

KeizerOpinion

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Meet the neighbors

This year's National Night Out is Tuesday, August 1. The country-wide event offers neighbors to connect, socialize and discuss neighborhood issues.

An off-shoot of such programs as Neighborhood Watch, Night Out was designed to encourage residents to get to know each other in a common desire to assure safe neighborhoods.

Keizer residents have embraced National Night Out over the years. Some neighborhoods hold elaborate block parties with bounce houses, music, games and more. Other neighborhoods are more low-key—a potluck, a few lawn chairs and good conversation.

Families move in and out of Keizer all the time. Chances are high that every neighborhood has had at least one new household move in since last year's event. That is why holding a National Night Out function is important.

Keizer is generous with its welcoming attitude; new residents will be greeted and given the 4-1-1 on the community. National Night Out is another vehicle to introduce new residents to their new neighbors.

Familiarity and communication between neighbors has been found to be key in establishing safe communities in which people take ownership of their neighborhood and watch over it.

If Family A knows that Family B is out of town yet they see a person lurking about Family B's home, they know to be suspicious and contact the police. Better to be safe than sorry.

National Night Out has generally been an event for homeowners. We

think that apartment complexes and their management should become more involved. Though apartment dwellers tend to be more transient than homeowners, they have a big need to know their neighbors. Apartment building managers and owners have a huge stake in promoting an event that can only benefit their complex.

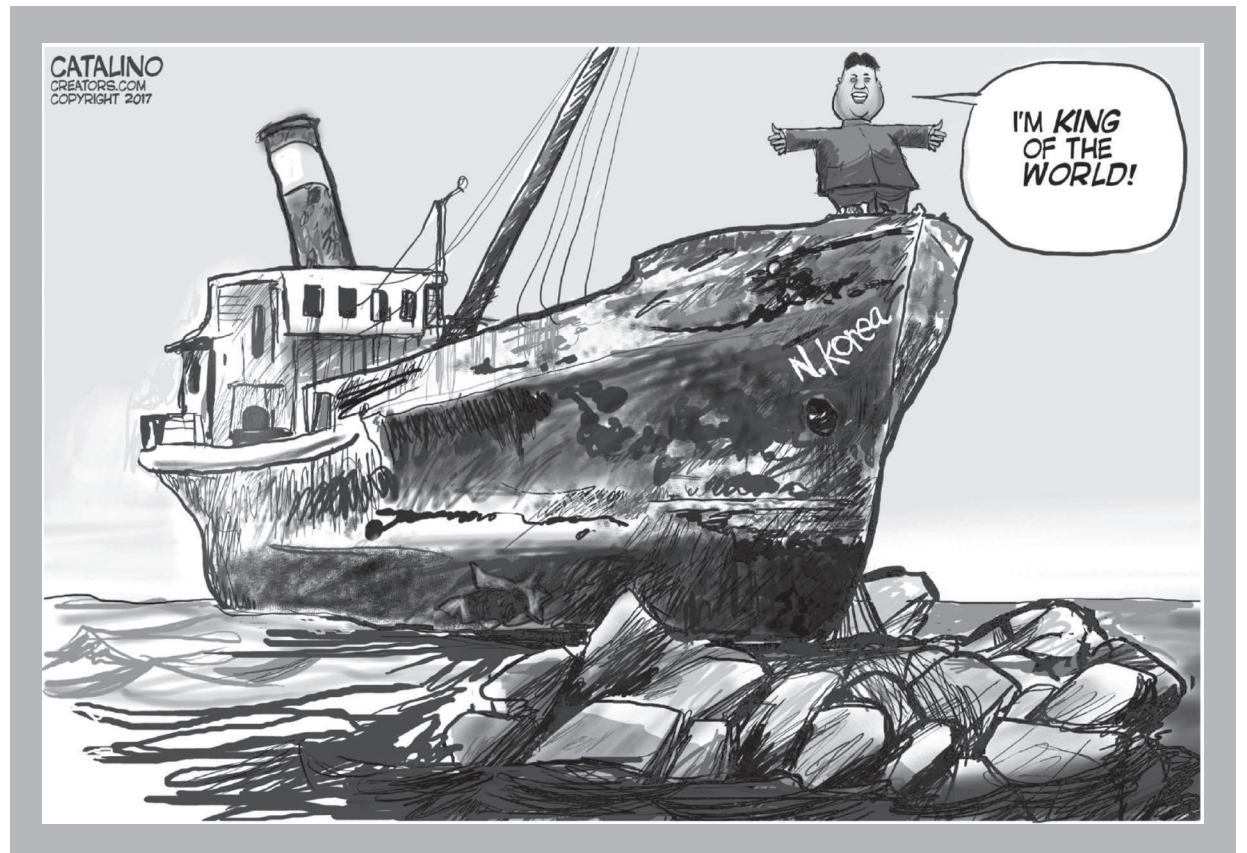
Keizer's leaders, including the police department and the Keizer Fire District is very much invested in National Night Out. The mayor, city councilors, the police chief and officers spread out in Keizer; just about every neighborhood gathering is visited. The lucky ones get a visit by a fire district truck, turning kids into junior firefighters for a few moments.

