

# KeizerOpinion

KEIZERTIMES.COM

## Local election is over

It ain't over 'til it's over. And now it's over.

Laura Reid was officially declared the winner in her race for Keizer City Council Position 1 over Allen Barker this week by the Marion County elections division. She won by 109 votes out of a total of more than 12,300 cast. There's a lesson here for everybody: every vote counts.

The race between Reid and Barker was not acrimonious, it was hardly even in the public eye. It was a race between two people who care about the place they call home and wanted

to do their part to keep it the livable city it is.

The city of Keizer is a winner here, too. As we said in this space before, by electing Reid we get a new voice on the council and Barker's business expertise remains on the budget committee. If only all elections had a beneficial outcome like this one.

We expect good things from Councilor-elect Reid. There will be important issues she will have to become familiar with. And fast.

—LAZ

editorial

## What kind of Christmas?

By LYNDON ZAITZ

People celebrate Christmas in many ways and for different reasons. Some celebrate the birth of Christ, some celebrate children, some celebrate Santa Claus. Others mark the season with a mix of reasons.

It can be argued that the Christmas season is the favorite time of year for most, even with the frustrations, disappointments and feuds that arise when family gets together. The need to buy a present for absolutely everyone—immediate, extended and blended families, not to mention friends and co-workers. Money—out-of-pocket cash or credit—is always a sticking point during the holidays.

That's why I cherish the Christmases I spent with friends when none of us had much disposable income. I guess it is akin to those who remember fondly the holidays they marked in the depths of the Great Depression in the 1930s when people had to use their imagination and being with family was more important than a present.

My circle of friends and I lived in Seattle, which was a pretty good setting for Christmas. It didn't cost a cent to see the window and in-store displays at The Bon Marche, and the flagship Nordstrom and Frederick & Nelson stores. In those days visual merchandising was still a big thing and one couldn't but help be in the holiday mood.

It is interesting how creative a group of people can be when the lack of money is common among them. But, like our Great Depression brethren, we didn't mope, or get depressed. We embraced the season and the fact that we were all in the same boat. We all had restaurant jobs—it seemed all our friends worked in the food industry in one way or the other.

The rental house my friends shared was Christmas Central; it was the gathering place for all the 'orphans' we knew who did not have family near by. There were many years I did not have a tree; the one at Christmas Central worked for me.

What do young people do when Christmas rolls around and they want to give gifts? They use their talents. At the time I was intensely into color pencil art, I cranked out art piece after art piece, trying to perfect my shading and perspective. I put that skill to use and went to work.

on my mind

Starting with a large blank, white sheet of art paper, I started what has become my masterpiece: a sullen harlequin jester sitting in a chair with his scepter carelessly tossed aside. I was proud of the way I figured out how to draw and shade fabric folds and details of the chair's upholstery.

I knew I had finally nailed it. This gift for my best friend deserved a frame that matched the subject. Luckily, I found a baroque style frame for a few dollars and it fit my art perfectly.

On Christmas morning I waited with anticipation as my friend opened that gift. The reaction was as I hoped it would be; he was dumbfounded. He loved it. It was probably the best gift I ever gave and it made feel good that my hands created something that brought joy to someone else.

Christmas mornings during those slight years are memorable because we didn't rely on expensive gadgets to show our love for one another. One of us was an amazing cook and prepared Rockwellian brunches and holiday dinners that we enjoyed with many of our friends who gravitated to Christmas Central.

At other times in my younger adult years, when money and I were not well known to each other, friends would receive an original Lyndon Zaitz poem or short story. One year I wrote my sister a sci-fi story that I packaged with my own handcrafted book cover. That story is long lost to history, but I do remember it wasn't very good. My sister was good sport about it, though.

With time circumstances changed. I and other friends moved out of Seattle to different parts of the globe; better jobs and careers brought economic security for my circle. The tight group of friends who marked the holidays at Christmas Central have not been together since those glory days of camaraderie, delicious meals, cheap decorations and heartfelt gifts. It was a time and a place that one can never go back to, nor should we want to. To a person, each of us, always look forward to what the future may bring. We hope for the future but treasure the past.

