

# KeizerOpinion

KEIZERTIMES.COM

## Vote yes for our schools

By JONATHAN THOMPSON

Stop someone from Keizer on the street and ask them what they love about their town and you will hear things like “small town feel” and “spirit of volunteerism.” You will also hear Keizerites talk about how much they love our schools. From the largest elementary school in the Keizer-Salem School District to the many “Go Celts” signs which pop up during various sports seasons—in Keizer, we love our schools!

On May 15 we will be asked to support our schools with a new bond measure. At the Keizer Chamber of Commerce, we are asking you to vote “yes” on the bond. We don’t come to this position lightly. This bond is expensive. However, for three reasons, we think this bond is an important investment in our schools.

First, the money raised in this bond will help needed capacity at many of our local schools. Rather than build another high school in the district which would send some Keizer kids to high school in Salem, this bond adds capacity to McNary, keeping Keizer kids in Keizer.

Keizer is home to the largest

elementary school in the Keizer-Salem School District. Keizer Elementary was built during a time when schools did not have cafeterias. Without a cafeteria, students rotate through a kitchen to get lunch and then take it back to their classrooms. With the number of kids at the school, in order to get everyone through the lunch line, the first group of kids starts lunch at 11 a.m.

That makes for a long “afternoon.” With passage of this bond, Keizer Elementary gets a cafeteria.

Second, the Keizer Chamber supports this bond because it invests in Career Technical Education (CTE). These are the programs which teach our high school kids trades like carpentry, culinary arts and auto shop. These programs teach students a skill they can use to get a job right out of high school. They turn today’s students into tomorrow’s employees.

Finally, anyone who has tried to travel down Lockhaven or Chemawa between 7 and 7:30 a.m. knows the traffic around McNary High School can be bad. With the passage of this bond, parking lots and traf-

fic patterns will be added and improved.

For more information about what is happening at your school, please visit [bondinfo.salkeiz.k12.or.us](mailto:bondinfo.salkeiz.k12.or.us).

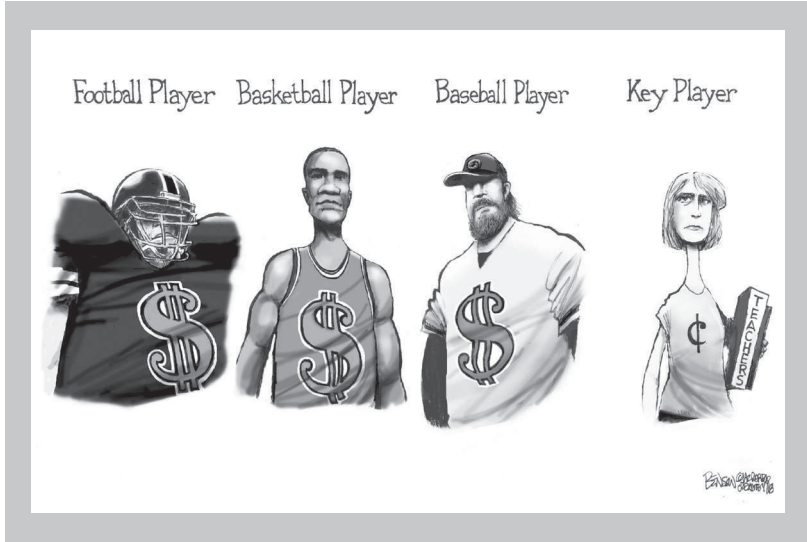
To put this bond together, the school district assembled a group of citizens from all over the district to make recommendations. Those recommendations formed the basis for what we are being asked to approve. We appreciate the school district engaging community members and then listening to them.

The Keizer Chamber of Commerce asks you take a look at what passage of this bond will mean for our kids in Keizer. We hope you will support it, but either way this is an important election. No matter how you feel about the bond, please make sure you study the issue, vote and return your ballot.

The Keizer Chamber of Commerce is made up of over 400 local businesses. For more information please visit [www.keizerchamber.org](http://www.keizerchamber.org).

(Jonathan Thompson is a member of the board of directors at the Keizer Chamber of Commerce and serves as chairman of the Chamber’s Government Affairs Committee.)

guest opinion



## Bite the bullet

The final amount of the Salem-Keizer School District’s Bond Measure was not grabbed out of thin air. It was not decided on in a vacuum. School bonds are serious business; members of the committee that established the amount needed and the members of the school bond take their duties very seriously. They all know they will hear from the public if they are being reckless with the public’s money.

The school bond comes in at \$619.7 million, that is \$1.24 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, or about \$248 per year for a home valued at \$200,000. That may seem like a lot especially since voters approved a \$250 million bond ten years ago—that bond was for improvements and new schools.