National Night Out, aside from promoting good communication among neighbors, is a opportunity for residents to speak one-on-one with their elected representatives.

The gatherings are also a good platform for positive conversations with members of the police department. This is good, especially where there is a suspicion and fear of authority figures. National Night Out should be viewed for what it is: just folks getting together, grilling a hot dog or two and discussing issues of the neighborhood.

The city council, police and fire personnel visit as many gatherings as they can, but they need to know about them. Keizer residents can register their National Night Out gathering at keizer.org/nno-2017. For information call Community Service Officer Dorothy Diehl at 503-856-3472 or via email at diehd@keizer.org. —LAZ

our opinion



Trump takes us to unexplored territory

By MICHAEL GERSON

It is sometimes argued that the media should spend less time on President Trump's transgressive tweets in order to devote more attention to real issues such as North Korea. In fact, it is necessary to focus on Trump's tweets precisely because they shed light on the mind that is doing the deciding on North Korea. It is a distasteful exercise. But we cannot look away. We need to know the state of mind we're dealing with.

Trump's tweets reveal a leader who is compulsive, abusive and easily triggered. Trump describes all this as "modern day presidential." Lincoln had his Gettysburg Address. Franklin Roosevelt had his Four Freedoms. But modern schoolchildren will learn the Mika bloody facelift tweet.

What we are witnessing is not a new age in presidential communications. It is an ongoing, public breakdown. And the question naturally arises: Is this the result of mental dysfunction?

Most psychiatrists are (understandably) uncomfortable with diagnosis from a distance. And the particular diagnosis of narcissistic personality disorder requires significant impairment—which is a hard case to make of a figure at the pinnacle of American politics.

And yet. There are judgments that must be made about the fitness of the leaders. Citizens are under no ethical obligation to be silent when they see serious dysfunction. The challenge here is not merely the trashing of political norms. The main problem is the possibility that America has an unbalanced president during a period of

high-stakes global testing. This is not a clinical diagnosis. It is a civic and political judgment, made necessary by the president's own words and acts. Trump

holds a job that requires, above all else, the ability to unite and steady the nation in a time of crisis. There is no reason to believe he can play that role.

Much of the prudence and courage required to confront this problem will need to come from Republicans and conservatives. Where to start? How about refusing to downplay revolting lunacy?

It is not merely an "occasional ad hominem" for a president to employ the tremendous power of his office to target individual American citizens who oppose him. It is an abuse of power.

It is not merely "uncouth" for a president to tolerate, even to hint support for, violence against political opponents ("I'd like to punch him in the face"). It creates an atmosphere of intimidation.

It is not merely "exaggeration" for a president to issue a series of eye-stretching lies, including that his predecessor spied on him and that a popular vote victory was denied to him by widespread electoral fraud. It indicates either a deep cynicism or a tenuous connection to reality.

It is not being "coarse" for a president to engage in consistent misogyny. It is a sign of a disturbing and deep-seated dehumanization of women.

Many conservatives would respond to this critique by saying, "At least he fights!" The question is: For what? Trump evinces no strong or consistent policy views. He fights for himself—

for admiration and adulation—which is the only cause his extreme narcissism allows.

Many conservatives would also respond by saying, "At least he does conservative things!" But if health care is any indication, Trump lacks conviction, knowledge and the ability to persuade. Other than that, he is Ronald Reagan incarnate.

Trump's conservative defenders are attempting something extraordinary: to politically normalize abnormal psychology. Their sycophancy enables a sickness.

What next? Applying the 25th Amendment (containing the procedure to remove an unfit president from office) is a practical impossibility, since it involves the Cabinet turning against the president. But House and Senate Republicans should be prepared to aggressively challenge unbalanced or unhinged presidential language and decisions, rather than trying to dismiss them as simply a "distraction."

And responsible officials in the executive branch—particularly at the State Department, Department of Defense, Justice Department and in the various intelligence services—may also need to provide an internal check on foolish, precipitous orders. The option here is to refuse, to defy, to resign (or be fired) and then to publicly provide the reasons.

No one really knows how to deal with this situation, which still feels more like an unnerving political novel than our political reality. Trump has led our country into unexplored territory. If this is "modern day presidential," all progress moves toward the past.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

other views

Newberg Dr. issues remain To the Editor:

It is very obvious that the City of Keizer is more into developing new property than performing badly needed upgrades to Keizer's established streets that are being inappropriately used beyond their intended purpose.

