

# KeizerOpinion

KEIZERTIMES.COM

## Students in need

As summer slowly winds its way towards September and fall Keizer households prepare for the upcoming school year. School supplies and new clothes are always on the shopping list in August. Kids look warily at the calendar while parents give a silent hooray.

While that scenario may be reality in many Keizer homes with school-age children, there are other households in which the onset of the school year is no reason to be cheerful.

Some kids will go to school without cold-weather coats or well-worn footwear that has seen better days. The fastest way to be bullied in school is to wear what other kids can easily ridicule: too small, too large, too dirty...young ones can be very cruel.

What one wears is superficial as opposed to hunger which is anything but. An empty belly is education's nemesis. It is hard to learn lessons—at any age—when your mind keeps screaming "I'm hungry!" Fighting food insecurity is a constant challenge for too many of our neighbors.

Another impediment to doing well in school for some of our students is lack of proper school supplies. Each grade level in elementary school has its own suggested/required supplies. The price of some of those supplies can be out of reach for a low-income household.

We would hope that a booming state and national economy would rise many families out of the low-income category, but until (or unless) that happens we must help our fellow citizens. Keizer is a generous community and now is the time to prove it again.

One of the most successful philanthropic projects in recent years has been The McNary Kloset which is a in-school repository of clothing, food and hygiene products for high school students. A student in need can enter and 'shop' privately from the closet only with a school counselor. The Kloset has since been replicated at Whiteaker and Claggett Creek mid-

dle schools.

The Keizer Chamber Foundation oversees the collection of donated and new items and assures they stock up the three closets. The public is asked to donate clean clothes shoes in good

repair; coats and jackets are especially needed with fall and winter coming. The Kloset also has food and hygiene products students in need can take. It is reported that the students who utilize The Kloset are humble and appreciative.

Donations for the Kloset can be delivered directly to McNary, Whiteaker or Claggett Creek schools. The Keizertimes office is a drop off point for McNary also while Copy Cats print shop on River Road is a drop off location for the two middle schools. All of us can look through our own closets and find one, if not more, items to donate.

Too many students in Keizer are eligible for the free lunch project at their school. One can conclude that food insecurity is an issue in their home. The Keizer Network of Women and other organizations (Marion County Fire District #1, Keizer Eagles, to name two) collect food to be delivered with toys during the Christmas holiday. But hunger does not know a season. A child hungry in December is hungry in September and May.

The generosity demonstrated in December should also happen at least twice during the school year. Full bellies means our kids will be attentive in class and ready to learn.

The Salem-Keizer Education Foundation, Assistance League Auxiliary and others hold school supply drives this time of year. The Keizertimes office is a donation spot for school supplies for those students in need.

The things that our most vulnerable students need can be found in our own closet, at a discount store or in an aisle during a regular shopping trip. By helping make daily school life better for them, we better our own community.

—LAZ

our opinion



## Trial highlight's Trump's bad choices

By DEBRA SAUNDERS

In June, U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis slammed the position of special counsel as a post too easily "deployed as a political weapon" to troll for dirt on targeted adversaries. At the same time, he ruled that Special Counsel Robert Mueller's prosecution of former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort was legitimate and should continue.

Ellis, who is presiding over Manafort's trial in Alexandria, Virginia, was acutely aware that the multiple charges of tax and bank fraud had nothing to do with the 2016 presidential election or Russian meddling in the campaign. But the judge found grounds for Mueller's team to prosecute Manafort as its probe uncovered a fraudulent money trail funded by backers of former Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovich. The terms of the Mueller investigation included looking into the "strongly pro-Russian" Ukraine leader.

There's something to be said for the irascible judge's focus. Ellis also appears to have curbed Manafort's lawyer, Kevin Downing, after Downing grilled star witness Rick Gates about four alleged extramarital affairs.

It's irrelevant. Gates is Manafort's former right-hand man who was indicted along with Manafort in October 2017, but later agreed to plead guilty and testify against his old boss as part of a plea deal that should reduce, and possibly eliminate, a prison sentence that threatened to span decades.

The jury has seen Gates as an accomplished liar and professional cheat. From Monday afternoon through Wednesday morning of last week, prosecutor Greg Andres walked Gates

through a series of fraudulent maneuvers that he orchestrated to avoid paying taxes.