Voters in the Salem-Keizer School District should bite the bullet and vote for the bond measure on the ballot that begin arriving in voter’s mailboxes this week.

The \$619.7 amount was discussed by the bond committee at various open houses and hearings. The school board held hearings before moving forward to putting the measure on the May ballot. The Salem-Keizer School District has a strong history of communicating with the public about its budgetary needs. Using the web, email, Facebook, newspapers and more, the district leaves no stone unturned when it comes to explaining to tax payers why this, or any other bond measure, is important to the education of our kids.

The cost of education is not just for instruction, it also includes extracurricular activities and infrastructure. Where students learn is as important as what they learn. First, there should be enough space for the students. Second, the space should be sufficient and efficient for its task. Third, the space should be safe from both

natural and man-made disasters.

Those things are what the \$619.7 million will pay for. While it does not fund salaries, the money will create an environment for learning that will benefit teachers and students alike.

Every two years the Oregon legislature makes decisions that affect every school district in the state. With a biennial budget of almost \$80 billion, educators must fight for every scrap of its 11 percent of the budget. This is no way to serve our children. Educating our kids is a paramount

duty—it is a duty we, the people, assigned our public school systems. Unless the people decide that there should be no public schools, only private, we have the education system we have and we fund it the way we have for decades.

The reality is that a million dollars isn’t what it used to be. Economics has devalued the worth of a million dollars—these days \$1 billion is used like \$1 million was 20 years ago. Everything is relative.

Modern life is not inexpensive. It takes real money to operate the things that comprise a good quality of life and that includes good schools. Just as we desire pothole-free streets, we also desire quality institutions of learning that are not crowded, that meet the needs of all those who attend there.

Until we the people and they the legislators demand a better, consistent source of money for K-12 education in Oregon, we will have to take matters in our own hands and tax ourselves to have the schools we deserve.

That’s why voters should bite the bullet and say yes to Measure 24-429, the \$619.7 million Salem-Keizer School District bond.

—LAZ

our opinion

## May’s special session isn’t needed

Governor Kate Brown has called for a special session of the Oregon Legislature for May 21. This is due to the signing of Senate Bill 1528, the \$244 million increase in business taxes. Rather than giving this bill (which had bipartisan no votes) a veto, Governor Brown signed and then called for a one day special session to “fix” it.

The reality is, according to an Oregon Public Broadcasting news story: “The analysis of the tax cut Brown is proposing shows that few sole proprietorships would qualify for favorable tax rates extended to other pass-through businesses in 2013. Roughly 200,000 of Oregon’s sole proprietorships report positive income, but only about 13,000 of those pay any wages, which is a requirement of getting a better tax rate. Of those 13,000 businesses, only 9,000 filers report paying employees enough to qualify.”

This would be a special session but

run like a regular session if the majority in charge *do not* adopt special rules for the special session to limit bills, amendments, prohibit minority reports, etc. If they don’t, then anything could happen. Also, by looking at the Legislative Concept (the potential bill) being proposed for this session, you’ll find that the “relating to clause” is “taxation.” That means anything “relating to taxation” can be stuffed into this bill. The sky is theoretically the limit on content of the bill. (Think a tax on soda. Coffee. Used cars. Each of those ideas have been discussed and drafted before.) And, again,

depending on whether they adopt any special rules or not, other bills may be introduced in this session and not necessarily on taxes. Think gun legislation or other controversial topics.

As for the Legislative Concept itself (the potential bill) as noted above: It would help only 9,000 sole propri-

etors out of 276,000. That’s 3.4 percent. The tax relief for those 9,000 businesses would be \$20 million in the first biennium. SB 1528 was a tax hike of \$244 million. So with passage of this bill, it’s now only a \$224 million tax increase!

I will gladly serve you in the Legislature as I have but this special session is a complete waste of our tax payer dollars and in fact could lead to bills that are not appropriate for a one day session. And I have just learned that in fact the governor’s office is now asking for 5-6 days for this special session. I want business taxes cut indeed but 3.4 percent of them? Not something we should be doing.

Lastly, I remind you that ballots for the primary election should be in your mail soon if not already and I do hope you vote. It’s the most important civic duty we have. Thank you for letting me serve you again this year.

(Bill Post represents House District 25. He can be reached at 503-986-1425 or via email at [rep\\_billpost@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:rep_billpost@oregonlegislature.gov).)



from the capitol  
By BILL POST

## Police do much more good than bad

Before the 1960s, though the Cold War had raged unabated since the late 1940s, the U.S. was a fairly tranquil place to live and thereby generally enjoyed by its people. However, shortly after John F. Kennedy’s assassination in 1963, the Vietnam War began to take on a troubling veneer for an ever-growing number of Americans. Initially the protestors were mostly college youth; before long its detractors numbered a huge cross section of the U.S. population while—by its end—seemed to include virtually everyone.

