

KeizerOpinion

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Up. Down. Tied.

Media's fascination with presidential election polls has gotten out of control. Every large media outlet, including big daily newspapers and all the broadcasters—cable and regular television.

editorial

Sometimes when results of the latest poll are announced with 'breaking news' immediacy, a caveat will be added: that the poll is just a snapshot of the campaign right now.

Hillary Clinton was leading Republican Donald Trump handily for the weeks after the Democratic convention. She was leading in most battleground states and even in some red states that very rarely vote for the Democratic nominee. Trump's new campaign team seemed to have persuaded the Republican to be a more traditional candidate—using a Teleprompter (that he derided President Obama for overusing), reaching out to demographic groups he needs to win the presidency.

At the same time Clinton spent her time going from one high dollar fund raiser to the next. She had not held a press conference in months until she spoke with the members of the press who were allowed to fly on her plane (finally)—hardly a setting for a good old give-and-take with reporters.

The result, according to current polls is that Trump has narrowed Clinton's lead. For now.

Turning today's poll results into news does nothing good for the process; it's an inside the beltway game

consultants and reports love to play. Reporting on today's poll of an election that is still nine weeks away takes away from any serious reporting on what should matter in presidential elections; where a candidate stands on important issues and what they want to do if they get into the Oval Office.

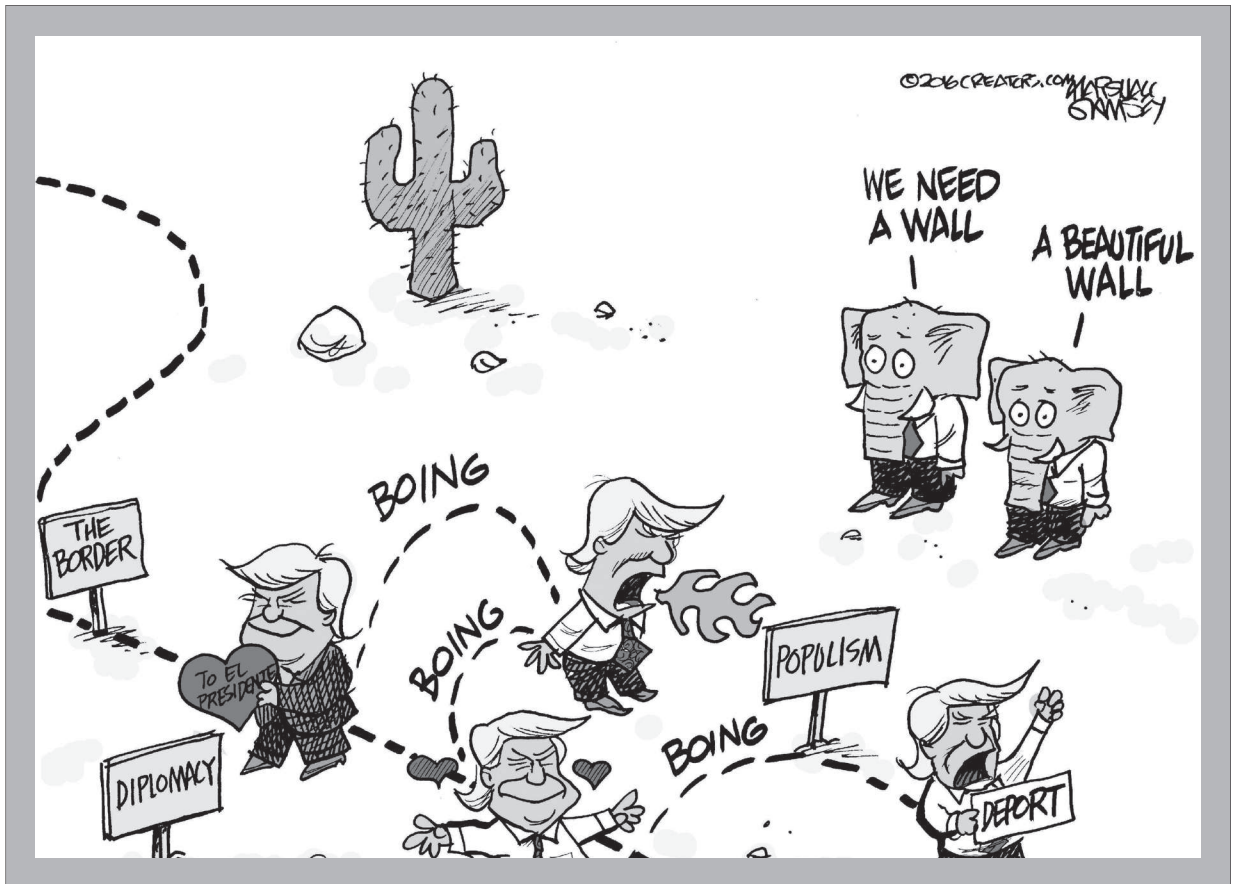
National polls mean nothing at all. The presidential election is really 51 separate elections—the 50 states plus the District of Columbia. Five hundred thirty eight Electors will be selected on Nov. 8; they vote for president. That's a fact. It is also a fact that some states are intractably red and some are intractably blue. Some of the reddest states may turn a little purple this year as certain demographics increase their numbers, especially Hispanics.

