

KeizerOpinion

KEIZERTIMES.COM

The kids are watching

I don't understand discrimination, racism or prejudice. I know what the words mean, it's just that I can't wrap my head around the people who harbor such views.

As human beings we all have our biases, we generally are uncomfortable with things that are different or unknown to us. It is tragic that people are subjected to verbal threats, taunts and physical harm. Where does hate for another person come from? We certainly are not born with hate

on my mind

It is not much different today for people arriving from our neighbors to the south or from the Middle East or Africa. Do bad people get into the United States? Sure, as it has always been. That doesn't justify hating a whole people due to the actions of a small percentage.

Diversity and inclusion is good for anything—countries, companies, communities. I spent this past weekend in Seattle. It was Pride Weekend and tens of thousands of people of different colors, genders, sexual orientations and ages mixed effortlessly on the streets of the city, including the four-hour pride parade downtown.

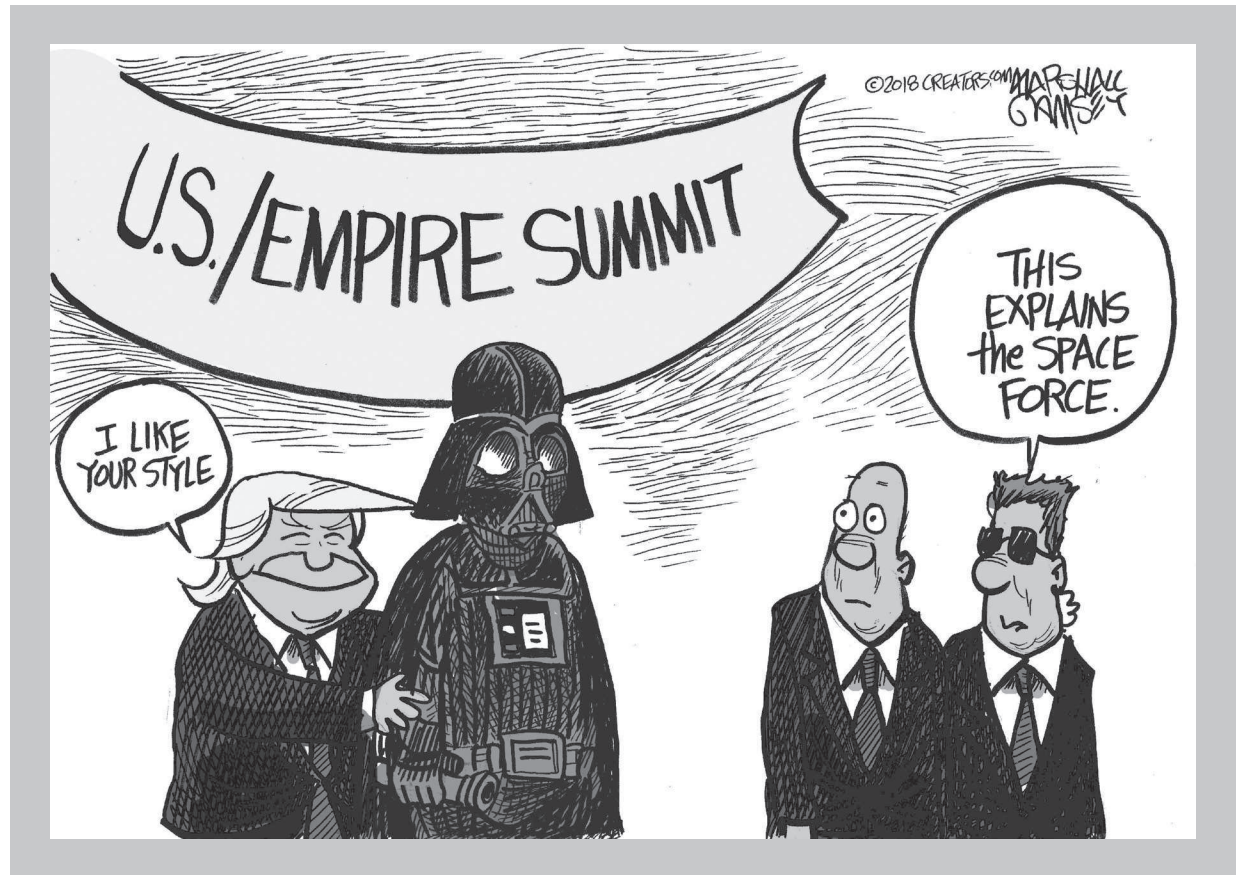
No city, regardless of how big or small, is immune from acts of racism and discrimination. So it was wonderful to spend a weekend in the big city where a rainbow of people mix together, all sharing a message of inclusion, acceptance and tolerance. It is harder to be frightened or wary of someone who is different if you know them. There was a shared energy on the tightly packed sidewalks during the parade because they all shared a message—everyone is important.