Not only involving the U.S. military and national leadership from former President Lyndon Johnson’s terms through some of Richard Nixon’s administration, soon all institutions that stand to invoke authority in the country were found wanting and charged as guilty by their perceived support of the ongoing bloody slaughter of American troops, Vietnamese civilians and the North’s Viet Cong warring in southeast Asia. What began as peaceful protests became riots on campuses, in city streets and throughout the land—the noise and fury heard and seen as a near daily event.

Some of the targets of those years of discontent were police organizations. Not that the police were entirely innocent of the charges thrown at them but many an officer was compromised by orders to “defend and protect” by local and state elected officials. What resulted was police officers as “bad guys” held responsible for “helping” those Americans who advocated for the war’s continuation. They were also seen as assisting the nation’s distrusted military industrial complex, those corporations making big money profits through the supply of war machines and materials for “an unwinnable war.”

My personal experience with police in general and individual officers in particular has never had a negative twist to it. In recent years there has been only one interaction with the police. That occasion took place at McNary High School during the years my wife and I volunteered there and Keizer’s Officer Dan Kelly was the on-duty police liaison. We were impressed with Officer Kelly, having found him to be an exemplary officer through the conduct of his behavior in fulfilling the responsibilities of the position he held.

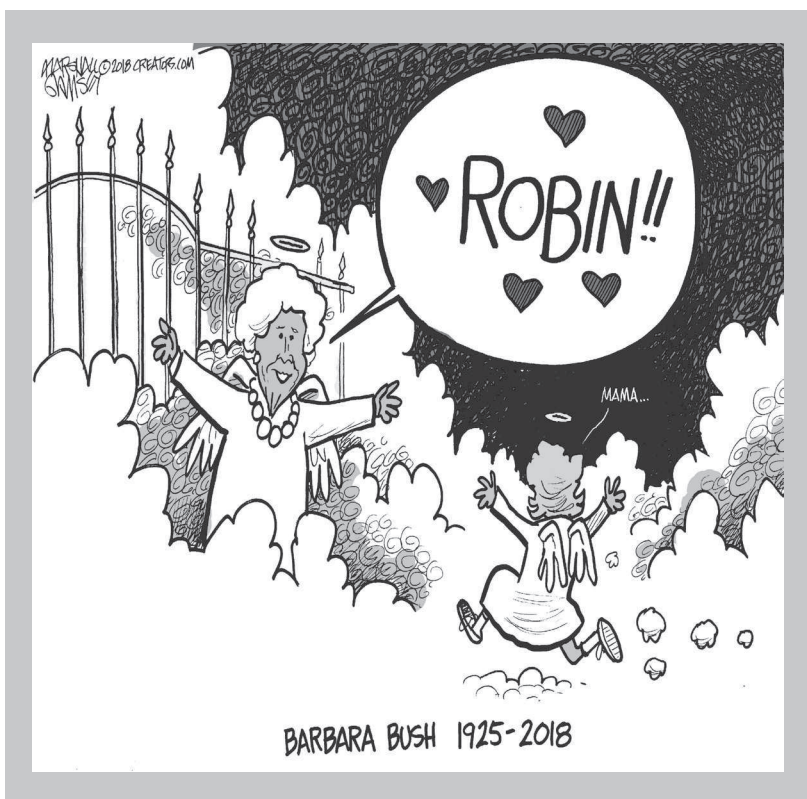
What bothers this writer at present is the extent to which protesters nowadays, sometimes employing violent means, continue to work against police organizations and police officers. There are, of course, from time-to-time, among the sworn police officers some ‘bad apples’ but that’s a condition of the personnel no matter what profession or line of work is examined. While there’ve been police officers who should probably not be police officers, quite often these men and women are ultimately mustered out: While it may take awhile, remember it is careers that are at risk.

Officers involved in fatal encounters are almost always placed on administrative leave and then brought before a review board or grand jury to determine whether the case under consideration justified lethal action. Based on what a citizen like myself can determine from media reports, it seems for the most part that officers involved were more likely dealing with lawbreakers that requires of them a protect-themselves-or-death response. When I read in print media or see on TV about an encounter that resulted in a death, speculation follows where, under the circumstances, if my life were threatened, I’d likely have done the same as the officer or officers.

Our police are more important than ever. Then, too, when trouble finds its way to us, it’s unrealistic for the vast majority of us to defend ourselves. The knowledge, training and experience of the average officer cannot be substituted. Locally, my impression of the sworn officers in Keizer and Salem is that we’re fortunate to have them and are best advised to honor and respect them, hoping for the sake of survival there will continue to be young men and women willing to join the ranks in order to protect and serve the public.

(Gene H. McIntyre lives in Keizer.)

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