The only true poll taken during a presidential campaign would be the poll that is taken in all 50 states and D.C.

When polls are conducted by computer people without a land line are excluded. Only manually conducted polls dial cellphones—this tends to skew the poll results. Who has land lines? Older voters who tend, as a whole, to be more conservative than the population at large (and also vote more reliably than other age groups).

Reading presidential election polls can be fun and a topic of discussion but it does not truly reflect what will happen on election night.

—LAZ



High medicine prices due to greed

If you live in a congressional district anywhere in America, then you are part of the problem. Scotta Callister spoke of the Mylan/EpiPen thievery (*EpiPen is mighty—but only for those who afford it*, Keizertimes, Sept. 2). I was struck because I am a large part of the problem. There will be no "market fix" for astronomical drug pricing in America. If there are to be any boundaries on the pharmaceutical industry or any other facet of the health care industry they must be set by Congress. Until you and I demand action they will continue on with the important business of calling each other names.

Even when modest efforts to bring costs down are made, Congress resists them. Congress created Medicare Part D drug coverage while including language that stripped them of the power to negotiate drug prices.

There are some legitimate concerns about simply asking Medicare to bargain hard with drug companies. When you see that other countries charge prices much less than ours for identical medicines you should recognize that those countries are not asked to share in the research and development costs of new medicines, most of which is done in the United States. Many times those countries may actually harm their citizens by waiting for price drops before sup-

a box of soap

plying new medicines proven effective from the outset.

In many countries, and even with our own Veterans Administration (VA), there is the option of simply saying no to a drug company that refuses to negotiate costs. Medicare doesn't really have that option. If that drug company has a drug not available elsewhere then Medicare must provide it to covered patients and has no recourse if the provider simply refuses to lower its price.

The EpiPen pricing is the perfect crystallized result of our decision to ignore the needs of patients in favor of corporate/shareholder profits. With all the conflicting information and arguments it is still easy to see that Mylan is making the phrase "business ethics" into an oxymoron. Epinephrine is a generic drug with all development costs long since recovered. Mylan's patent stranglehold is on the injection pen, not a terrifically complex device. Mylan had nothing to do with EpiPen until it purchased the rights in 2007. Since then the price has gone from \$57 to over \$600. The only number growing faster at Mylan is the CEO's pay, now surpassing \$20 million.

Claiming the need to maximize shareholder returns Mylan bought a pharmaceutical company with operations in the Netherlands and nominally moved corporate headquarters there. Relieved of much of their U.S. tax burden they nonetheless asked for U.S. protection from a hostile takeover by an Israeli pharmaceutical company. Even in Keizer you can smell the stench from this deal.

I am taking a newish drug called Esbriet priced at about \$94,000 a year. Take that, EpiPen. I have Medicare, private supplemental, and a non-profit organization that have teamed up to make my cost zero. Esbriet/Perfenidone is available for \$2,000 per year in other countries where it was already in use.

Because I am selfish I am glad I don't have to pay \$94,000 a year but I understand that because it was paid, everybody in the country must then share the burden. If health care costs are already affecting all of us then we already have "socialized medicine." If we ever tire of paying twice as much as every other industrialized nation for health care maybe we could learn something from them, even insist that Congress join in.

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

In memory of Sept. 11, 2001

By ART BOBROWITZ

On September 11, 2001 I watched the world change in real time with no editing or special effects. I was getting ready for work and talking to my wife. It was one of those surrealistic moments when the world seemed to slow to a crawl. The news media was frantic with speculation as smoke came off the top of the first World Trade Center building. I still remember how austere it looked against the cloudless New York sky.

And then the second plane hit. It was at that moment that I knew America, and our workplace, would be different. There was no need for further speculation or the possibility of an accident. I knew that those towers represented in other parts of the world was hated with such passion and depth, that evil had taken control of the digital age. That day something in America began to die. It was something we had taken for granted far too long. We were losing a way of leading, thinking, learning and working. It was a message to the rest of the world.

Media interviews created some very interesting conversations. People started to say how they had found new meaning in their lives. Voices stated how they wanted to strengthen relationships, and that quality of life was important. People wanted to have say-so and speak their mind. They

guest column

had a deep need to establish a quality of life after the event. Relationships became a priority. They wanted to know that if anything happened to them that their life was not in vain, nor the lives of those who were victims of September 11th. We had experienced the ugliness of radical anger thrust into our lives and social conscience. How we respond or choose not to respond would define who we were and what we could have been. I am not seeing that from our leaders.

