

# Opinion

## Time for fun, time for irises

KeizerFEST, formerly known as Keizer Iris Festival, kicks into high gear this weekend.

Produced by the Keizer Chamber of Commerce, KeizerFEST officially started two weeks ago with the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast (the first official event) and continued with the Distinguished Young Women's program last Saturday and the Keizer Volunteer Firefighters Association's Mother's Day breakfast on Sunday.

Though the name of the festival has changed, the heralded bearded iris is still very much in the mix. Schreiner's Iris Gardens north of Keizer, is the one of the world's foremost hybridizers and shippers of the tall bearded iris. We are in the thick of bloom season, the perfect time for a visit to Schreiner's.

KeizerFEST organizers have seen to it that there is something for everyone during festival weekend. Beginning Thursday night, there will be four days of live music on the main stage at the big KeizerFEST tent on Cherry Avenue at the Lions Club.

That live music includes LaFamilia Dia—Family Day—on Sunday. In the afternoon five acts will perform on main and community stages. The theme iris for 2019 is Lovely Senorita, and LaFamilia Dia is a tip of the hat to the Hispanic heritage.

Before Los Alvarados, Jr. takes to the main stage Sunday afternoon, the Teen Music Showcase will feature some of Keizer and Salem's most talented teens in the morning. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top winners as determined by a judging panel comprised of choir directors from Salem-Keizer schools.

But before you get to LaFamilia Dia on Sunday, there are plenty of activities on Saturday. There are

four runs (3K/5K on River Road before the parade and a 10K and half marathon that takes runners into the area's rich farm lands).

Those who think they have the best or cutest pet, can enter the Mayor's Pet Parade which starts at River Road and Lockhaven Drive (near Figaro's Pizza). Some of those same parade entrants just might be entered into Crown the Hound Saturday afternoon on the community stage.

After the pets have their time in parade spotlight, the Valley Credit Service KeizerFEST parade begins at 10:30 a.m. and heads down River Road to south Keizer.

The grand marshal for this year's parade is Teresa Munoz, owner of Los Dos Hermanos restaurant in south Keizer. Chosen to honor her community works and support, Munoz is one of the popular hostesses of any restaurant in the valley.

The KeizerFEST grounds will be home for the Vendor Fair and food trucks; inside the main tent adult beverages will be available.

The KeizerFEST Classic Car Show will be held at St. Edward Catholic Church until 1:30 p.m. on Saturday.

For thrill seekers of any age, carnival rides will be twirling, rushing and spinning. What's a good festival without rides and the midway with its many games of skill and luck?

Purists need not worry, KeizerFEST is bounding with irises: thousands of irises will decorate parade entries. The Keizer Art Association's Enid Joy Mount Gallery at the Keizer Cultural Center is exhibiting entries for the official artwork for the 2020 festival—all are iris-themed.

KeizerFEST is here this week but the tall bearded iris is in Keizer forever...after all, Keizer is the Iris Capital of the World. —LAZ

our  
opinion

## The hypocrisy of Democratic leaders

To the Editor:

According to Democratic party leaders, President Donald Trump is the source of the hate that has permeated our nation since his election. My observations in the past three years see a different side of their story line: his election has exposed the extreme bitterness they harbor toward those who resist them.

While claiming to take the high road, they attack him with acrimonious partisan rhetoric, and also encourage incivility toward his supporters.

With bi-partisan support and without public outcry, construction of our nation's existing barriers along the American-Mexican border began in 1993. With bi-partisan support and without public outcry, President Obama separated illegal immigrant families during his presidency. With support of the Democrats and without public outcry, President Obama used his executive privilege to withhold documents from Congress in 2012. Without consequences, Obama's Attorney General Eric Holder was held in contempt of Congress in 2012. But now that Trump is taking these same actions, Democrats are trying to convince us that his doing so is immoral, unethical, corrupt, unpatriotic, and represents a constitutional crisis.

Democrats are also quick to point out character flaws in Trump while white washing their own. Their acrimonious hypocrisy for the past three

years is disgraceful.

I'm not a far-right activist. Throughout my life I've voted the person, not the party. But I can no longer, in good conscious, support the Democratic Party.

**Dave Bacon**  
Keizer

## Retain Diane Watson on CCC board

To the Editor:

Being fiscally responsible is why Chemeketa Community College has the lowest tuition of all community colleges in Oregon. You need to know that it's Diane Watson's experience and service on the Board of Education for the past six years that has helped Chemeketa achieve and maintain that status while improving its programs and also finding unique opportunities to support students.

I've served with Diane on CCC's Board of Education and can personally attest to her dedication, passion and commitment to improving programs for Chemeketa students. She has also been an ardent supporter of partnerships with Salem-Keizer School District that make it easier for students before they get to Chemeketa.

