

# Opinion

## Celebrate a flower or a community?

We refuse to believe that KeizerFEST (born as the Keizer Iris Festival) has run its course. But we do think that its current home at Keizer Lions Club and Cherry Avenue is the best place for an event of this size.

When the festival moved from Keizer Station to the Keizer Lions Club a few years ago it solved a problem. Keizer Station was building out leaving no space for all the elements of the festival. With no better alternative and a landlord that was amendable, the event was shoehorned into the yard at the Lions Club. Utilizing that property plus closing down part of Cherry Avenue, the festival had found what some people consider its forever home.

When the main tent was erected at previous sites—especially on River Road, the community got excited: they were reminded that it was festival time. The main tent placed at the Keizer Lions Club is not readily visible from important River Road traffic.

Some have said that Keizer Rapids Park is the ideal location for KeizerFEST. It is a nice idea but it is too far off the beaten path and as amenities are added at the park, the space for a festival would grow ever smaller.

We think the only viable, long-term solution to the future of KeizerFEST is to negotiate an arrangement with Volcanoes Stadium.

The festival is important for the Keizer community—residents and businesses alike. The event was known as the Keizer Iris Festival

for the first 30 plus years of its existence. The name was changed to KeizerFEST in 2018. Keizer has billed itself as the iris capital of the world for years, and it still is, thanks to Schreiner's Iris Gardens north of the city.

The festival has always been a celebration of Keizer itself. That's one good reason to site the festival where the most people can see it, and hopefully, visit. As a city we can celebrate alone by ourselves or we can invite the surrounding areas to see what Keizer has to offer—its businesses, its parks and amenities.

By placing KeizerFEST at a site with high visibility—such as the stadium—you make it easy for residents and passers-by alike to see it. Out of sight, out of mind; in sight, top of mind.

We have been loyal supporters of the Keizer Iris Festival and KeizerFEST and nothing will change that. We think Keizer has many things to be proud of and celebrate. Keizer is now home to two large parades—KeizerFEST and Holiday Lights in December. The May festival, once the only event on the calendar, is now competing with dozens of other events and activities. That's why the festival needs to grab any advantage it can to be the preferred event for people to attend on the third weekend in May.

As volunteers in the community we are ready to roll up sleeves and do what we can to assure Keizer's premier community event continues far into the future.

—LAZ

editorial

## The politics of the legislature

By REP. BILL POST

As I begin to write each monthly column, I try to write something with the perspective of "I've never been to the Capitol and I don't understand what those people do down there."

Until I was elected, I wondered the same thing. For instance, the matter of the recent walkout by the Senate Republicans—what did that actually mean? Though you could argue that this was a partisan procedure, when in truth, it is a part of the legislative process

for any minority party in the Legislature. It is a drastic procedure and it's only used when absolutely necessary and has been utilized in the recent past by both parties. The goal is to get the majority party to come to the table and negotiate. In regard to this year, the minority leaders in both the House and Senate chambers felt that they were left out of multiple negotiations which included Cap and Trade, Student Success/Gross Receipts Tax, gun control, the Paid Family Leave Act and other issues important to Oregon.

Another tool the minority party has is to "read the bills." The Oregon Constitution requires that every bill be read in full before the members of that chamber vote on it. Traditionally, for many years the minority party has suspended those rules to allow the bill summary only to be read instead of the entire bill. So, when the rules are not suspended by the minority party, it's within the Constitution, and also allows for slowing down of the process so that there is more consider-

ation for what is being voted on.

What are the pros and cons of these tools? The pros are: the process is slowed down in hopes of not passing bills that have not been thoroughly debated in their perspective committees, and the potential opportunity for more negotiations. The cons are:

it slows down the process (again), potentially killing legislation and it's a very painful process for each party, thus it's known as the "nuclear option" because no one likes it.

