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What's a political junkie to think?

By LYNDON ZAITZ

Thanks to my dad, Clarence, who owned the Keizer News in the 1960s and was then the United Press International bureau chief at the capitol building, I've been a political junkie since I was a young lad.

The politics of campaigns, elections, operations and governance. My little cup runneth over during presidential election years, especially if it was a tight race where the outcome would not be sure until late election night.

The presidential election of 2016 has got me all verklempt. The election campaign really began the day after the 2012 race. At that time Jeb Bush was the frontrunner who would use his name, connections and millions of dollars to grab the Republican nomination and follow his father and brother into the Oval Office.

Hillary Clinton would sail to the Democratic nomination and would be elected handily.

The voters in both parties had different ideas. Bush was out of the race early, that's \$100 million down the drain. Donald J. Trump tapped into the anger and anxiety of the Republican primary and caucus voters. He was discounted as a viable candidate for months by the media, even after many missteps, offensive remarks and no set agenda. At the outset he faced 16 other candidates and bested them all. The pundits and media dismissed them at their own peril and now report every word he utters.

Clinton faced a Socialist senator from a small New England state (it has only 4 electoral votes) and a former governor of Maryland. The expected easy run to the Democratic nomination ran into a wall called Bernie Sanders.

In the end we get one expected nominee and one nobody thought could get anywhere near the White House.

As if the primaries weren't exhausting enough, the general election campaign—which has been going on since early summer—is beyond the pale. The ceaseless polling numbers puts Hillary up one day, then it's Trump in the lead. Of course the election is 51 elections; it doesn't matter who is ahead in national polls.

Oregon is a not a battleground state so we have been spared the endless onslaught of television ads, mailers, robocalls and volunteers knocking on our doors. Those poor people in Ohio, Florida and other states where the election will be decided.

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Thankfully there are only a few days before Election Day, because I think I'm overdosing on politics. I've been horrified by some of the things that have come to pass. What happened to the great experiment that is the United

States of America that citizens are threatening revolution if their candidate doesn't win. America doesn't do that, and it wouldn't do that if it wasn't being given permission to do that by one of the candidates and some of the media news entertainers.

Talk of a rigged election has gone mainstream; it used to be inside politics who'd talk like that. Experts say that rigging an election with more than 100 million votes would be a nifty trick worthy of a McGyver or the Mission Impossible Force. But when the Republican candidate tells his rabid supporters that if he doesn't win it will only be because the election was rigged.

Politics was, at one time, a gentleman's game. Now it has devolved into a morass of tit-for-tat charges, accusations and flat-out untruths.

It is very frightening when members of Congress declare that if the Democrat wins the presidency, her choices for the Supreme Court and other federal courts will get no hearing at all. President Obama's nomination for the high court has been twisting in limbo for months.

A president has to be the leader of all Americans, not just their supporters. With the country dangerously divided, there doesn't seem to be a path to cooperation and a coming together as one nation. Whoever wins on Tuesday, we will see years of investigation by Congress or we'll see how the world and the economy, especially the stock markets respond to a president who is not ready for prime time governance.

O for the days when candidates actually discussed policies and agendas. Elections usually come down to who a voter trusts and the candidate's character. This year we have two candidates who cancel out each other on the trustworthiness and character issues. It's enough to make me go cold turkey and withdrawal from politics. That will never happen. After the election comes the fun of watching the winner flesh out their political appointments. For me, it's a sequel to a horrid election campaign, but I'll be paying attention just like every other junkie.