Sometimes memories are the best Christmas present of all. (Lyndon Zaitz is publisher of the Keizertimes.)



## The Third Reich isn't on the way

By BERNARD GOLDBERG

Perhaps you've noticed that some of the most illiberal people in America these days ... are liberals.

Liberals are the ones who pride themselves on being open-minded. But who are the ones on college campuses stifling speech they don't like? It's not conservative students. In 1944, college-age men were storming the beach at Normandy. Today, more than a few liberal cupcakes on campus are demanding "safe spaces" and "cry rooms" to protect them from the bogeyman we just elected president—and from any ideas that don't conform to their own.

And hasn't it been liberals who say they don't want to be lectured about morality, especially if it's by a bunch of smug conservatives? But it was smug liberals who rudely lectured the vice president-elect from a Broadway stage recently about how he and Donald Trump should behave when they take office.

And it was liberals who warned us that undemocratic right-wingers would never accept the election results if Trump lost. But it's undemocratic left-wingers who took to the streets to protest Trump's election, sometimes violently. And it's desperate liberals who are trying to overturn the election results by demanding useless recounts in several states Trump won. And it's liberals who are trying to convince Electoral College electors to reject Trump—even if that's who voters in their states picked—and vote for Hillary Clinton instead. They're willing to do anything, including reportedly issuing death threats against electors, to deny him the presidency.

Liberals claim to abhor anything even vaguely resembling a viola-

other views

tion of human rights. But it's liberals this week, not all, of course, but more than a few prominent ones, who are shedding tears over the death

of that great man, Fidel Castro, who, like all dictators, didn't tolerate freedom of speech or the press, whose autocratic regime wouldn't allow even peaceful protests, and who tortured and murdered many of those who wouldn't fall into line.

"In many ways, after 1959 (when Castro took power), the oppressed world over joined Castro's cause of fighting for freedom and liberation—he changed the world, RIP!"

Thank you, Jesse Jackson. At least that wasn't as bad as the liberal prime minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, who said he had "deep sorrow" for "the loss of this remarkable leader ... who served his people for almost half a century."

The real problem with liberal elites is that they don't think America is good enough—for them. I recently spoke to a liberal news reporter who, I got the impression, couldn't so much as conceive of the idea that millions of good, decent people voted for Donald Trump. This journalist wanted to talk about all the bigots Trump had in his corner.

He certainly had some, I acknowledged, but I wanted to know what percentage of Trump's vote did he think came from "deplorables"—was it more or less than Clinton's 50 percent? He wouldn't commit to a number, but I got the impression it was more, a lot more.

He was also appalled that Trump supporters wanted the president-elect to fulfill his campaign promise to build a wall along the Mexican border. I told him the reason was both simple and benign: They were against illegal immigrants sneaking into this country. He had a different theory: Trump supporters didn't want people here who don't look (white) like them.

It's interesting that liberals are the ones who tell us they care about the little guy. But a lot of little guys in Ohio and Pennsylvania and Michigan chose Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton. Don't those little guys count as far as the sophisticated liberal elite is concerned?

The problem is that too many liberals have forgotten how to be liberal, the essence of which is to keep an open mind, to consider what the other side is saying before you cavalierly label them as bigots.

Instead, they're too busy warning us that the Third Reich is coming.

William F. Buckley got it right most of the time, including when he said, "Liberals claim to want to give a hearing to other views, but then are shocked and offended to discover that there are other views."

A little humility wouldn't hurt right about now. I was never a fan of Donald Trump (or Hillary Clinton), but I'm willing to see what kind of president he will be. Illiberal liberals might want to take a break from their nonstop disgust with the president-elect, and from their holier-than-thou umbrage that never seems to end, and instead close their mouths, open their ears and try to understand why he won.