So, what did the walkout accomplish? According to sources I've heard, Gov. Kate Brown and the Senate Republicans and Democrats negotiated together to bring the Senate Republicans back to the building with the Senate Republicans agreeing to stop using all the tools I just described for the remainder of the session. In return, Senate Democrats promised they would not bring SB 978 (gun legislation) and HB 3063 (vaccine legislation) to the Senate floor for a vote, which means these two bills will not pass this session. They also promised Sen. Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario) will have a larger role negotiating HB 2020 (Cap and Trade legislation).

Needless to say, it has been a dramatic few weeks in the Capitol. It's unclear what legislation will pass before the mandated Sine Die (adjournment) of June 30th. At this point, anything could happen. As always, please feel free to contact my office with questions or concerns.

(Bill Post represents House District 25. He can be reached at 503-986-1425 or via email at rep.bill.post@oregonlegislature.gov.)

from the capitol



## No winners in infrastructure spat

By DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

Here's a scary thought about last week's skirmishes between President Donald Trump and the Democratic leaders formerly known to him as "Chuck and Nancy": Both sides think they won.

When both parties think they've won, dear reader, that probably means you lost. Because there always has to be a big loser in Washington.

The plot device in last week's soap opera was a \$2 trillion infrastructure package. After last month's infrastructure meeting with Trump, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer emerged from the West Wing to tout an agreement on the big-dollar price tag and the initiative's scope, which would encompass not only roads, airports and water but also broadband, housing and clean energy.

Glowing, Schumer told reporters that, during the session, Trump never even mentioned the 11 congressional investigations into his finances, taxes, Russian ties, possible obstruction of justice and more. "He didn't bring it up," Schumer offered.

Pelosi had asked for the meeting—which was supposed to show she is serious about getting things done. Forget that the package was a \$2 trillion pipe dream.

I still haven't heard a good answer as to why Trump sat back while Pelosi and Schumer said he had agreed to present the details of how he would pay for the massive spending plan, because that never was going to happen. Even if Trump agreed to raise the gasoline tax, that wouldn't pay for the package. And the fact that

the Democrats pushed for Trump to agree to take back parts of his signature 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act—which would never happen—shows they weren't remotely serious.

With absolutely no plan to bankroll this big boondoggle, Trump sent Pelosi and Schumer a letter telling them he wouldn't talk infrastructure until Congress passed the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

After meeting with impeachment-focused members of her caucus Wednesday morning, Pelosi told reporters, "We believe the president of the United States is engaged in a cover-up."

Pelosi has said she believes Trump is trying to "goad" Democrats toward impeachment. Former Trump surrogate Jeffrey Lord agrees. "He thinks he wins because the public will hate impeachers," Lord told the *Review-Journal*.

But just before heading across town to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue to meet Trump, Pelosi charged Trump with engaging in a "cover-up." It's as if she was goading Trump to goad her caucus to impeach him.

Pelosi's provocative accusation gave Trump an excuse to wave a transparently false rationale for calling off the infrastructure talk. As Schumer later noted, Trump didn't see the House probes as deal-killers in April. And the night before, Trump gave a different reason for not talking bridges and water.

Some readers tell me they are fine with Trump saying one thing one day and another the next, because messing with Democrats' heads

shows he's a fighter. OK. But in this case, the head fake got him nothing—or nothing but a lousy "No Collusion" T-shirt from his trip to the Rose Garden.

Trump may have wanted to signal that Democrats can't handle the Mueller report's failure to establish his campaign's collusion with Russia. But he also broadcast that he won't work with Democrats on an issue he supposedly champions.

To show his displeasure, Trump switched from calling the California Democrat his usual "Nancy" to "Speaker Pelosi" and demoted Schumer to "Sen. Schumer"—with no reference to the New Yorker's leadership role.

On escalation, Trump was back to a first-name basis, as the nickname pugilist called the speaker "crazy Nancy."