Case in point: if you look on Chemawa Road near that new round-about heading toward Keizer Station you will see a long stretch of new sidewalks going in right now. Then, during the school year if you go to Newberg Drive you will often see students walking three abreast in the middle of the busy road. Plus, many other dangers with the mix of excess school traffic, pedestrians, and parking with no sidewalks, curbs, marked crosswalks, or any sort of traffic control.

It is obvious that McNary High School and the city have joined efforts (the city will not admit it, so they are hiding the fact—I wonder

why) so they have directed student traffic and parking to the Newberg Drive neighborhood putting this neighborhood in harm's way with many damages to our property and disruption of our lives. That is just wrong. St. Edward

Catholic Church has said that they will sell an adjacent property to the school that would solve the traffic and parking problems that McNary has created in the last two school years. Could it be that investing in a parking lot that would solve traffic and parking issues for the school is not profitable for the developers? Do I smell a rat? Follow the money. Time will tell, along with some research which is underway.

Charles Anderson
Keizer

Share your opinion

Email a letter to the editor (300 words) by noon Tuesday.

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letters

Drug Deaths in America Are Rising Faster Than Ever.

—News Item



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U.S. relations with Russia and Putin

By GENE H. McINTYRE

Russia has been on the map of the world for hundreds of years. For 300 of those years it was led by a totalitarian monarchy whose despotic Romanov family kept the Russian people totally repressed and servile. In comparing histories, no two nations, Russia and the US, have different founding principles

Shortly before World War II, under megalomaniac Stalin, the USSR signed a non-aggression pact with Adolph Hitler's Nazi Germany that lasted long enough for those two nations to invade and carve up Poland. Two years later, Germany invaded the Soviet Union and they went at killing each other until WW II ended in 1945. Thereafter, the Cold War emerged in 1947 as the Eastern Bloc (mainly the USSR) confronted the Western states (mainly the USA) under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or NATO, formed in 1949.

Thereafter for decades, Russians and Americans nail-bitingly feared nuclear war until, with considerable wait-and-see, USSR leader Nikita Khrushchev, in the 1960s, liberalized things a bit, and later, in the 1980s, when the last Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, sought to reform and liberalize the economy through his policies called "glasnost" and "perestroika." The Cold War ended during Gorbachev's tenure wherein the Eastern Bloc totally fell apart with its satellite nations going their separate ways and the Russian people embracing a few freedoms, along with a new economy outside of building war machines.

After the USSR disappeared, Russia has mostly stood alone in eastern Europe with, more recent-

ly, Vladimir Putin as its leader, he having moved through the ranks in the former USSR secret police, the brutal and murderous KGB, to become President of Russia. He was also Russia's prime minister and held the office of president of Russia once before his present tenure, 2000 to 2008.

It's a well-known fact that President Putin was totally opposed to the USSR breaking up and has been mightily chafing under its emasculated consequences ever since: The loss of its world standing and empire-sized power juxtapositioned it against the USA, making them equal in the minds of many people. Whatever the case, one could argue that the USSR lost the Cold War and the USA won it while not only Putin, but his former comrades, "burn" with a score to settle.

So, Putin, a man who grew up and became a highly successful Communist Party apparatchik in an authoritarian USSR, and one who notoriously, then and now, disposed and disposes of anyone in his way, has set out, putting his power and authority to making Russia great again while dedicating himself to the demise of the USA. He has already achieved a huge victory as he and his henchmen had a hand in the outcome of the 2016 presidential election while are dedicated to repeat their mischief in the immediate future, attempting to delegitimize our political institutions through cyberspace attacks by taking advantage of our political and social divisions.

Why are he and President Trump believed buddies, with Trump supporting him? Because he knows that Trump is a self-centered, ego-

tistical American who cares mainly about himself and his family and scoffs at America's freedoms, focusing now on the first amendment's freedom of the press. Putin grew up in a totalitarian world as did Trump who was led to believe he must win what he undertakes by any means possible, even if those means will bring an end to a Constitutionally-established society that has afforded him the freedom to practice his creed of self-aggrandizement, lawful or not.

President Trump has fought every step of the way to stop the investigative efforts intended to find out how the Russian interventions took place and what the USA must do to prevent more destruction by the Russians. Trump in his private dealings with Putin and Russian oligarchs has a sword of Damocles hanging over his head due to his suspected actions in Russia, possibly criminal in nature, but would bring considerable damage if revealed.

The future of every American alive today has a stake in this matter. Many Americans have indicated indifference. Getting behind the federal agency investigations, but threatened by Trump, should be in every American's interest because they threaten us. Then, too, keep in mind a couple of interesting facts: Putin hates the press and Trump proves daily he does, too; Putin's big deal for the Russian economy is oil, its profitable sale and ubiquitous uses and therefore is against the Paris Accord which promotes clean energy while Trump has officially ended the US role in it; and, both Putin and Trump seek greatness, Putin for his country and Trump for himself and his family.

(Gene H. McIntyre lives in Keizer.)

guest column