

Opinion

Let your passion lead you

There seem to be two schools of thought on the role of schools in the lives of our children: some think that schools should do most of the raising of our kids; others think that education in school should be coupled with life education in the home.

Contemporary education movements have put much currency in public education as a tool to get our children ready for life—training for a trade, for example.

For decades, the American Dream entailed becoming whatever one wanted to be regardless of their beginnings. The poorest child in the worst ghetto, via hard work in schools, could become a world-class doctor or an attorney on the ranks of Supreme Court justice.

Some students today certainly harbor a desire to attend a four-year university and earn a doctorate in medicine or law. It seems we don't want to produce doctors and lawyers as much as we want to produce workers for the trades.

With that background, voters will be faced with two distinctly different candidates for Position 6 for the Salem-Keizer School Board election in May. Incumbent Chuck Lee has served for three terms (12 years); his opponent, Danielle Bethell, is a businesswoman with three children in Keizer's public schools and experience with Individual Education Plans—a written statement of the education program for a child who is eligible for special education.

Lee has a strong resume including leadership of Blanchet High School and president of the public-private Career and Technical Education Center (CTEC).

Bethell is passionate about what schools should be and what they should not be. As a mother she wants to be sure all children are getting the education they deserve.

It is no surprise that Lee thinks that career and technical education is a key to a successful high school education. While Bethell supports CTEC, she believes that it is not the only game in town and it should be a part of high school education, not the be all and end all.

Our students are not cut from

the same cloth. Students here in the state's second largest school district come from diverse backgrounds (economically, racially, nationally, linguistically, etc.). The time has come to stop trying to ram all of our kids into the same classrooms and curriculums.

Our schools need to be centers of learning. Bethell is frustrated by the cuffs that bind teachers' hands when it comes to dealing with disruptive students. That does nothing for the kids who are ready to learn.

Class disruption is but one small part of the education system that needs to be addressed.

Lee says that the school board has one employee and one employee only: the district's superintendent. That means that what happens in the classroom is not in the board's wheelhouse. What happens in the classroom is the responsibility of Superintendent Christy Perry, her cabinet of nine administrators and those that serve under them.

The school board is where the buck stops. Though many want to lay responsibility for what happens in Salem-Keizer classrooms at the feet of the state education department or the legislature, policy is what the school board does. You may not know if you attend a school board meeting—it's all about the budget, money and grants. Nary a word about curriculum.

We would like to see the Salem-Keizer School Board be more involved with the setting of curriculum at all levels of education in our schools.

Regarding the election for Position 6, if you think that career and vocational education is the future for our high schools, vote for Chuck Lee.

If you believe that teachers need to have more say in how their students behave including consequences for class disrupters and a well-balanced curriculum is important, vote for Danielle Bethell.

Both candidates are equally passionate about our schools. Let your passion be your guide in choosing. —LAZ

editorial



The cathedral and the path to renewal

By E.J. DIONNE JR.

The burning of Notre Dame Cathedral, a monument to human creativity and divine inspiration, invites first a mournful silence and then a search for meaning. This often involves efforts to understand the inexplicable by reference to metaphor.

That this ancient place of worship burned during Holy Week invites, perhaps paradoxically, hope. A time when Christians remember suffering and death and then celebrate resurrection speaks to the yearning for deliverance and renewal. Because Notre Dame was not completely destroyed by this tragedy—or by centuries of neglect, or by political threats—it can be reborn.

And the possibility of revival instructs us about tradition and its endurance. We are learning from experts in restoration and repair that a reconstructed building is never the same as it was before. We are also learning that when structures are hundreds of years old, they are not the product of a single time or a single culture. They are the creations of many tastes, many insights and many minds.

Traditions are built that way, too. They survive because those who honor them work mightily to protect them—but also because living traditions never fear adapting when change demands it.

In a stirring piece of journalism, *The Financial Times'* Edwin Heathcote reminds us that great structures come to be hallowed for more than their magnificence. We appreciate them as well because they have embedded themselves in the lives of individuals

and communities. He notes that architecture is often “revered as an art object or an artefactm(sic) rather than a working component of everyday life.”

