

KeizerOpinion

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Join the campaign to decrease distracted driving in Oregon

Nearly 500 people died on Oregon roads in 2016, according to the Oregon Department of Transportation. That is an increase of almost 60 percent in three years. Evidence concludes that many road deaths can be linked to distracted driving.

Drive Healthy is a new campaign from the Oregon Department of Transportation, Oregon State Patrol and AAA, beginning Sept. 1, to encourage healthy driving habits. They want to achieve a marked reduction in the number of people injured due to distracted drivers. Every three hours someone in Oregon is injured by a distracted driver, which is not surprising when up to 75 percent of Oregonians say they drive distracted.

Healthy driving is defined as 'hands on the wheel, mind on the road.' That's especially true here in the mid-Willamette Valley where traffic gets heavier year after year. Let's face it, we're really talking about people talking or texting on their cellphones while driving. When you drive look around and you'll conclude that easily 75 percent of your fellow drivers are concentrating on their phone call or their text message rather than the car in front of them or on the sides of them.

The Drive Healthy campaign will endeavor to make healthy driving a winning proposition by having drivers install the LifeSaver app and participate as driving members of an organization or a group. Beginning Sept. 1, the competition starts to see who is Oregon's safest driver.

When a driver registers the app that scores on whether you unlock or use their phone while their vehicle is in motion. Less unlocking of a phone means a higher score. Drive

Healthy will post the scores which are reset each month. Not only will they be able to see who the safest drivers are, but also track changes in driving behavior.

We fully embrace this campaign. States can pass no cell while driving laws, but the enforcement generally comes when and if that driver is pulled over for some other infraction. The Drive Healthy campaign is an alternative to the scolding campaign that never seems to work: don't text and drive lands on too many deaf ears.

A societal change of behavior regarding distracted driving really needs to start when people are driving with their young kids in the car—young people see what they see, and if pre-teens see their parents texting or talking on their cellphones it reinforces the message to the children that it is okay. That behavior then follows them into their cellphone-owning and driving years.

The Drive Healthy campaign is not a frivolous, teens-only, program. It is for everyone. Members of a church, members of a club, co-employees—groups can be comprised of anything.

This is a good time to get the LifeSaver app and join the healthy driving campaign. The penalty for distracted driving also goes from \$500 to \$2,000 and goes into effect on Oct. 1.

Not getting injured, or getting into an accident or receiving a \$2,000 fine are some good incentives to be part of the campaign.

Drivers can visit drivehealthy.org to learn more about the program and the app.

—LAZ

our
opinion

Eclipse event hits it out of Keizer Rapids Park

By MARLENE PARSONS

Thank you, Keizer!

The Keizer Park Foundation's solar eclipse event fundraiser at Keizer Rapids Park was a huge success and the citizens of Keizer were welcoming to our out-of-town guests. There are several people that helped pull all of this together and I would like to acknowledge them.

David Loudon for his tireless work on preparing the camping field for campers, providing security at night alongside his son Chris, and being available to the campers

Allen Barker for his tireless work on preparing the camping field for campers, and being available to help the campers find their spots.

Rich Palmer from the Keizer Parks Foundation gave up a few days of his time to also help out with staking out the camping spots to working the registration booth.

Tom Thiele saved the day by bringing out his quads so that we could get around better in the fields and then he stayed and helped us for a few days.

Trudy Thiele, Teagan, and Tyler for their help showing guests their camping spots.

Bob Shackelford for bringing in sponsors: (Les Schwab, Keizer Vision Clinic, Earth Tech Landscape Solutions, Quick Lane Tire and Auto Center, Keizer Elks, JC's Pizza, Brian and April McVey, Coldwell Banker, Mommy and Maddy's, Home Smart Realty, Oregon Finest Custom Tile, Odd Moe's Pizza, Building Materials Bargain Center Inc., Battle Storm Functional Fitness and Defense and Rich Ford with Windmere Realty, thank you again for your support) to

marlene
parsons

help offset the cost of the event and for being available to help out in the field to give our other folks a rest.

Matt Lawyer for getting the trash cans donated for the facility.

Kriss Lawyer for not only organizing the registration booth but for helping out in whatever was needed.

Clint Holland for providing three nights and one morning of amazing entertainment at the Keizer Rotary Amphitheatre.

Maria Kelly helping in registration and the HOST Camper.

CERT, especially Linda Pantalone for organizing

her teams to protect our campers. Keizer Police Department for patrolling and always being present.

Keizer Fire District for patrolling and always being present. The campers were grateful that we took care of them.

The Keizer Chamber of Commerce who lent us their trailer for registration, and for providing signage from the freeway to the park.

Bob Parsons for traffic control, trash control and manning the Camp Host trailer.

Jeremy Turner for creating the website so that our campers and volunteers could sign up on line.

The Keizer Parks Foundation for manning the registration booth and getting our campers checked in.

There were numerous volunteers who worked every day on picking up trash, traffic control and helping the campers find their spots. Special thanks to these folks:

Amanda Buenz, Kristie Sears, Carla Schultheis, Kevin Dial, Jeremy Turner, Judi Liechty, Andrea Bland, Kris Bland, Tim Reid, Allison Reid, Evan Harvey, Heather Roberts and

Megan Dulong, I appreciate all of these folks because without volunteers we could not have pulled this off.

Councilor Laura Reid volunteer coordinator, traffic control, trash control, you name it she was there rolling up her sleeves.