Pelosi engages in the same game with a different demeanor. Like Don Corleone's long-suffering wife, she offered that she prays for Trump's soul "ardently."

My theory: Pelosi accepts impeachment as inevitable, but she wants to make everyone think she tried to stop her House's nuclear option. Like a lot of folks in my profession, I once bought that act. But it's hard to believe Pelosi wants to cool down the temperature as she calmly and efficiently needles Trump.

On escalation Thursday, Pelosi told reporters, "I wish that his family or his staff would have an intervention for the good of the country."

Crazy Nancy. Intervention-worthy Donald. What's the difference? Syllables.

(Creators Syndicate)

## The very air that we breathe

Hi kids! How about an opinion piece for people your age? Since you will inherit our planet and hopefully help to preserve it for the generations to come, it's important to keep you informed and thinking about some vitals, such as the oxygen we breathe. I want to share with you a subject we take for granted but that we must think about saving to save life on earth.

All of you probably know that when people take a breathe of air they should thank the trees, as trees take in carbon dioxide and produce oxygen. But the other source may come as a surprise to you as about half of the oxygen we breathe comes from phytoplankton. Phytoplankton are very small creatures that live on the surface of our world's oceans and lakes. Just one alone is invisible to your eye and can't be seen without a microscope. Some look like a bowl with two tails, some have an oval shape and some even look like a tiny fork. And some have spines while others have crowns. When they're healthy they give us at least half of all the oxygen we breathe.

Phytoplankton love sunshine and can turn it into energy and they do so by a means known as photosynthesis. The great benefit to us is that this photosynthesis process makes oxygen through its waste.

There are billions upon billions of phytoplankton that, all day long, every day, release tiny puffs of oxygen. Of course, as you may know already, many animals eat them as their food, including whales, jelly fish, shrimp and small fish. As a result, phytoplankton, you might say, are at the beginning or bottom of the food chain. Of further interest to you may be that some of them can glow and

when millions of them glow at night they can light up the water they are in like small scale fireworks.

Now, phytoplankton can also do harm to the environment. For example, when too much fertilizer gets washed into bodies of water, the tiny creatures multiply quickly, becoming algal bloom that occur in both freshwater and the oceans. Algal blooms

then can cause what's known as a chain reaction when there are so many of them that they themselves use up the oxygen to cause a "dead zone" where no creature can live. By the way, when we throw garbage into our streams, lakes, rivers and oceans the tiny creatures that make the oxygen in our atmosphere, and keep us humans alive, die and stop making ox-

xygen.

As a writer who wants each and every young person to enjoy a long life, I want you to know that it is going to be up to you and your friends to know about the importance of phytoplankton, how they make oxygen and what stops and even destroys them. Without every person on our planet doing his and her part to save phytoplankton there could come a day when there is no oxygen. If that happens, all people will perish. There's still time but you must look after phytoplankton as your responsibility as it is your part in saving the health of our planet for humans and all things great and small. And please don't forget our important oxygen-producing trees as you can do your part to save them too.

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



## Keizertimes

Wheatland Publishing Corp.  
142 Chemawa Road N. • Keizer, Oregon 97303  
Phone: 503.390.1051 • www.keizertimes.com

### MANAGING EDITOR

Eric A. Howald  
editor@keizertimes.com

### ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Matt Rawlings  
news@keizertimes.com

### COMMUNITY REPORTER

Hunter Bomar  
reporter@keizertimes.com

### ADVERTISING

Paula Moseley  
advertising@keizertimes.com

### PRODUCTION MANAGER & GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Andrew Jackson  
graphics@keizertimes.com

### LEGAL NOTICES

legals@keizertimes.com

### BUSINESS MANAGER

Leah Stevens  
billing@keizertimes.com

### RECEPTION

Lori Beyeler

### INTERN

Lauren Murphy



EDITOR & PUBLISHER  
Lyndon Zaitz  
publisher@keizertimes.com



facebook.com/keizertimes



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