(Lyndon Zaitz is publisher of the *Keizertimes*.)

and especially all her help), McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Town & Country Lanes (bowling ball for pumpkin seed guessing contest), Olive Garden, Fandango (movie passes),

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Kathy Kaplan
Youth Director, Town & Country Lanes

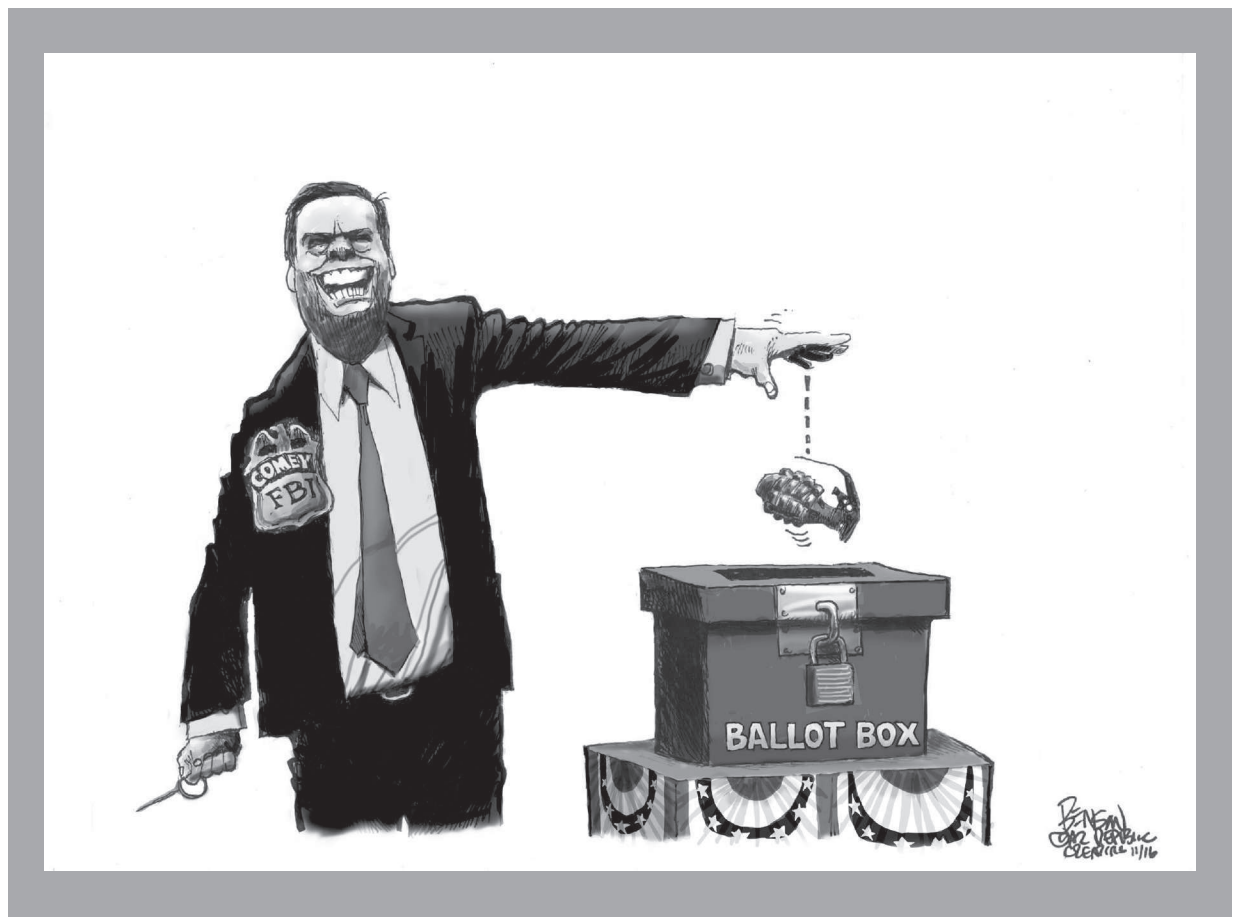
Halloween party thanks

To the Editor:

Thank you so much to Christy from JC's Pizza for helping make the youth All Night Halloween Party a success. Your help in getting the donations was extremely helpful.

I would also like to thank: Keizer Florist, Safeway, Schreiner's Iris Gardens, Costco, Mommy & Maddy's, Java Crew, Warpaint Int'l, Christina Secco (for her many, many donations,

letters



The costs of Comey's appeasement

By E.J. DIONNE JR.