People who are different from us are not dangerous, they are not out to harm us; we all want the same thing: to live in peace for ourselves and our families. Anyone will reciprocate in kind when treated with respect and fairness.

My way of life is not threatened because a Sikh wears a turban or a Saudi-born woman wears a burqa. I have learned from living in other areas that diversity is important, my life is richer because I have known and befriended those different than myself. How? I have gained respect for traditions and customs other than my own. I have learned that things I take for granted are not always good for others.

Social change begins with each of us. We can lessen discrimination, racism and sexism in our society by remembering that our kids mirror what we do. Accept others with respect and tolerance and our future generations will too.

(Lyndon Zaitz is publisher of the Keizertimes.)



Separation anxiety

By DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

It's June and the crush of undocumented immigrants at the U.S. border with Mexico has hit a crisis point.

Government officials are housing migrants in tents and separating some children from their parents. Tens of thousands of unaccompanied minors attempt to cross the southern border; some 90,000 are expected to be apprehended by year's end. A former top administration official defends the government's policy: "We have to send a clear message. Just because your child gets across the border, that doesn't mean your child gets to stay."

The year was 2014. Barack Obama was president and the quote was uttered by Hillary Clinton, Obama's secretary of state from 2009 to 2013 who also plainly stated that thousands of children "should be sent back" to their families.

So why are news outlets treating the 2018 border crisis as if it is the worst?

First, President Donald Trump is the first president in recent memory to push strong enforcement of federal immigration law. His "zero-tolerance" policy announced in April directed immigration officials to charge and detain all undocumented immigrants apprehended at the border, which led to mass family separations.

The Obama administration split families and housed migrants in tents, but it also released many apprehended at the border while giving them

orders to appear before an immigration judge.

This is the system Trump derides as "catch and release" -- a system discredited by the high number of beneficiaries who don't show up at court. According to federal statistics, 25 percent of the 186,434 immigration cases completed for 2016 were decided in absentia -- meaning the undocumented immigrant didn't show up.

Second, Trump's rhetoric is inflammatory and words have consequences.

When he announced his candidacy in 2015, Trump described immigrants from Mexico as criminals, drug dealers and rapists. Just last week he said immigrants "infest our country."

Trump didn't enhance his credibility when he blamed Democrats for forcing family separations, trying to paper over the fact that "zero tolerance" was his administration's decision.

Also, the point of the family separation is to deter more families from making the dangerous trek to the border -- but that's the point Trump low balls.

Third, politics and media bias lean against enforcement. Broadcast news outlets have aired heart-breaking scenes of children crying for their parents -- with no context. News organizations ran photos of a crying two-year-old Honduran girl who represented victims of family separa-

tion. Problem: She and her mother were not separated. Do the parents have a legal claim to asylum? Not an issue.

Also not an issue, the fact that critics are complaining that Trump is enforcing federal laws they have failed to change.

Consider the push for a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants brought into the country when they were minors, also known as Dreamers. Obama provided them with temporary legal status with his Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals in 2012.

But Obama failed to keep his 2008 campaign promise to pass a big immigration bill in his first year, when Democrats controlled the White House and Congress.

When there was a vote on the Dream Act in 2010, it failed to get the 60 votes needed to pass in the Senate.

Democrats now say they won't vote for GOP legislation to protect DACA recipients because they object to Republicans using DACA recipients as hostages. It's as if they'd rather have the issue than the win.

When it comes to the Dream Act and family separation, argued Mark Krikorian of the pro-enforcement Center for Immigration Studies, the left's goal "is to make sure the parents also are released. They want children to be human shields so that if you bring a kid with you, you get a get-out-of-jail-free card." (Creators Syndicate)

Vaccine rates not bad at all

To the Editor:

Recently, there have been multiple newspaper articles sounding the alarm that Oregon's vaccine exemption rate for kindergarten students has sharply risen. Is this true, or is there more to the data than people understand?