And he asks of Notre Dame: “But how much of that fabric is actually medieval? Cathedrals took centuries to build and they are always works

in progress, accretions of layers from across the ages. The urgent questions then are: where do you start and what, exactly, do you rebuild?”

Which invites the other, more disturbing metaphor that has been invoked often in recent days: Notre Dame burned at a time when the Roman Catholic Church, to which it owes its life, is also burning in a different way.

Perhaps this is too easy a leap to make, but who can question that there is a deep crisis in the church, brought about by the failure of its leadership to protect its most vulnerable members? Who can miss the debilitating divisions in the church, reflected most recently by Pope Emeritus Benedict's letter that was widely interpreted (I think accurately) as a challenge to Pope Francis' worldview and his handling of the crisis?

Notre Dame's near destruction brought home why this crisis has, of late, left me close to silent. As a struggling, run-of-the-mill believer who is neither particularly holy nor doctrinally pure, I have—like many Catholics, I suspect—found it impossible to break with an institution that has been profoundly, at times wickedly, flawed yet still kindles acts of mercy,

moments of transcendence and works of beauty.

From my first visit to Notre Dame just before Christmas in 1973 and continuing through many others, I always found the cathedral at once wondrous and welcoming. It was a blend of the sacred and the profane as bustling tourists made their way by pews where the devout and the doubting offered their prayers to a God they hoped was listening.

When I was there, I was always aware of French Catholicism's morally bifurcated history. It was a force for both shameful collaboration with the Nazis and the Vichy regime during World War II, and also heroic resistance. So we should not be shocked by this very human institution's more recent failures. There have been lies told to cover up corruption, but truths preached in the name of love and justice.

At times, I think that those who are leaving the church -- the outraged parents, the women and LGBTQ people who feel excluded from its concern -- may simply have more courage than I do. Yet I still want to place my bet with those who insist the church can be delivered, who remember, as with Notre Dame, that it is a work in progress about which we always have to ask, “What, exactly, do you rebuild?”

No matter how skeptical I get, I find myself joyful at Easter Mass, year after year, when we first hear the words, “He is risen, Alleluia!” It will take time and care, but I know Notre Dame will have its Alleluia moment. I pray there will also be one for the church that inspired its creation.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

The scourge of fentanyl

To the Editor:

Fentanyl is the strongest opiate on the streets right now and it's estimated to be 100 times more potent than morphine and 50 times stronger than heroin.

Not only is fentanyl sold on the streets “as is,” but it's also mixed into other drugs by dealers who have no regard for human life; all they care about is taking the addict's money. Fentanyl has recently been found not only in heroin supplies, but it's also been found in other illicit drugs like cocaine and marijuana.

Unsuspecting addicts consume the drug in the amounts they're used to, completely oblivious to the fact that they are about to ingest a lethal dose of fentanyl. Fentanyl affects the opiate receptors of the brain and crosses through the blood-brain barrier and creates an intense euphoria and addiction in the user much like heroin. Fentanyl was originally only supposed to be indicated for cancer patients and for “end-of-life” pain.

letters

Fentanyl was rarely ever prescribed as a “take-home” medicine for chronic pain or painful disorders and never used outside of a hospital. Not only is fentanyl available on

nearly every street corner nationwide, it's also being widely distributed throughout the country after being imported from China. In order to finally get a grip on the growing opiate epidemic, doctors need to stop over-prescribing opiates so as to not create new addicts and effective drug rehab needs to be made available to anyone who needs it. Addiction doesn't care who you are, how you were raised, or where you're from; it can affect anyone. Another person becoming an unfortunate statistic is one too many.