(Creators Syndicate)

## Why virtual in a land of amazing beauty?

Oregon provides the most lovely settings and beautiful landscapes for enjoying life in the whole natural world. Most of America is a feast for the eyes of those fortunate enough to live here.

What causes me considerable wonder is why so many Oregonians, and other Americans throughout our land, find it necessary to alter their consciousness through use of drugs, some legal like alcohol and marijuana, and others still illegal, like cocaine and heroin. Most Americans got along very well without those drugs in former times and, without them, were not risking their health and very own lives, and the lives of others who "get in their way," because reality's too much or not enough for them.

One concludes that the ability to cope with life's ups and downs, its disappointments from time to time, appears to have encouraged a loss of courage to face trials and errors among so many of us. Why do they not dig in to the free public education available to them, grades one through 12? What is it that along the way stops them from seeking work of most any kind, including volunteer work to get started by trying this and that, so that they can learn how to work and thereby acquire a measure of self-respect and self-confidence: conditions of mind growth and development to serve them through the hard times rather than mind-warping drugs followed by thievery, homelessness or prison confinement, loss of self-respect, hope and the throwing away of life's

possibilities.

Another means of avoiding reality—and the true beauty of that which abounds around us—is the ever more availability of augmented-reality devices. Since the evolution of our species, humankind has looked about his and her environment in wonder and awe, the earliest of our species blessed by a beautiful planet. More and more now, Americans find it necessary to strap on a helmet with viewing glasses to see things that are not there but can be seen by the eye-to-brain to believe they are real, providing what's fiction as though fact.

It's hard to fathom that my fellow humans want a machine to drive their car or truck! The freedom of the open road and the thrill of driving a car that a human can control has been among the most rewarding of life experiences for me. It comes across as so mindless that someone would want to give up negotiating a machine with a steering wheel and the ability to maneuver it when sober. Instead, they'd rather just sit

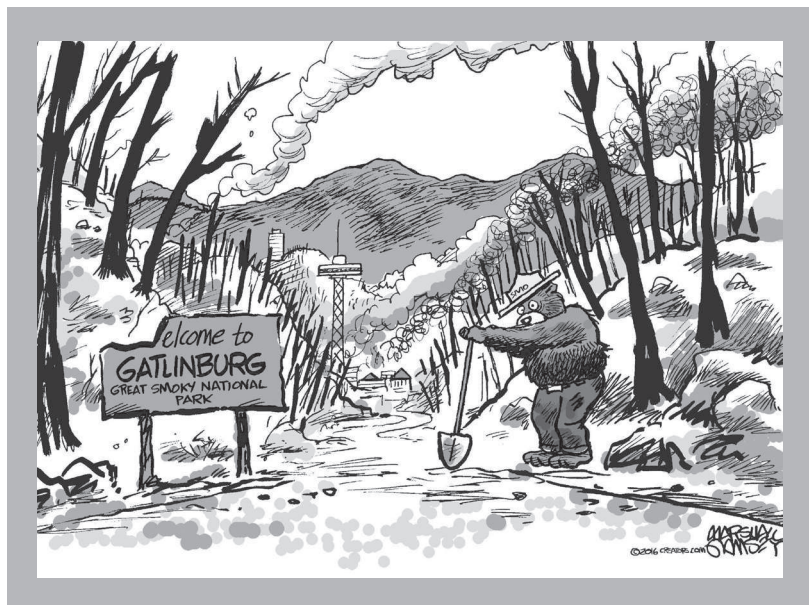
gene h. mcintyre

there and most likely play games incessantly with their cell phone, iPad, etc., for the purpose of mindless satisfactions without enduring value or reward

Obviously, Americans in large numbers send their brains nowadays into dizzy daydreaming by drugs while surrendering their lives and the real world around them to a space of pretend life.

Instead of doing things with their hands and whole bodies that keep them physically fit and mentally healthy, they choose instead the latest drug or technological device ultimately delivering members of our species to empty vessels. Go out in public anywhere now and view an anesthetized world: A collection of wires, plug-ins and plastic hand-held devices devoid of humanity.

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



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