

# KeizerOpinion

KEIZERTIMES.COM

## A glorious holiday for every home

Does anyone need to be reminded that next week is Thanksgiving? Television is filled with soft-focus ads showing families enjoying preparing and eating the holiday dinner.

This weekend every store that sells groceries will be packed with shoppers picking the fixings for dinner. Many of us will step back and marvel at the sight of the table with its themed-holiday centerpieces, the 'good' china and cloth napkins.

After dinner many will either be cleaning up, suffering a food coma or watching a football game. Some, though fewer of us, will be preparing for the frenzy of the Black Friday sales at stores and malls throughout the region.

Roll back the tape of that Norman Rockwell-esque scene and start over at a Keizer household where abundance is rarely seen and the reasons to give thanks seem to belong to someone else. In a rich nation there are too many families who can't take part in

the great American pageant of our Thanksgiving rituals. The lucky families are able to get to the food bank for generous donations of food. The unlucky families treat Thanksgiving as just another Thursday.

We ask that as Keizer families shop for their Thanksgiving dinner, they add extra items to their basket that can be donated to help every family enjoy the holiday.

Every store has a bin for food donations that will be donated to Marion-Polk Food Share or Keizer Community Food Bank. When we have plenty it should not be a heavy lift to help our neighbors who may not be as fortunate as we.

Other ways to help this season is to volunteer at Wednesday's community dinner at St. Edward Church from 3 to 6 p.m. Or help out in downtown Salem locations to feed the needy. Thanksgiving will take on a whole new meaning when we help our brothers. —LAZ

editorial

## District should pay for Newberg

To the Editor:

On Oct. 12, I attended a meeting at McNary High School regarding parking and traffic issues on Newberg Drive.

The meeting was hosted by McNary Principal Erik Jespersen and Salem Keizer Public Schools Chief Operations Officer Michael Wolfe. Each of these individuals stated that they were concerned about the safety of students arriving at McNary High School, and wanted to stress that keeping the gate open to MacArthur Street was allowing a safe entrance. All the individuals that attended the meeting stated that this is not correct, and leaving the gate open to MacArthur is unsafe. Newberg Drive has no sidewalks or street lights for the safety of the students walking to school, whereas Celtic Way and Dice Lane both have sidewalks with street lights providing a safer entrance for the students.

They then claimed that the students that live on Newberg would have to walk that much further to get around to these streets, which is also not true. There is only one student that lives on Newberg Drive, and his parents agree that the entrance on MacArthur is unsafe with all the cars driving in and out of the school parking lot. They prefer their student walks around, and he always has. The fact is, leaving the gate open on MacArthur is creating an unsafe environment to the students that are walking in the street on Newberg without proper light-

letters

ing, and subjecting them to possibly being hit by a car some morning. There are also cars driving on Newberg to drop their kids off at the corner of Newberg and MacArthur that are making the

situation even more unsafe. Does a child have to get hit by a car and possibly killed before the Salem Keizer School District stands up to take notice of this unsafe situation? Several people have signed a petition and attended Salem Keizer School District meetings, and Keizer City Council meetings to address this issue of unsafe habits caused by the gate being left unlocked, only to be ignored and told that the entrance is safe. Even Chief of Police John Teague will not send an officer to the neighborhood as the traffic congestion is too obstructive. Please feel free to sit anywhere in the vicinity of MacArthur and Newberg and see for yourself how unsafe this has become. When talking with Keizer Mayor Cathy Clark, she states that the city is trying to get the residents of Newberg Drive to pay for street lights and sidewalks on Newberg. Why should the neighborhood have to pay for this if the school wants to provide safety for the students to use the MacArthur gate? Why doesn't the school district pay for it?

Jeff Weekly  
Keizer

### Share your opinion

Email a letter to the editor (300 words) by noon Tuesday.  
Email to: [publisher@keizertimes.com](mailto:publisher@keizertimes.com)



## Morally and intellectually exhausted

By MICHAEL GERSON

Political commentators are supposed to be somewhat objective and analytical when it comes to tracking trends. In that spirit, I find the polling snapshot of President Trump at one year since his election to be interesting—if “interesting” is defined as a downward spiral of polarization, pettiness and prejudice that threatens the daily functioning and moral standing of the American republic.

