

KeizerOpinion

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No crystal balls, no wishes

At the end of each year media outlets use news space to predict what will happen in the following 12 months or run a list of wished-for headlines in the coming year.

In this space we don't utilize crystal balls or predictions—they are nice parlor games—we prefer to look forward by relying on trends and the words of those who can affect the future. We will focus on what is happening rather than write about hoped for events.

While we don't do predictions we are confident in our desire to hear words that can help all live better lives—that is the goal of most every man and woman.

We want to hear the words *compromise, moderation, solve and everyone.*

Compromise is not a dirty or treasonous word, though that is what many in Congress have suggested or acted on. Politics is the art of compromise—shifting one's position slightly to achieve part of one's goals. In recent years politics has meant stand firm in your position and don't give in...ever.

Just as extremism is no virtue, moderation is no vice. Winners and winning ideas live in the middle, the space between the extremes of the ideological spectrum. Former conservative icon Ronald Reagan certainly understood the art of moderating some of his long-held beliefs to achieve a score in the win column.

Every problem that America, Oregon and Keizer face has been solved somewhere in the world. A look to Europe and Asia will show how countries on those continents

have managed their traffic and transportation issues. Travelers returning from those places marvel at the infrastructure that get people from one place to another. Other nations have also addressed housing and density issues that can be an example.

Hippocrates said it best more than 2,000 years ago. In part, he wrote *primum non nocere*. Its translation is one of the most well known sayings on Earth: "first, do no harm." It was part of the oath that those who dispensed medical service gave to the gods.

Though modern day doctors do not use the oath, its premise is an important guide. Everyone knows the Golden Rule and some may even live by it. Hippocrates rule, while originally devised for doctors, would be a good complement to the Golden Rule especially by those who have sway over others: governments, employers, legislators and business.

Doing no harm would mean passing laws that are friendly to our environment—the only one we have. It would mean not imposing regulations or doing away with regulations that relate to the well-being of people or their livelihoods. We should all endeavor to do no harm to the world on which we live or to harm those who are different than us.

When we compromise, moderate our positions we can find solutions that benefit everyone. That's a heck of a plan, one to adopt and help others, all without the services of a crystal ball or made-up headlines.

We'll do our part.

—LAZ

our opinion



Where contempt and mockery meet

By MICHAEL GERSON

I, Tonya is a movie that is, in places, very difficult to watch. But it is also impossible to look away.

This biopic about the briefly famous, then infamous Tonya Harding has offended some reviewers by putting child abuse and domestic violence in close proximity to comedy. But it would be difficult to tell Harding's story without both elements.

Harding's mother, LaVona, (the way the movie portrays it) motivated her young daughter's dedication to skating with beatings and demeaning cruelty and eventually threw a kitchen knife into her daughter's arm. LaVona (played with vicious charisma by Allison Janney) also excels at emotional violence. At one point—after the attack on Harding's main skating rival, Nancy Kerrigan —LaVona finally tells her grateful, tearful daughter how proud she is of her achievements on the ice. But Harding discovers that her mother is actually recording the conversation in a ploy to sell a confession to the tabloids. Harding's husband, Jeff Gillooly, not to be outdone, smashes his wife's head into a wall and shoots a gun at her. Nearly everyone who is supposed to love Harding hurts and betrays her.

But who could possibly invent a stranger comic story than the conspiracy against Kerrigan's knee? Gillooly plots with self-described international counterterrorism expert Shawn Eck-

hardt (actually a professional loser and *Star Trek* nerd who lives with his parents) to send death threats to Kerrigan. This somehow morphs into the hiring of two hit men (quite literally in this case) to strike Kerrigan's leg with a retractable baton, in an attempt to disable her before the 1994 Olympics. This caper has all the hallmarks of comic exaggeration; but none of this was fiction. Eckhardt, in particular, is a reminder that cartoon characters actually walk among us.

The moral core of *I, Tonya* is clear enough. Harding is a difficult, occasionally obnoxious person, for whom we end up rooting without reservation. She emerges from a crucible of dysfunction and abuse as a remarkable figure—at one point, the best in her field. In a world where the judges wanted a princess, she was an athlete. Their preference for "artistry" was revealed as snobbery. Harding's working-class background and hand-sewn costumes were noted at the time—now (amazingly to me) 25 years ago. But the real story was how a flawed, vulnerable young woman managed to show such strength and excellence even while surrounded by abusive fools.

The fools eventually brought her down. There is little evidence that Harding participated in planning the plot against Kerrigan. There is plenty of evidence that she trusted the wrong people.

But *I, Tonya* is ambitious beyond

these details. The movie points to the danger of imposing a simple narrative on events. I vividly recall the Harding/Kerrigan scandal and Olympic show-down, which occupied the country for months. Before I saw the movie, I honestly could not remember if Harding was innocent or guilty. Yet in the back of my mind, I thought she exemplified guiltiness. The country had created a drama with a villain and a victim. There was no room for humanizing complexity. It is possible, it turns out, for a story to have two victims.

In the cause of our narratives, it is our tendency to draw massive conclusions based on scant evidence. The movie indicts tabloid television — which was a rising force at the time—as particularly prone to this destructive form of simplification. But Harding eventually turns to the camera and accuses the audience sitting in the theater of the same thing. When she says, "You're all my attackers, too," it is a moment of genuine discomfort.