The United States of America needs to be a beacon for the world to guide the workplace and the human spirit. We are facing the challenges of global hatred and arrogance coupled with cultural and academic insecurity. Whether we want to or not, America and the workplace are on a very steep learning curve. Our focus needs to be on re-defining what is education and what we want our children, citizens and employees to know. Authentic leadership needs to be the product that makes the difference. The challenge facing 21st century communities and businesses will not be renewable products or the field of renewable energy. It will be defining and creating a model for moral, ethical and renewable leadership.

(Art Bobrowitz lives in Keizer. He is an author and public speaker.)

Uniform display missing at fair

To the Editor:

I was very disappointed to learn that U.S. military uniforms were not on display this year at the Oregon State Fair.

I heard that they were expected to pay for space if they wanted to be there. From what I understand they did not have to pay in the previous years to share their wonderful display of veteran's uniforms. Many veterans volunteered at the display booth over the years to talk to fair patrons about the uniforms and their history.

letters

I strongly believe the uniforms should be displayed at the Fair to honor our veterans and current military. What better way to offer some education to the coming generations. I would like to see the uniforms return to the Fair. I don't think the veteran's organization that manages the uniforms should have to pay for their space. They have proudly served our country and many have already paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Kari Williams Keizer

Will Turkey become USA's next Iran?

A reason our government gets itself into so many difficulties overseas is due to the way it so often conducts business with other nations. A case in point is our most recent problem with Turkey.

After surviving the recent coup there, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan demanded the U.S. hand over the man the Turkish president says was responsible for that putsch. The demand could result in a crisis in U.S.-Turkey relations as the United States is unlikely to honor the request without "hard evidence," whatever constitutes it by the flexible ethical standards of anything goes in Washington. However this turns out, it could affect Turkey's role as a long-time key ally, including the fight against ISIS and the handling of refugees fleeing the civil war in Syria.

Erdogan has said, "I call on the United States and President Barack Obama: Dear Mr. President, I told you this before, either arrest Muhammed Fethullah Gulen or return him to Turkey. You didn't listen."

Who is Gulen? He's a reclusive cleric who leads a popular movement called Hizmet. The 75-year old imam went into self-imposed exile when he moved from Turkey to the U.S. in 1999, settling in Saylorsburg, PA. American media informs us that he maintains a loyal following in Turkey, known as Gulenists who subscribe to the Hizmet movement.

Hizmet is a global movement inspired by Gulen who espouses what has been described in the U.S. as "a moderate, pro-western brand of Sunni Islam that appeals to many well-educated and professional Turks." Non-governmental organizations founded by the Hizmet movement include secular co-ed schools, free tutoring centers, hospitals and relief agencies which address many of Turkey's social problems.

In Turkey volunteers in the Gulen movement own television stations, the largest-circulation newspaper, gold mines and at least one Turkish bank. In a statement directly after the coup, Gulen denied any connection with the coup attempt and further

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suggested the whole thing could have been staged (even though 161 Turks were dead in the end). Yet, another coup was attempted in 2014 and Gulen's supporters were blamed for it. Again then, Gulen denied any involvement in it. It may not be too great a stretch to surmise that this guy Gulen wants to be the next president of Turkey

So, the beat in this matter goes on. Secretary of State John Kerry has reported no formal request for extradition from Turkey. Kerry said, "Give us evidence, show us the evidence, we need a solid, legal foundation that meets the standards of extradition in order for our courts to approve such a request." In reply, Turkey's duly elected President Erdogan has said, "I call on you again, after there was a coup attempt, extradite this man in Pennsylvania to Turkey."

History reminds us of a similar overseas episode that took place in 1979 when the U.S. refused to extradite the Shah of Iran after the revolution against his rule. The U.S. said he was undergoing medical treatment in the U.S. The refusal set off outrage in Iran, culminating in the taking over of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and the taking of 52 American hostages for 444 days. The fallout

from that affair has continued to impact U.S.-Iran relations to today. The situation in Turkey risks developing into a major crisis in relations should the U.S. continue to ignore Turkey's entreaties to act on its behalf.

Our capital is notoriously nowadays run and controlled by money. So, it would come as no surprise to learn that the Obama administration and members of Congress have received huge and persuasive contributions from Gulen to prevent extradition.

This modern day story is another example of strongly suspected corruption that that takes place every day in our nation's capital. What's predicted will happen in this case is that Turkey will ultimately be refused its request, we'll lose another ally as we've lost so many since our leaders jettisoned traditional American values, and it will ultimately cost the lives of American service men and women who will be sent to their deaths because, through revolution, the Turkey of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, he who sought to establish and maintain a secular country, will ultimately fall to Islamic overthrow and the U.S. will, by NATO treaty, be forced to protect Bulgaria, Romania, Greece and others from invasion by fanatical Muslims.

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

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