

# KeizerOpinion

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## ‘We’ can become the ‘They’

Thousands of cities and towns across the nation elect a mayor and a city council. Most have a city manager-city council form of government such as we have here in Keizer.

City manager Chris Eppley oversees the directors of the city’s departments: administration, community development, public works, finance and more. The operation of the city gets done with these departments and their leaders.

What these departments manage is generally at the direction of the city council, which sets policy in all areas of the city. That makes the city council important when it comes to current issues and especially the future of Keizer.

In recent years, Keizer city council elections have been more like coronations as too many council races have had one candidate. In contrast, during the first two decades of city-dom, races for mayor and city council seats attracted multiple entrants.

One could argue that life today is much more complicated compared with the early 1980s; activities and commitments take up so much of our time that many feel they have no time to devote to a two- or four-year political job. Voting in elections, especially on the local level, is as involved as most people get. But there are other ways to have a say in how one’s hometown is operated: run for public office as a city council candidate.

With this path anyone can become a ‘They.’ Being a ‘they’ doesn’t have to be negative or nefarious, becoming a ‘they’ means that a ‘me’ will have a place at the table where decisions about the city are made. The job of city councilor is rewarding. Whether one believes Keizer should stay quaint and mid-sized, or that Keizer’s growth should be maintained in a beneficial way, there is room for those views on council.

In most instances the people who are elected to the city council are those who come from the grassroots. Keizer is a city of neighborhoods and that is where are government leaders come from.

What does it take to run and be elected to the city council? It takes the belief that one would be a good addition to the council, that their background and experience would bring a unique perspective to that body’s deliberations. And to win? It takes votes, pure and simple. That means asking people for their vote either through door-to-door canvassing, advertising or both.

Every potential city councilor is part of a group—a service club, a sports organization, a school, etc. This is the base—the people most likely to support a candidacy of ‘one of ours.’

Some may think that running for public office costs lots of money, funds that have to be raised. To run in a local election is fairly inexpensive. The hard costs include placing information in the Voter’s Pamphlet. Softer costs can include yard signs and advertising, but those are not required.

Some campaigns need only one issue to be successful. In the early 1970s there was an unknown woman running for California secretary of state. Her issue? Getting rid of pay toilets in public places such as airports. It was an issue that resonated with voters and she went on to serve 20 years in that office. All because of one issue.

Closer to home, some past Keizer city councilors owe their election to a single issue, such as sidewalks. There are issues that can be used as a campaign platform; some people have been elected to council with a promise to keep an eye on the city’s budget.

With Keizer’s future in the balance, the next city council will grapple with some big issues. Some of those issues will be resolved in a way that will anger some residents and please others. That is how democracy works, sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. But you don’t win if you don’t play.

Morphing from a ‘Me’ to a ‘They’ is good thing when it means you help your community.

—LAZ

our  
opinion



## Squeezing both sides in the Middle East

By DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

President Donald Trump wants to negotiate a “deal of the century” between Israelis and Palestinians like a high-rolling real-estate don.

At the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, last week, Trump defended his decisions to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, to move the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and to withhold \$65 million of \$125 million to the U.N. Relief and Welfare Agency that provides care for Palestinians.

Trump told reporters at a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that “the money is on the table.” The U.S., he said, gives “hundreds of millions of dollars” to the Palestinians, and “that money is on the table. Because why should we do that, as a country, if they’re doing nothing for us?”

Former Secretary of State John Kerry, meanwhile, wants to negotiate like the British colonel played by Alec Guinness in *Bridge on the River Kwai*.

The Israeli outlet *Maariv* reported Thursday that Kerry met with Hussein Agha, an ally of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, in London. Kerry reportedly asked Agha to tell Abbas to “stay strong,” “play for time,” and not yield to Trump’s demands. He came across as more interested in protecting his rank than ending decades of strife, which was supposed to be his mission.

It seems Kerry is so committed to a two-state solution to the Israel-

li-Palestinian dispute that he prefers no deal to a deal with Trump.

*Maariv* also reported that Kerry, the Democrats’ losing presidential nominee in 2004, told Agha that Trump could be out of office in a year and that he was considering running for the White House in 2020.

It is rare to have a discussion with experts about Trump’s actions without hearing the definition of insanity—doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result.

Rabbi Dr. Donniel Hartman, president of the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, cited the definition of insanity and mused, “I’m not saying it won’t work for sure,” although “I might have looked for a more thoughtful change that allows each side a total amount of dignity.”

“At the end of the day, the Palestinians are going to have to make the decision, whether they want everything or whether they want part” of everything, he said.

Hartman warns that it often is a mistake to consider Palestinians simple bargainers at a table—when they see their pride at stake.

When Vice President Mike Pence visited Jerusalem this week, he repeated the administration’s new talking point—that the administration supports a two-state solution “if both sides agree.”

When Trump hosted Abbas at the White House in May, the president opened the door to an un-

imagined deal. But there has been no movement, and between the Dec. 6 Jerusalem announcement, the withholding of funds and his questioning of a two-state solution, he essentially is signaling that Palestinian leaders better walk through the door now, while there still are concessions to be had.

“Palestinians are not very thrilled by this new formula,” Ghaith al-Omari of the Washington Institute of Near East Policy observed.

“Palestinians are now saying that because of all of this pressure, the U.S. can no longer serve as a mediator,” al-Omari added. “Whether this is just posturing remains to be seen, as many Palestinian leaders understand that a peace process cannot proceed without the U.S. playing a leading role.”

As for the withholding of funds to U.N. relief, Colum Lynch wrote in *Foreign Policy*, “There is concern that the move against the Palestinians could backfire, feeding greater extremism in the region.”