Our times are not normal—and it is a disservice to the country to normalize them. In a recent *Washington Post-ABC News* survey, Trump's approval rating is worse —far worse— than any president at this stage in seven decades of polling. About half of those surveyed *strongly* disapprove. The public assessment of Trump's leadership, character and competence has grown harsher in every category.

All this is true following two quarters of more than 3 percent economic growth, with the stock market booming and unemployment at 4.1 percent. Practically, this means that Trump has no cushion or margin of public support when economic circumstances worsen.

And yet. The *Washington Post-ABC News* poll shows that if the Trump/Clinton presidential race were re-held today, it would be a tie. Think on that. Arguably the worst president in modern history might still beat one of the most prominent Democrats in America. This indicates a Democratic Party in the midst

of its own profound crisis. During the Obama years, it collapsed in large portions of the country. Its national establishment has been revealed—with extensive footnotes provided by Donna Brazile—as arrogant, complacent and corrupt. But the only serious ideological alternative to that establishment is frankly socialist—the fatuous and shallow sort of socialism held by college freshmen and Bernie Sanders.

We have reached a moment of intellectual and moral exhaustion for both major political parties. One is dominated by ethnic politics—which a disturbingly strong majority of Republican regulars have found appealing or acceptable. The other is dominated by identity politics—a movement that counts a growing number of Robespierres. Both seem united only in their resentment of the international economic order that America has built and led for 70 years.

Normally, a political party would succeed by taking the best of populist passion and giving it more mainstream expression. But in this particular, polarized environment, how is that possible? Do mainstream Republicans take a dollop of nativism and a dash of racism and add them to their tax cuts? That seemed to be the approach that Ed Gillespie took in the Virginia governor's race. But this is morally poisonous—like taking a little ricin in your tea. Do mainstream Democrats just take some angry identity politics and a serving of socialism —some extreme pro-choice rhetoric and single payer health care—and add them to job training programs?

other voices

The lead ideology of the Republican Party at the national level is now immoral and must be overturned—a task that only a smattering of retiring officeholders has undertaken. The lead ideology of the Democratic Party is likely to be overturned—by radicals with little to offer the country save anger and bad economics.

Where does this leave us at year one of the Trump era? With two very sick political parties that have a monopoly on political power and little prospect for reform and recovery. The stakes are quite high. If America really develops a political competition between ethnonationalism and identity socialism, it will mean we are a nation in decline—likely to leave pressing problems (educational failure, unconstrained debt, a flawed criminal justice system) unfronted. Likely to forfeit global leadership, undermine world markets and cede to others the mantle of stability and firm purpose.

There is a serious prospect that the president will truly crash and burn in a colossal fiasco so disastrous as to be undeniable proof against all things Trump. But that would be so bad for the country that it is hard to wish for.

So what should we wish for? It is a measure of our moment that this is not obvious. It is quite possible that moderate conservatism and moderate liberalism are inadequate to explain and tame the convulsive economic and social changes of our time. Which places America's future —uncertain, maybe unknowable—on the other side of an earthquake.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

## Mandatory reporting in our schools

By GENE H. MCINTYRE

The front page article, *Law Professor on SKSD mandatory reporting* in last week's *Keizertimes* resulted in a “Do I laugh or do I cry?” reaction. There were several reasons for being torn asunder, the most notable being the hypocrisy angle, what a modern day U.S. public school district will do to curry favor with local persons of conservative interests even though the Salem Keizer School District is a secular-founded public organization.

But let's get to the meat of this matter. The hypocrisy between what so many of us Americans say and what we do may be unparalleled in the rest of the world. There is in fact so much hypocrisy in America that one must only scratch the surface of life here to know its depths. For one, Americans will tell pollsters they're in church when they're actually sleeping in or watching a ball game; similar examples could fill a book. Politicians don't dare talk about legalizing certain drugs because Americans are reputed more likely to use drugs than other nations where use is accurately reported. Meanwhile, American hypocrisy is possibly most bizarre when it has to do with sex.

Facts show that Americans are sexually active because Americans are human beings, as is true of every other species on earth. As humans we can't help ourselves as sex usually strikes like a bolt of lightning at puberty, although curiosity about it gets underway often long before it can result in a pregnancy. Yet, so many Americans object to other people engaging in it that our local school chief administrator and others there want to make the school environment here not un-

like a religious dictatorship. So much so that they will intrude with threat of law enforcement into the private lives of the most vulnerable among us, our youth.