We need Diane's perspective and effective advocacy for quality education on the Board. Please vote to continue Diane Watson's service on CCC's Board of Education.

**Jackie Franke**  
Salem

(The writer is a Chemeketa Community College Board of Education member.)

letters

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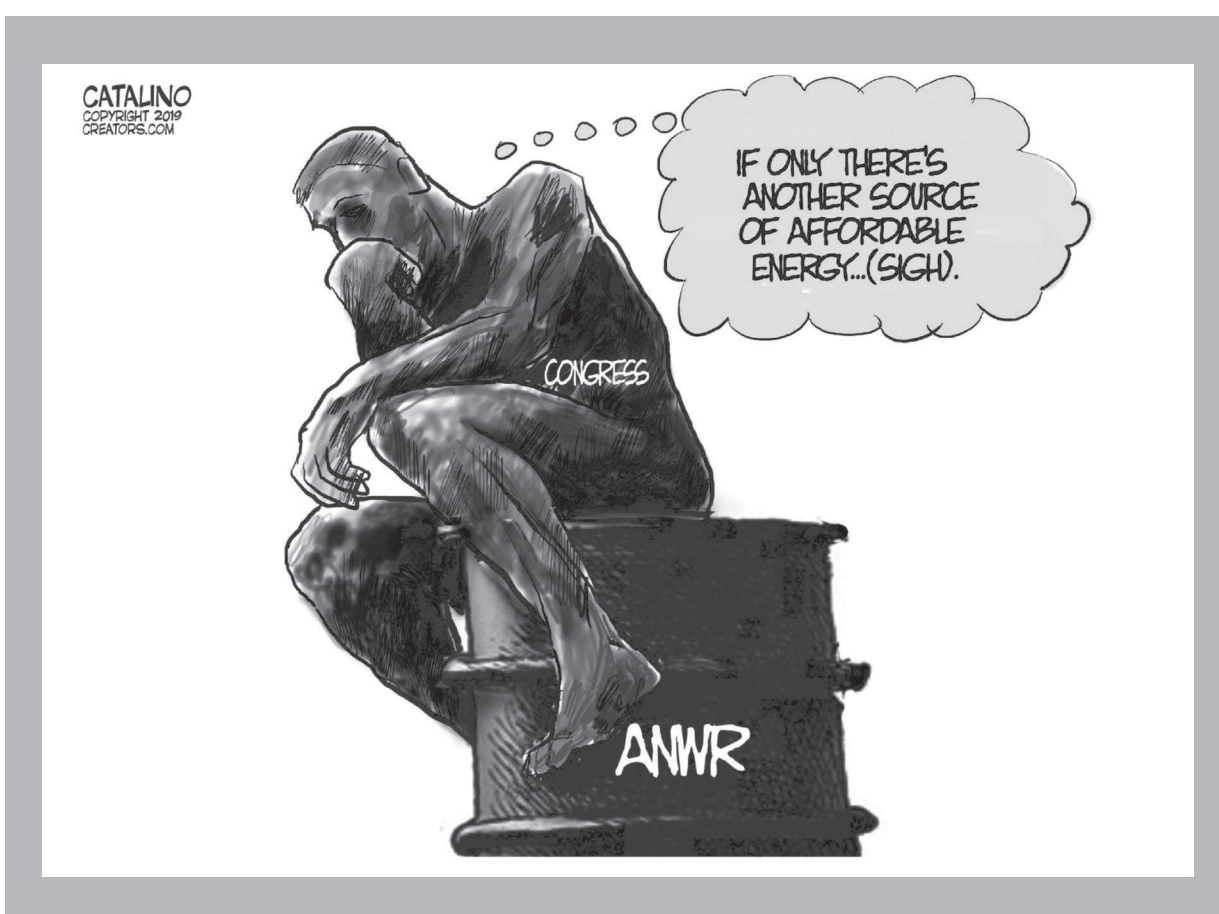
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## Don't trash my good union job

By DAVID BURCKHARDT

Twelve years ago I was scrambling to make ends meet with two part-time food service jobs when my dad told me to check out a job just posted at his plant. I was intrigued. Reliable hours. Union health and retirement benefits. A chance to build my career in renewable energy.

Other than the heads up, my dad didn't pull any strings. I got the job on my own merit and have worked for the Covanta Energy-from-Waste plant in Brooks ever since. Today I'm a control room operator, part of a team that oversees the conversion of Marion County's garbage into local, renewable energy for 9,000 homes each year.

I'm writing because I hear that some in the Oregon Legislature might be looking to shut down our plant. I want lawmakers to know about the benefits our plant provides, not just for me and my 43 co-workers (including my dad), but also for everyday Oregonians.