The evidence suggests that FBI Director James Comey is a decent man. The evidence also suggests that he has been intimidated by pressure from Republicans in Congress whose interest is not in justice but in destroying Hillary Clinton.

On Friday, a whipsawed Comey gave in. Breaking with FBI precedent and Justice Department practice, he weighed in on one side of a presidential campaign.

I don't believe this was his intention. But his vaguely worded letter to Congress announcing that the FBI was examining emails on a computer used by Clinton aide Huma Abedin accomplished the central goals of the right-wing critics Comey has been trying to get off his back.

Especially disturbing is that some of those critics are inside the FBI. As *The Washington Post's* Sari Horwitz reported on Saturday, "a largely conservative investigative corps" in the bureau was "complaining privately that Comey should have tried harder to make a case" against Clinton.

For a major law-enforcement institution to be so politicized and biased against one party would be a genuine scandal. If Comey acted in part out of fear that his agents would leak against him, it would reflect profound dysfunction within the FBI.

One measure of the damage Comey has done to his reputation is the praise Donald Trump showered upon him after months of trashing the director for not recommending Clinton's indictment. Winning favor from a politician who has described how he would use the government's instruments to punish his enemies is not something a professional like Comey will ever be proud of.

Far from covering, Clinton and her campaign went on the offensive,

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demanding more clarity from the FBI director. In light of reports that no one in the bureau has even viewed the messages,

Tim Kaine, Clinton's vice presidential running mate, said on ABC's *This Week* Sunday: "If he hasn't seen the emails, they need to make that plain." Clinton called Comey's intervention "unprecedented and deeply troubling." Indeed.

Comedy's murky letter opened the way for Trump to level wild charges against Clinton and for congressional Republicans to engage in their own initiatives to twist the truth.

Rep. Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah, chair of the Oversight Committee, quickly tweeted news of Comey's letter Friday and stated: "Case reopened."

This is not what Comey said (and technically the Clinton case was never closed). But many in the media bought Chaffetz's hype, especially in early accounts. That's what happens when an FBI director hands an explosive but muddled letter to a Republican-led Congress.

In fact, Chaffetz had already made clear that if Clinton wins, the GOP's top priority will be to keep the Clinton investigative machine rolling. "It's a target-rich environment," Chaffetz cheerfully told *The Washington Post's* David Weigel last week. "Even before we get to Day One, we've got two years' worth of material already lined up. She has four years of history at the State Department, and it ain't good."

And on ABC Sunday, Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., chair of the Judiciary Committee, gave the Republicans' game away when he spoke of

Clinton's "potential impeachment" before correcting himself. Note to reader: Inauguration Day isn't until January 20, 2017.

These are the people Comey has been trying to mollify ever since he decided that there was no way the evidence justified prosecuting Clinton. His first act of appeasement was his July news conference in which he announced his decision but also criticized Clinton and her aides for being "extremely careless in their handling of very sensitive, highly classified information."

Comedy may have thought he had arrived at the Solomonic middle ground that would make everyone happy. But as Matthew Miller, a former Justice Department official wrote in *The Washington Post*, when "the government decides it will not submit its assertions to ... rigorous scrutiny by bringing charges, it has the responsibility to not besmirch someone's reputation by lobbying accusations publicly instead."

Comedy had entered the political fray, and there was no turning back—especially since his Republican tormentors would not be satisfied until Clinton was brought down. As *The Post* editorialized, Comey had already gone "too far" in "providing raw FBI material to Congress." He allowed himself to be sucked into a dangerous and dysfunctional relationship with one political party that set him on the hazardous course to Friday's letter.

History shows that appeasing bullies never works. Maybe Comey has learned this lesson and will try to make amends in coming days.

As for the voters, my hope is that they reject this perversion of justice all the way down the ballot.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

Was Malheur the start of do-it-yourself government?