The truth is that 22 vaccines are required for school. Someone receiving 21 of 22 shots, is still captured by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) as exempt. "Exempt" quickly morphs to "unvaccinated" in the press, and the public's mind. According to the OHA Immunization Program, for 2018, the number of K-12 students with a non-medical exemption to all 22 required vaccines is only 2.6 percent. But that is not the number that is reported anywhere.

Many legislators misstate that

letters

Oregon's unvaccinated rate is 7.5 percent. This is simply untrue. In a 2018 memo to the Governor, OHA stated, "The vast majority of Oregon parents choose to fully immunize their children."

According to the memo, the uptake for every school vaccine is well over 90 percent. Why did OHA then issue a press release with the foreboding title of sharply increasing exemption rates, picked up by newspapers statewide? Is it to pave the way for an attempt in 2019 to remove Oregonians' medical freedom, under the guise of an emergency?

Darcy Rapoza
Salem

Share your opinion

Email a letter to the editor. Deadline is noon Tuesday. Email to: publisher@keizertimes.com

We need to assure we have clean, potable water

Generalizations about us don't always apply to all humans. However, it's generally recognized and agreed upon that a human body can go two to three days without water and 30 to 40 days without food of any kind. Water is clearly the most important requirement with an average of eight to ten cups of water needed to replenish what the human body loses each day.

Unfortunately, water supplies all over the world are more and more often polluted and thereby a danger to health and a threat to life itself. Western Oregon has been often recognized, due to the state's forested regions, mountain ranges and dependable and sufficient annual rainfall, as one of those places on the planet whose water supply would remain healthy and drinkable even if the remainder of humankind had to heavily filter the water or desalinate it. That may remain true for places outside of Portland and Salem but not now in Oregon's "Rose" and "Capital" cities.

Locally, it could cost millions to make Salem's water potable again. However, some argue that long-term, less costly and much more practical solutions to consider must include phasing out industrial tree plantations that work by clearcutting, chemicals and fertilizers. Industrial logging practices are one of several underlying causes of the toxic blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) outbreak contaminating Detroit Reservoir and North Santiam River. Coupled with climate change, latter day practices destroy otherwise perfect drinking water conditions.

Common knowledge on the subject comes to us from science. Toxic algal blooms thrive in warm, slow moving water contaminated by nutrients and chemicals that assist in

their growth. Then, too, clearcut watersheds lose their soil moisture and provide less water during periods of low rainfall while any streams run slower and warmer—often by 2.6 degrees—than in those under normal full-forested conditions. These conditions have been studied and it has been proven that heavily logged watersheds have at least 50 percent or less water in them during dry and drought durations. Thus, algae thrive in nearby lakes and streams.

Another cause for algae come from chemicals and fertilizers liberally used on tree-growing plantations. Applications of herbicides and atrazine always find their way in rivers and lakes. The use of them in Lake Erie brought Toledo, Ohio, to near closure four years ago. Nitrogen fertilizers like urea are most common used in Oregon and are recognized as a chief culprit in turning wonderful watershed water into something that looks awful, tastes awful and can send a person to the hospital and an early grave.

By this point here, the reader must

recognize the obvious: The solution is to stop the application of chemicals and fertilizers and industrial scale clearcutting to any area where Oregonians now or later get their drinking water. Timber plantations must be controlled and monitored for compliance with Oregon laws made to address this very serious challenge to our health and safety. The matter is even more urgent at present than at any earlier time in Oregon as climate change is a fact, bringing ever drier conditions in a new, no longer deniable, world we humans have inherited.

Arguably speaking, there probably are some things, perhaps a modern gadget or two, we Oregonians can live without. However, I would argue that clean-tasting, uncontaminated, drinkable, disease-free water is not among those items we can do without. Therefore, it would seem high time that those Oregonians who want to protect drinkable water would let Governor Kate Brown and our legislators (state and federal) know how important it is to them. After all, for the sake of human survivability on planet Earth, this matter falls into the life or death category.

gene h. mcintyre



Keizertimes

Wheatland Publishing Corp. • 142 Chemawa Road N. • Keizer, Oregon 97303
phone: 503.390.1051 • web: www.keizertimes.com • email: kt@keizertimes.com

Lyndon A. Zaitz, Editor & Publisher

SUBSCRIPTIONS

One year: \$25 in Marion County, \$33 outside Marion County, \$45 outside Oregon

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

Publication No: USPS 679-430

POSTMASTER

Send address changes to:

Keizertimes Circulation
142 Chemawa Road N.
Keizer, OR 97303

Periodical postage paid at Salem, Oregon