Elsewhere in the movie, Harding argues, "There is no such thing as truth. Everyone has their own truth." It is facile and destructive to claim that truth itself is relative. But all of us see truth from our own angle, and there is wisdom in recognizing that our view can be skewed. As *I, Tonya* demonstrates, the world is often more complex—and more interesting—than our narratives.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

The mad rush to Waremart

The anticipation for the opening of Waremart by WincoFoods at Creekside Center is palpable. Thousands of Keizer households are ready to shop at the city's second grocery store. The city has had one grocery for several years.

We would expect that once the doors of Waremart are open for business there will be quite the mad rush to check it out and do some shopping.

We would also expect that the city of Keizer recognizes this and will help with traffic control. Creekside Center is notoriously hard to exit onto River Road or Lockhaven Drive at certain times of the day. With a crush of cars entering and exiting the parking lot it would be helpful to have police officers helping direct traffic during rush hour

for the first few days of operation.

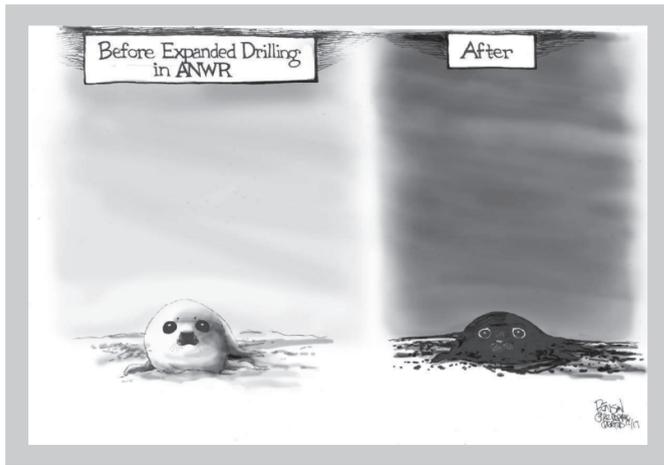
Eventually a rhythm of traffic will be set and people may time their trips to the new store accordingly, but at the beginning the city of Keizer's police department can do a wonderful service and help residents get to a business that will be pumping lots of tax dollars into the city's coffers.

That's worth a few days of police traffic control.

—LAZ

Share your opinion

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Seniors need to head off budget cuts

By GENE H. MCINTYRE

"Seniors" includes guys like me. We Americans, who grew up during the years I grew up, most often completed high school while also holding part-time jobs that were full-time on Saturdays and during summers. Subject knowledge leads me to say that we made serious contributions to the American economy, raised families, and served in wars since 1945. We worked throughout our lives and earned a respectable retirement. That appears threatened now.

At this moment, for seniors, the Republican tax package is not only widely unpopular but already recognized as mainly beneficial to the "One Percent" of Americans who got wealthy through our labor and consumer buying. These wealthy Americans are nowadays singularly served by what should also be our representatives in the U.S. Congress. Meanwhile, the D.C. Capitol crowd lies to us in propagandizing that the tax package is a win for all Americans.

As 2018 dawns, these GOP representatives are concerned about a backlash by their constituents back home and plan to double-down in an aggressive public relations effort, trying to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. At the same time, President Donald Trump is busy, by talk and tweets, promising that he "will work with the Democrats to rebuild the nation's road and bridges" after one of the greatest giveaways ever to the U.S. rich.

So, let's get real. With the tax cuts alone, not including an infrastructure package that would require more billions in deficit spending, it means the nation will go more seriously and outrageously deeper into black hole debt that will adversely effect a lot of

us us and our descendants. But, hold your horses! Let's be wise to what's really a coup de grace that will be peddled to the contrary as making all here good and wonderful: the greatest of pipe dreams that our nation's corporations and wealthy will use their recklessly generous windfall to invest in all ways possible to improve and enhance American lives in general.

Americans who've been around for a while should know what's about to happen. The same representatives in Washington, who've given us the new tax package are eyeballing seniors for budget savings, and those savings will be advocated by drastic cuts, even termination of, Medicare, Medicaid, and what was the sacred "third rail in politics," Social Security. Again, predictably, those clever folks who are supposed to be looking after all of us, those who worked for a better America, will predictably soon be informed that things must be tidied up through "entitlement reform." Trans-

lated, that means seniors must pay for those tax breaks.

If seniors, and those Americans about to become seniors, want to save themselves, it appears timely for them to become activists. At least look into what's about to be laid upon us and be motivated thereby to vote. Then, too, regarding the entitlement issue, it's not only that Social Security will take a dive by reforms, but it's Medicare that keeps most of us after age 65 from poverty and homelessness when surgical procedures and cancer-abating drugs become our financial companions.

A fight by millions upon millions of older Americans must be joined to let those in Congress know that their days "representing" us are over if they vote for significant damage to our government lifelines. In fact, although it may be pie-in-the-sky thinking at this time, the best course of action for the American majority is for the tax package to be reversed as soon as possible and our current "representatives" become real representatives again.

(Gene H. McIntyre lives in Keizer.)