Jason Good
Clearwater, FL

Share your opinion

Submit a letter to the editor, or a guest column by noon Tuesday. Email to: publisher@keizertimes.com



The anxiety of living in the U.S. today

The lengthy life for this writer is attributable, in part, to birth in the United States. In fact, there have been only two periods during my life when serious wonder arose by “the end” appearing imminent. The two periods were characterized by protracted migraine-like headaches, resulting from intense feelings of helplessness due to fear-engulfing stress and bone-chilling dread.

The first period occurred during my youth and was known as the Cuban Missile Crisis. It was when, for 13 agonizing days of uncertainty, the world anxiously awaited on whether the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. (Russia) would enter a nuclear war initiated by the U.S. discovery of short-range Soviet ballistic missiles being deployed in Fidel Castro's Cuba, a Russian ally.

By the end of World War II, the world knew from the 1945 atomic bomb detonations over Hiroshima and Nagasaki that nuclear weapons had human life-ending power. Furthermore, we knew that America had the more powerful hydrogen bomb and aware that the Soviet Union also had the hydrogen bomb in their arsenal. One of those Americans who knew the facts and contracted a monumentally-big headache thereby was yours truly.

The second period is currently underway. It has arrived by way of Washington, D.C., where our current president, Donald J. Trump, ignores rule by law, undermining and emasculating the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights and apparently is seeking autocratic status. Examples abound: Attorney General William Barr appears to work for Donald Trump and not the Amer-

ican people. Evidence of his patronage role can be witnessed in his unwillingness to fully release the 26-months-in-the-making Mueller Report and his recent announcement charging (without evidence) his Department of Justice employees, FBI agents, used FISA (Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act), electronic surveillance approved by federal judges, to “spy” on the Trump campaign. If Barr's charge were true, it would mean our FBI operates like government investigators do in China, Russia and North Korea.

Not. President Trump refuses to reveal his tax returns. Meanwhile, tax returns have been lawfully requested since the scandal-ridden presidency of Warren Harding in the 1920s. The law, which says the U.S. House Ways

and Means Committee can request and review any American's tax return, has always been honored. Now, Trump's Secretary of the Treasury, Steven Mnuchin, without power by statute to intervene into the U.S. Tax Analysis office, is preventing Trump's returns from oversight by Congress. Looks like public employee Mnuchin also works only for Donald Trump.

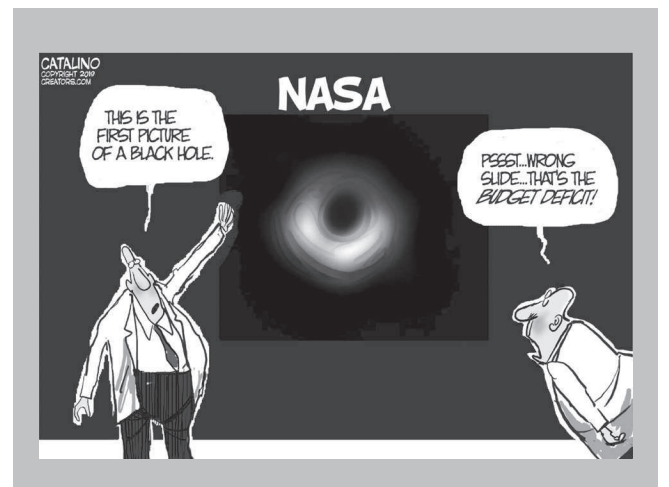
Just one more example among so many that

cause alarm. The Congress-approved Secretary of Homeland Security (DHS) and most of the division heads under the DHS, including, among others, the Director of the Secret Service, have been discharged or fired from their duties and replaced by acting heads who simply work for Donald Trump, not the American people. Subsequently, all matters that establish and preserve our security are now decided by one American who has placed the safety and health of 323 million Americans under his single-minded, often arbitrary, whimsical control.

Avoiding naivete, I'm aware that no one besides my wife and daughters care whether I contract a migraine or any other malady. Nevertheless, if anyone besides myself values a free country, our human rights, a government design with separation of powers and checks and balances by three separate entities, it is high time every American get acquainted with the threat and do what he can do to defend and thereby save the United States.

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

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