In U.S. history, there is no specific documentation of just when the concept of protecting wildlife through habitat preservation began. Nevertheless, as long ago as the mid-1800s, diaries of early western explorers, pictorial records and reports from journalists and speakers knowledgeable about the West referenced the unrestricted slaughter of wildlife for food, fashion and commerce, destroying a remarkable and irreplaceable national treasure.

Over the subsequent years of the 19th and 20th centuries, American presidents and Congresses have passed acts that preserved ever more sites in the West. These have become our wildlife refuges, providing the protections we cherish: Protections against the wanton destruction of the fish and game found within those refuges and against their capture and destruction for purposes of merchandise or profit.

Now we find that modern day business and industrial interests, along with smaller groups of persons bent on self-aggrandizement by exploiting our refuges, among them logging, ranching and mining interests, will not use the courts or the permit process to use federal lands intended to be enjoyed by all forever. The Bundy family and their gang members have come to our consciousness most recently by their Malheur Wildlife Refuge invasion. Unfortunate for law-abiding Americans, who do not want our refuges destroyed, they want to take them by use of weapons for their personal monetary gain.

The seven offenders in federal

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court in Portland have intentions to use refuge locations throughout the West, as they've already proven in Nevada and Oregon, at the expense of that which has been protected by federal laws for well over a century. Their convictions should have been a slam dunk as their cohorts had already confessed to being guilty on the federal charges against them. Now, it looks an awful lot like they'll strike again while the law may stand by, wringing its hands in helpless resignation.

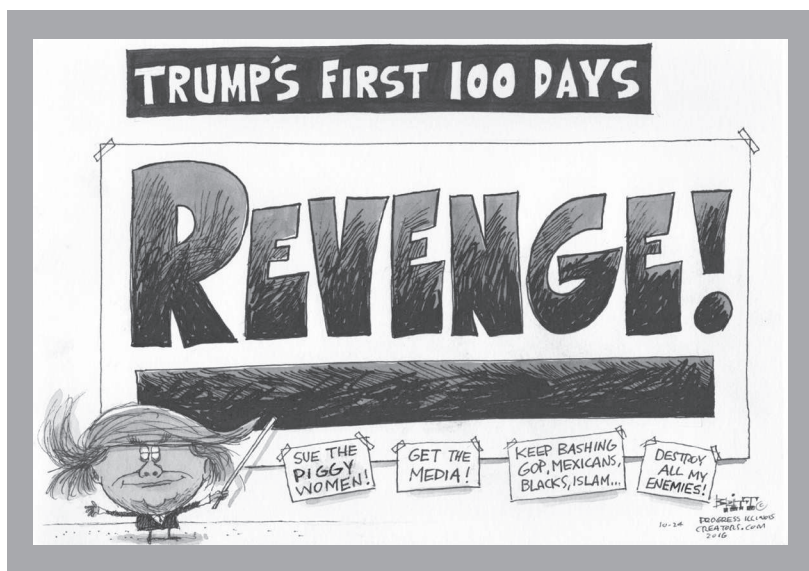
The federal jury that acquitted the Bundys et al were obviously unable to foresee the consequences of their decision as they now have been given that bunch a virtual license to steal our wildlife refuges.

The federal jury system has failed all Oregonians who care and all others in the West who value our wildlife refuges protected in perpetuity. One chance at saving these

revered places is by our U.S. Senators, Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley. They have the power to take the issue of preservation to the halls of Congress whereby laws on the books since 1864 can be enforced by federal marshals, with backup by the U.S. military.

Finally, here, the "overreaching government" argument, it's predicted very possible, will lead to the second American Civil War as in nullification of the federal authority used by the Confederacy in 1861. How so? Because if all Americans take what they want by force from our long-standing refuges and most likely next, our national parks, too, avoiding our tradition of settling matters of federal property ownership in American courts of law, then the only way law-abiders have to protect what they value is to take up arms, using the last resort vigilante approach.

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



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