American prudery means that both tabloid and actual news media are regularly dominated by sex scandals. These are often conducted as though the worse thing a person of any age can do is to have consensual sex with someone to whom he or she is not married. Most of what happens regarding this topic in this country seems actually to be controlled by middle-aged spinster-resembling persons, trying to force our youth into strict 19th century lives.

Facts on the subject reveal that Americans have sex on average 2.3 times a week, while 19 out of 20 Americans have had premarital sex, not holding back from getting started during the years of intense, internal fires burning, the teenage years that get well underway in middle school and hugely drive the high school years. Americans like to have sex for pleasure as indicated by the count of contraception devices sold in the U.S. Another revelation from research is that Americans love porn, while conservatives, who denounce other people's sexual choices, have themselves been discovered, when anonymously surveyed, to be avid consumers of porn.

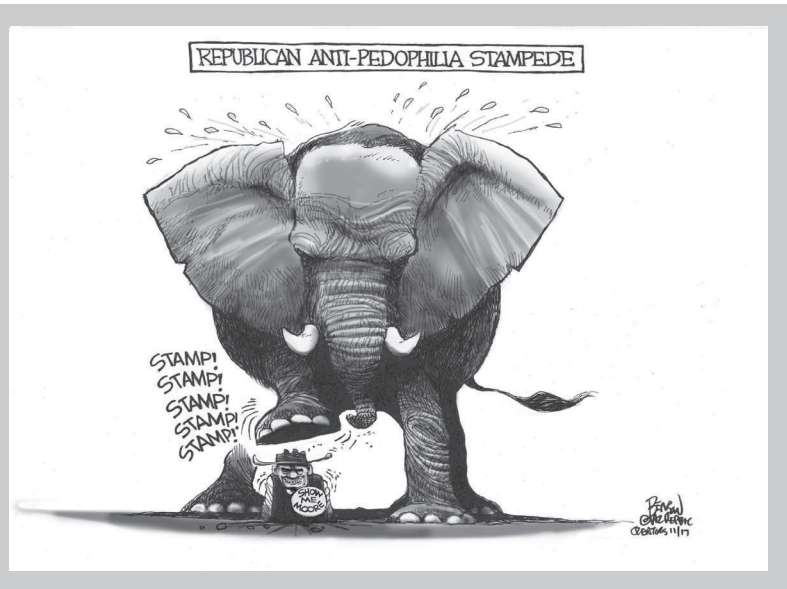
Americans just love judging other people, even when they themselves behave in similar, if not identical ways. Abortion clinics receive an earful of how common the hypocrisy is when sharing stories about anti-abortion patients telling how they deserve an abortion when “Those sluts in the waiting room don't.” Meanwhile, sta-

tistics inform us that 99 percent have used contraception; yet, 38 percent of women want to take away funding from Planned Parenthood and 46 percent of men want contraception subsidies cut while they benefit from their use.

A not small number of Americans are a study in extreme hypocrisy. They wanted and participated in reckless unmarried sex as a teenager but escaped the peril of an enraged father seeking justice for his pregnant daughter. Then, they get older and purportedly “wiser” and suddenly are rabidly against teenagers having sex. This attitude in view of statistics that show that teenage sex is not as rampant as it once was and actually has been in free fall for the last half century. The facts point out that teenagers in the 1950s, for example, were a whole lot less chaste. Yet, no matter the prohibitions and denunciations, it goes on everywhere.

Holding back on judgments, it's probably a good guess that those in charge of the schools here in Salem-Keizer are overzealous and far too aggressive in application of SKSD Mandatory Reporting Guidelines; instead of a light touch, they've chosen the nuclear option. Offering counsel, they are strongly advised to back off and substitute educational means instead of an effort at total control which will only drive the whole matter further underground where secrecy substitutes for good sense. Should Superintendent Christy Perry, her immediate subordinates and board member decision-makers feel they must interfere in the lives of youth to the extreme suggested by them they want to do so, then they are respectfully encouraged to seek positions in non-secular schools where religious behaviors rule.

(Gene H. McIntyre lives in Keizer.)



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