Gates also admitted to skimming money from offshore Manafort accounts—although, as Downing pointed out, he claimed to have embezzled hundreds of thousands from Manafort after the government had figured Gates skimmed close to \$3 million.

But Gates looking shifty doesn't make Manafort appear pure—not when prosecutors produced documents that gave the impression Manafort hired Gates because they share the same low bar on ethics.

In 2015, Manafort emailed Gates about a higher-than-expected tax tab. "We need to discuss actions," Manafort wrote. After some fancy shuffling, no surprise, his tax bill shrank.

Manafort also consulted Gates about the method to doctor a PDF as he applied for a loan.

In the long run, the most damaging testimony from Gates had to do with Manafort Inc.'s depleted finances after Yanukovich fell from power.

According to the feds, as Manafort advised Yanukovich and other Ukraine entities from 2006 to 2015, \$75 million flowed into the big-spending political consultant's offshore accounts—and Gates helped launder more than \$30 million of that.

But when Yanukovich fled, the money went away. In 2015, Gates testified, "We had zero clients." Rather than sell one of his many homes, Manafort went on the hunt for big loans by whatever means it took get to get them.

Then, like a deus ex machina in an ancient theater production, Donald Trump appeared on the political stage.

Manafort agreed to advise Trump without pay, as he clearly saw an opportunity to cash in on his work for Trump over time.

Through a Kiev staffer, the *Atlantic* reported, Manafort sent clippings of stories about his political work for Trump to a Russian oligarch, to whom Manafort owed millions. Manafort asked, "How do we use to get whole?"

Conservative journalists have chronicled ties between Moscow and the Democratic National Committee and Hillary Clinton's campaign in 2016. Most notably the DNC and Clinton campaign bankrolled the unverified "dossier" compiled by a former British intelligence officer who repeated dirt fed by Russian sources.

The opposition research firm that hired the Brit also had worked against the 2012 Magnitsky Act that prescribed sanctions against corrupt Russian players.

But if everyone's hands are dirty, does that mean no one's hands are dirty?

Trump frequently notes that Manafort served as his campaign chief for only a brief time, a mere three months. But given Manafort's reputation for advising strongmen who oppose U.S. interests, that's three months too long.

As a candidate, Trump boasted that he'd hire "the best" people to run his government. But first he hired the worst guy—a politico who made his fortune advising corrupt strongmen -- to steer his campaign. So even if there was no collusion, there was colossally bad judgment. And there is a price to pay for bad choices.

(Creators Syndicate)

## KLL board doing good work

To the Editor:

The last couple of months there has been controversy concerning Keizer Little League.

I have been a supporter, lover of kids and volunteer in this program on and off for more than 50 years.

I want you to know that the Keizer Little League Board of Directors serving presently are the best. Every story has two sides. This board was handed problems from previous boards. They are doing an awesome job working together to solve these situations.

letters

For the past two years Keizer Little League has raised funds through sponsorships, grants, volunteers and out-of-pocket funds. This amount has been more than \$50,000. Keizer Little League is working to improve now and into the future. A big thank you to the board serving our kids.

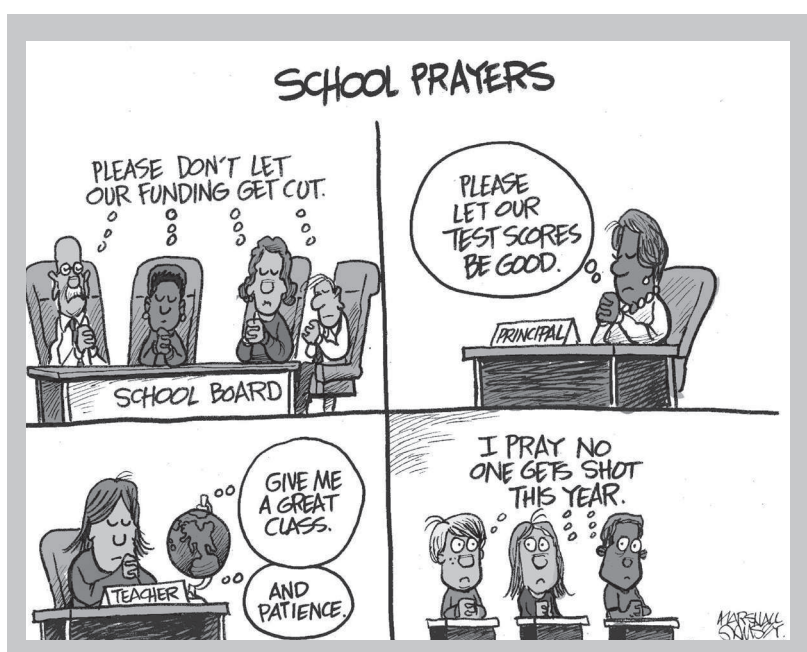
Clint Holland  
Keizer

### Share your opinion

Email a Letter to the Editor or submit a guest column to the Keizertimes.