Let's start with the immediate consequences of shutting down the plant. More than 500 tons of waste that's processed at our plant each day would be loaded on semi-trucks and shipped more than 100 miles through the Columbia Gorge to a

landfill in eastern Oregon. Think the traffic is bad on I-5 today? Add more than 9,800 semi-truck loads on I-5 and I-84 each year.

Closing the plant means my dad, myself and more than 40 others would lose our family wage jobs. We'd also lose our good union health and retirement benefits.

Closing the plant means Marion County residents could potentially see higher garbage rates. That's because our county government would lose the revenues from the energy the plant generates. In the past, those dollars have been invested in county services and those dollars make it possible for Marion County to have some of the most innovative waste reduction and recycling programs in all of Oregon including Save the Food (food waste reduction) and Master Recycler training.

Additionally, our plant recovers 8,000 tons of metals each year. That's enough metal to build more than 6,500 cars.

Longer term, closing the plant would mean another 500 tons of waste added every day to regional landfills. Instead of producing energy, the buried waste produces meth-

ane that adds even more greenhouse gas emissions.

Instead of closing the plant, I urge my representatives in Salem to endorse Senate Bill 451, which would allow Covanta to receive renewable energy certificates from the state.

Rather than forfeiting good union jobs and dismantling one of the most progressive systems for handling solid waste and recycling in Oregon, I think lawmakers ought to be doing everything they can to support a local energy resource that keeps garbage out of landfills, preserves land for higher use and eliminates greenhouse gas emissions.

Most people I talk to are glad to hear that our plant is a cleaner alternative to coal-fired plants. They appreciate that waste-to-energy facilities like ours are recognized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the European Union for mitigating greenhouse gases.

To me, recycling, recovery and renewable energy is what the Oregon environmental ethic is all about. I'm proud of the work my dad and I do. And I hope that my 4-year-old daughter will someday be proud of the contribution her dad and grandfather made to our state.

(David Burckhardt works with his father, Ed Burckhardt, at the Covanta Energy-from-Waste plant in Brooks.)

other  
voices

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## American consumer loser in tariff war

A picture can be worth a thousand words and such an example appeared the other day by cartoonist Michael Ramirez in *The Las Vegas Review-Journal*. The drawing was a cartoonish resemblance of a scene inside Air Force One where a likeness of President Donald J. Trump asks a staffer, "How do you say 'Paying tariffs in Chinese?'" The staffer replies, "U.S. consumer." This "funny" is prologue to an ominous tale.

A volley of tweets has come from Trump where he has addressed the serious issue of tariffs by using his familiar, "Well, I said to myself, I said, 'I'm going to sugar coat the consequences of my trade war with China and my base will carry me to victory.'" Unfortunate for at least one million Americans whose jobs are directly at stake, Trump has minimized the worth of China's purchases of U.S. goods and services, misstated the trade deficit and ignored the wholly predictable rise in the many costs to consumers when imports are heavily taxed.

With trade relations between the United States and China totally falling apart and the stock market looking every day in free fall, Trump has chosen to label these fractured talks as "congenial." Meanwhile, his view is to wait for China to start buying from our farmers when, in fact, China already is the fourth-largest export market for U.S. agriculture.

Then there's Trump's statement that "We have lost 100 million dollars a year, for many years, on crazy trade with China and we won't anymore." That, too, is wrong. When an-

alyzing the trade deficit, Trump overlooks trade in services where we gain a surplus with China. Keep in mind also that while the imbalance has been lopsided, export of goods to China has increased over 70 percent since 2008 and exports to China overall are up 527 percent since 2001.

Trump reports that tariffs are now being paid to the U.S. by China at 25 percent on \$250 billion worth of goods and products and these payments go to the U.S. Treasury. However, tariffs don't work that way: China is not writing checks to the U.S. Treasury. Rather, the tariffs are paid by American companies which then

pass the costs onto U.S. consumers by higher prices. Do we Americans typically buy from home-based manufacturers? No, to the contrary, what happens is that Americans buy less of everything and a recession gets underway.

We hear again from Trump that "tariffs will bring far more wealth to our country than even a phenomenal deal of the traditional kind" which "our farmers and starving

nations helped." However, Trump fails to pay attention to the damage tariffs do. By all estimates, a trade war leads to slower growth and not the prosperity he predicts. Tariffs have proven to retard growth while their latest increase will cut back U.S. gross domestic product by 0.3 percent or \$62 billion in 2020, a loss of about \$500 to every American household.

One of Trump's handicaps is his internal conflict on matters economic. He prides himself on being tough in deals; yet, views himself as the master of the deal, a tug-of-war bound to grind thinking and problem-solving to irreconcilable paralysis. Yet, he keeps talking to himself through the labyrinth that's his mind and we Americans, our farmers now in the bull's eye, suffer the calamity underway by Sino-U.S. incompatibility, losing a vitally important bilateral relationship.

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

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