Councilor Kim Freeman—Doing everything we asked of her and just being present to help where needed.

And special thanks to the Keizer-times for advertising our event and printing off maps in a special edition for our guests to get around town.

We had campers from all over the world: Australia, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan, Ireland and folks that came from Texas, Oklahoma, Washington, California, Idaho, Maryland, Alaska and Florida.

The campers were excited to be at our park and some of the comments that they wrote were:

"Thank you for welcoming us to your party."

"Nice park."

"Great organization! Definitely would visit again."

"This is a great experience! So impressed with all the Keizer people volunteering and how organized it all is."

These are just a few of the comments that our campers wrote in our guest book.

It is amazing how our little town came together for the most amazing eclipse ever. Awes and tears; I hope that I didn't forget anyone and if I did thank you again.

I'm very grateful to serve this city and call it my home. Keizer, we did well!

(Marlene Parsons is the president of the Keizer City Council and spearheaded the eclipse-related events at Keizer Rapids Park.)

Legislature can learn from Keizer

As I write this column, it's Sunday afternoon, the day before the *Eclipsealypse* or whatever it will be called in the future. By the time you read this, you'll have experienced something that is, maybe, a once-in-a-lifetime experience and I hope it was everything you wanted it to be.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to many people in our little town called Keizer. Our Mayor Cathy Clark, our city councilors: Laura Reid, Bruce Anderson, Amy Ryan, Roland Herrera, Kim Freeman and Marlene Parsons. The man who seems to get everything to happen in Keizer: Clint Holland. Our wonderful police department led by Chief John Teague. Our fantastic fire district and its chief Jeff Cowan. I know I'm missing many but lastly Lyndon Zaitz and the crew at the *KeizerTimes*. These people and as I've said, many others, are part of what make Keizer the best little town in Oregon. As a state representative, I don't try to get involved too much in city business but when I do have the opportunity I find that all of these folks and others, really help me to understand what "the volunteer spirit" truly is. You see, though some of the people I've listed are, of course, paid employees, all of them do so much more than "their job" and go "above and beyond" to make Keizer the place that it is. Sadly, so many times in the state legislature, our political differences keep us from working together to make Oregon

better. From what I've seen in my second term in the Oregon House, both sides can be right and both sides can be wrong but they can't always seem to see that. Working together can also be something that does great things yet if it means compromising your principles, it can be a disaster. An example of that is Gov. Kate Brown's recent line item veto of certain projects that were negotiated as part of a deal made by both sides. Though I am not a fan of political deals, there is a time for them and both sides must keep their word. Rep. Sal Esquivel of Medford kept his word, the governor did not. I've written many times in this space that I feel that one-party rule is detrimental

to Oregon. I contend that with either party this is true as there was a time, not long ago, when my party was in control of the Oregon Legislature and I am ashamed to say, made many of the same mistakes and pulled many of the same tactics that the current party in charge are doing. If I could wave a magic wand I'd make the legislature just like Keizer. We may come from differing political ideologies here, but we come together to help each other when it counts. This eclipse event is exactly what I mean. So much has been done by so many to make this a once-in-a-lifetime experience here in Keizer, I am just so proud of our town.

(Bill Post represents House District 25. He can be reached at 503-986-1425 or via email at rep.billpost@state.or.us.)

from the
capitol
By BILL POST

Racists are made not born

Different races? Racism? Such matters rarely touched my young life growing up on Oregon's northern coast. Most everyone in town was of northern European extraction while I was not aware of an African-American until I reached high school, he being the only one—a man who shined shoes in a barber shop downtown and lived in its basement. There were two youths in my high school of other origins, two Chinese-Americans.

I did not acquire good or bad thoughts about persons of other races. The African-American shoeshine guy was likeable whenever I went for a haircut and the two Chinese-American kids mainly kept to themselves.

Meanwhile, there were those among my fellow Americans who adopted racist views. I got huge doses of their views and values on the subject from my college and university years as well as the world of work among my fellow Americans from teaching and training positions inside the U.S. as well as overseas. Throughout my adult life I have asked, "How do these people become racists?"

It would require more space than what's available here for a comprehensive treatment of the subject. However, should the reader be interested in exploring some of the major reasons that have been identified, let's consider a few. In the mean time, the subject continues active in me and cries out for attention.

It's argued that the most common reason people become racists is due to their environment and upbringing. So,

if one's parents are racists and raise the child with their ideals, then prejudice and racism can be taught or ingrained at an early and impressionable age. It's challenging for a child to distinguish the difference between right and wrong when his or her parents, their first role models and people they love and respect, inculcate racist ideas. Then, too, as one grows and matures, those exposures, often years-in-length, can indoctrinate a person as much as youth want to make and keep friends by going along to get along with the same hair style, mode of dress, social and sports activities, and points of view.

This second point can be difficult for many Americans to accept. Nevertheless, highly reputable study after study has found that a person is racist because he or she has low intelligence. As far as why racist people are more likely to have lower than average IQs is open to interpretation. Let's review a couple here, including that people with low IQs may be more impressionable and thereby less open-minded when it comes to changing childhood impressions. In other words, from where they started in life, with all its early and later influences, remain largely unchanged regarding their foundational views of the world.

Much of this approach to the matter has to do with what makes up the size of the parts of a person's brain. Apparently, the ability to think and problem solve has a great deal to do with brain parts like the amount of amygdala versus gray matter in the

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