing how futile it is to force an act of evil into the boxes we prefabricate. The Orlando slaughter was, he said, "an act of terror and an act of hate."

We should despise what happened if our fellow citizens were gunned down by a man who was inspired by foreign terrorists. And we should despise what happened if people had their lives snuffed out because of their sexual orientation.

We gain nothing by arguing about which form of moral revulsion is superior or more appropriate. We set ourselves back by responding to an act of violence against Americans who are gay by turning on Americans who are Muslim.

The only appropriate response to Orlando is solidarity harnessed to intelligent determination. So far, no body count, however repulsive, has forced us to abandon our ideological cul-de-sacs. The dead on the floor of a night club cry out to us.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

America is a tapestry of world's races

Because every grouping of people in the world harbor among them an assortment of the good, the bad and the ugly, the Latinos, arguably, are no exception as is any cross-section of the U.S. population. Nevertheless, there are some Americans who have chosen to single Latinos out as mainly rapists, murderers and drug peddlers.

Meanwhile, according to facts as organized into a volume by author Steve Phillips in *Brown is the New White: How the Demographic Revolution Has Created a New American Majority* Latinos who come to the U.S. constitute six subgroups, counting 63 percent from Mexico, 9.2 percent from Puerto Rico, 3.5 percent from Cuba, 3 percent from El Salvador and the Dominican Republic and 2.1 percent from Guatemala.

Population in the U.S. now numbers about 320 million. Whatever the case of their numbers in past times, Latinos are today the largest group of color with 54 million and are followed by African-Americans at 43 million and Asian-Americans, counting 18 million and whom Phillips claims are the fastest-growing ethnic group in the U.S.

It may interest some to know, if they don't already, that 51 percent of Latinos live in the U.S. states of Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. That huge area was part of Mexico before the war between the U.S. and Mexico that ended with the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the surrender by Mexico.

History reports that the war started because Texas sought independence from Mexico so it could continue practicing slavery. With the help of President James Polk and many a like-minded member of Congress and other Americans, the U.S. militarily intervened. In fact, many a Mexican "visitor" refuses to accept "illegal" to describe those without documents and whose view often harbors the idea that illegal is how the U.S. took Mexico's land at gunpoint 168 years ago.

Yet, time brings changes and though

gene h. mcintyre

some Mexicans living in the U.S. are fond of saying, "We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us,"

there have been adjustments and accommodations over the years. Since Mexicans came north to occupy lands that were solely occupied by native Americans in past centuries, there remained many a family of Mexican origin on land that became part of the United States. Much of the influx of Latinos to the U.S. population in recent years is a result of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act which provided those south of the border to reunite with families in Arizona, California and other states.

Puerto Ricans and Cubans have settled in the U.S. by way of historical patterns. Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens and eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Many a Puerto Rican has settled in the state of New York and states nearby while economic challenges in their home have encouraged them more recently to relocate in Florida and other areas of the American South. Cuban immigrants also chose

Florida as a destination for change of living location. Fidel Castro's regime motivated many to flee Cuba after he took over in 1959 which means that at least half of Cuban-Americans were born here.

By what Steve Phillips reports, 20 percent of Oregon's current population is Latino with the states of Idaho and Washington counting a similar number. The Oregon territory was never part of Mexico any more than it was ever claimed by a "south of the border" entity. So, Latinos cannot legitimately claim that Oregonians, for one, played mix the borders with them.

Whatever the case, the bottom line is that the Latinos are here to stay, Trump or no Trump. It's believed that the best advice anyone can offer is that all races and people inside the U.S. should try harder, much harder, to get along with each other and not hold immigrant origins against anyone since we're all immigrants. After all, if we accept all who are documented here and want to be citizens, we thereby recognize the contributions that all make to the standard of living we enjoy.

(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
Eric A. Howald
editor@keizertimes.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Derek Wiley
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

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