Deadline is noon Tuesday.

Email to: [publisher@keizertimes.com](mailto:publisher@keizertimes.com)



## Why are we trashing our only home?

The planet Mars held a special place in my imagination as a child. An Italian astronomer, Giovanni Schiaparelli, observed in 1877 what he believed to be straight lines on Mars surface and surmised them the work of intelligent life. Later, astronomers with more powerful telescopes determined the lines or "canals" to be an optical illusion. Orson Welles' adaptation of H.G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* on Oct. 30, 1938, panicked millions, announcing weird monsters swarming out of a spaceship in New Jersey were destroying humans with ray guns.

Our sun and its eight planets have been spinning through the Milky Way galaxy for billions of years: 5 billion for our sun and 4.6 billion for Earth and Mars. Mars has a thin atmosphere mostly of carbon dioxide, argon, nitrogen along with a small amount of oxygen and water vapor, cannot support life as we know it, and is called the Red Planet due to oxidization of iron minerals. It has dramatically changed over the billions of its life years as has the Earth. At the dawn of mammals, 50 million years ago, crocodiles, palm trees, and tiger sharks thrived in the Arctic Circle where the atmosphere was 1,000 ppm carbon dioxide. A condition of 1,000 ppm carbon dioxide is expected again by the year 2100.

Knowing what we know now, could Mars have been like Earth long ago? That's very possible. Since our knowledge of the changes the Earth has gone through, it is not beyond flights of fancy to think that Mars has experienced a large number of changes. Is there a chance Mars looked very

much like Earth, perhaps 2 billion years ago, and was inhabited by beings not unlike Earthlings, and that those beings used it up.

Our planet meanwhile is changing very quickly as the human species keeps throwing stuff away and have turned our backs on the oceans and waterways, turning them into what more and more of us see as sludge buckets for massive accumulations of toxic materials. We have a global contamination issue where our mismanagement of waste is rapidly adding up to our demise.

Most of us take an out-of-sight, out-of-mind approach to garbage. We throw things away but don't think about what "away" really means. Many of us, this columnist argues, have this notion about it all that there are magical people who take things from us we don't any long want and we never have to think about these things again.

We are currently cursed by examples like Scott Pruitt, former head of the Environmental Protection Agency. He, whose grossly unethical behavior notwithstanding, was on-the-job in Washington, D.C. for about 18 months during which time he was committed to making it easier for U.S. businesses to pollute and allow the greatest possible damage to Mother Nature. President Trump has already appointed Pruitt's successor, Andrew Wheeler, a former coal-and-chemical-lobbyist with Trump said "will continue with our great and lasting EPA agenda."

Meanwhile, the World Economic Forum estimates that Earth's oceans

are now clogged with 150 million metric tons of plastic with another 8 million tons added every year. Imagine a huge truckload of plastic dumped into the planet's waters every minute and one soon gets at the monumental size of the problem. Yes, plastic straws are on the "endangered" list but what about everything else. And, just remember, too, modern plastics have only been in use since 1909 while the Earth was devoid of them for the 4.6 billion years before their advent.

In concert and cooperation with the world's most able scientific minds, American can-do inventiveness could make significant contributions to lessen or reduce the anticipated global warming catastrophe already underway in the form of devastating wind storms, flooding rains and out-of-control forest and wild fires. Unfortunately for the immediate future and generations yet unborn, leadership in the United States is not willing to address the storms well underway. Waiting for the right people in power to try to turn the current downward trajectory may wait too long and be too late.

There are measures that offer solutions for air, water and earth. These include the decarbonization of the global economy, enhancement of biosphere carbon sinks, behavioral changes, technological innovations, new governance arrangements and transformed social values. President Trump and his Cabinet members have evidenced no interest while they continue to work against any fixes for a seriously ailing environment that could result ultimately in a Mars-like Earth.

(Gene H. McIntyre shares his opinion weekly in the *Keizertimes*.)

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