For Trump, this is all about getting a deal, and he showed himself ready to squeeze concessions from Israel as well. As Trump told Netanyahu in Davos, “You won one point”—on the embassy—“and you’ll give up some points later on in the negotiation, if it ever takes place.”

“Obama and Kerry, were they able to make the deal?” Hartman asked, rhetorically. The answer was no, because they lost the Israeli side. And Trump can’t win a deal without the Palestinians.

(Creators Syndicate)

other  
opinions

guest  
column

## Don Vowell to be missed

To the Editor:

I am sorry to have read of the passing of Don Vowell. Over many years I have ‘consumed’ many of his

letters

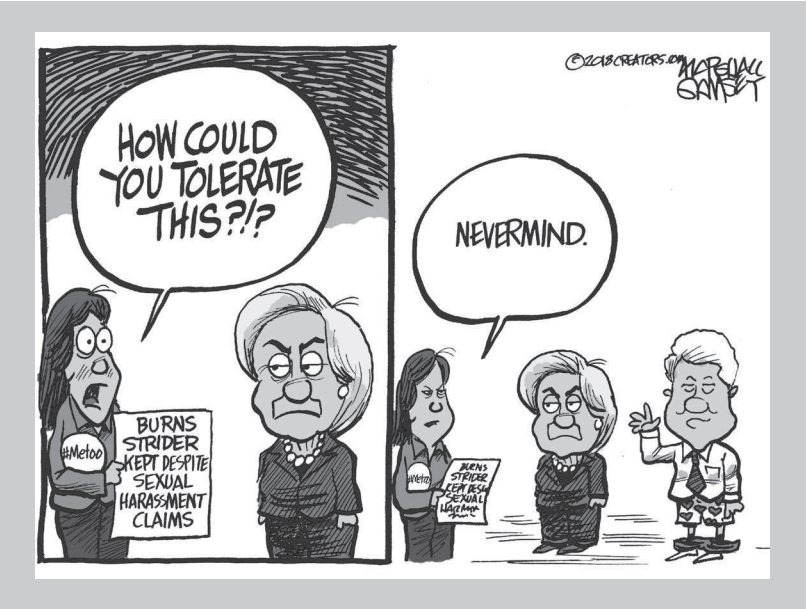
Boxes of Soap.

His thoughts and columns will be missed. My condolences to his family and friends.

Bob Mitchell  
Keizer

## Correction

In the Page 5 editorial, *No More Soap*, the date of Don Vowell was incorrect. He passed away on January 15, 2018. We regret the error.



## Bundys open era of legal law breaking

By GENE H. MCINTYRE

I have read widely, as many an Oregonian have, about the long, arduous and dedicated work of several Americans that came before us and got our national monuments, refuges and parks established, it was with alarm that the events at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge unfolded two years ago. Described as an armed, self-described militia group, protesting the sentencing of father-son ranchers in Burns, Oregon, for burning federal land, they seized control of the eastern Oregon refuge for 41 days.

That group of outlaws substantially wrecked the buildings and equipment there and, besides protesting over the incarceration of father-son for criminal actions, clearly wanted to take our Refuge away from decades-long protection by the federal government as a sanctuary for bird and beast in order to declare the Refuge for personal use and personal profit from all manner of personal and private development. Some of these people were already under law-breaking status by the federal government for tax evasion in the state of Nevada where, for all intents and purposes, they used federal land there as though their private property.

Bundy family members and followers were brought to federal court in Oregon but had the charges against them dismissed as have had the federal charges against the father, Cliven Bundy, dismissed in Nevada. These outcomes predict more trouble for all of us who want the

federal lands set aside as sanctuaries for Americans to visit and view and essentially have now given Bundy look-alikes to believe they can do as they please with public property while the average American who cares should be on notice that the next round with these law-breakers is about to get underway, and predictably, with Trump Administration help.

One of Oregon’s newspapers, *The Daily Astorian*, through its editorial board, has commented that “Most Americans have little sympathy for Bundy, his family and supporters. He might like to think himself a folk hero, but his hide-

bound refusal to abide by longstanding cattle-grazing rules placed innocent lives in danger, degraded public lands around his ranch and made a mockery of the law.” However, the reader may have noticed, as did I, that government attorney ineptness failed to obey the rules of evidence in the Oregon and Nevada prosecution efforts.

The judge in the Nevada case, the honorable Gloria Navarro, decided the holding back of evidence useful to the defense bungled their case and thereby ended it. Hence, the government prosecutors, stumbling around like cowboys in from a cattle drive for a night on the town, demonstrated an inability to herd things to convictions. Replacements, trained and experienced to get the job done, as a new set of federal of prosecutors, should be appointed to re-try, with success, these lawless types.

Unfortunate for those of us who

do not want a repeat of the Malheur take-over and the subverting of rangeland actions by the Bundy ranch in Nevada, President Trump and his Secretaries of Energy Rick Perry, and Interior, Ryan Zinke, Environmental Protection Agency director Scott Pruitt, who seek to convert public lands to private purchase and use, those of us who want monuments, refuges and parks protected will not be in any likely way see a saving of federal lands before January, 2021. Those of us who want the land that belongs to all Americans for posterity must fight for public lands protection because those among us who will exploit for profit are pals of Trump and have his ear.

Another chapter in this saga is currently underway by the family of the law-breaking occupier who died in a shootout with federal and state law enforcement officers. Meanwhile, preliminary costs to American taxpayers for FBI and state police, the wreckage by occupiers, the loss of work by fish and wildlife employees, the damage to businesses, et cetera in the area now adds up by available figures to something around \$6,000,000. The family suing seeks \$5,000,000. Wouldn’t that be something if our fellow Americans award the amount wanted, thereby essentially forcing us to condone and financially reward criminal behavior.

(Gene H. McIntyre lives in Keizer.)

## Share your opinion

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

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