

# Opinion

## Sidewalks are for all

Keizer governance is complaint-driven; usually something doesn't get done until or unless, a citizen files a complaint with the city. The latest example is the proposed ordinance to ban mobile basketball hoops from city streets and sidewalks.

Posts on social media reflect the opinion that there surely must be more important issues to tackle rather than the toys of Keizer sports players. It is important for a city to assure its citizens have the ability to walk the streets easily and safely.

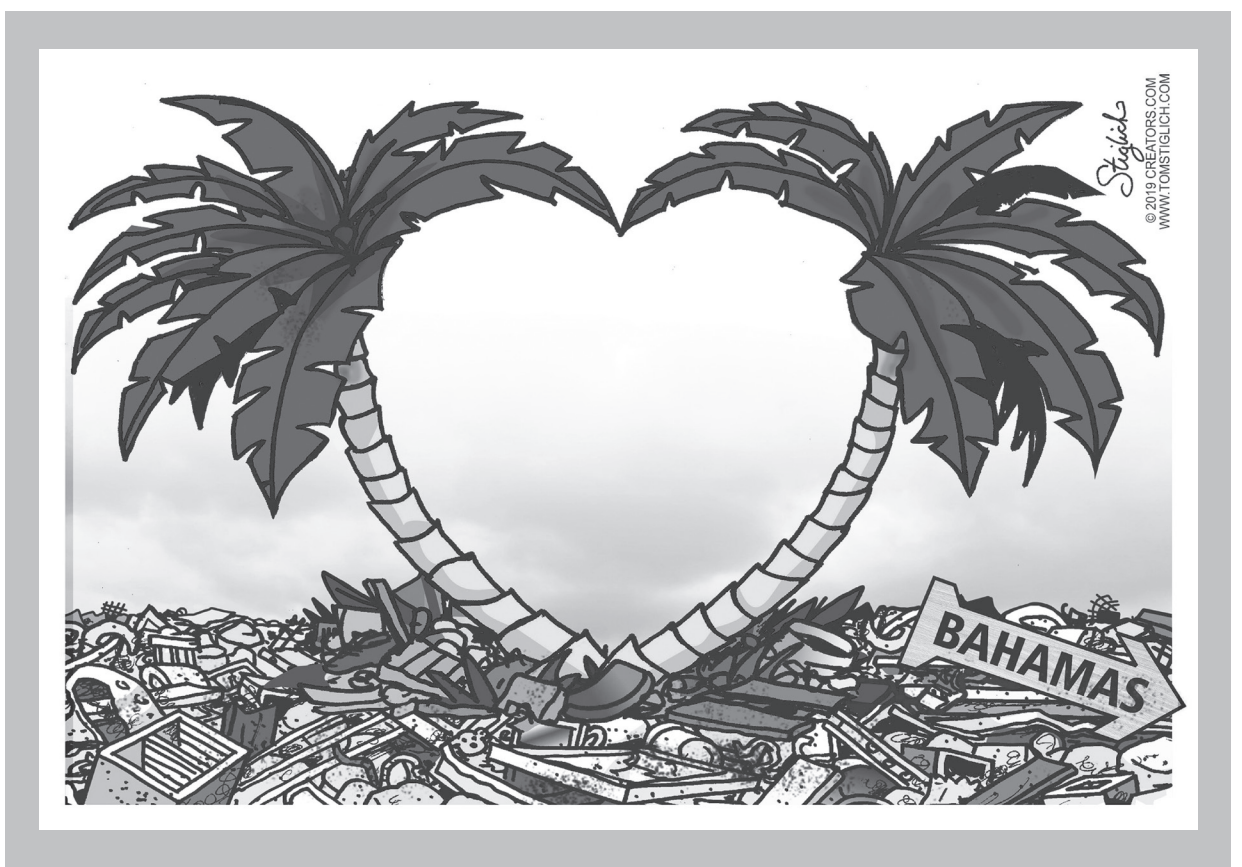
Everyone uses sidewalks—kids walking to school, fitness-minded people with a daily regime and those without a vehicle. For those who rely on wheelchairs, walkers and canes for getting around, public pathways free of obstructions is key to their quality of life. It is not unreasonable to require that all public sidewalks be free and open.

The Keizer City Council addressed sidewalks in general and portable basketball hoops specifically. The issue is setting regulations for basketball hoops. Many of these hoops are placed on sidewalks, players using the street for their game court.

The city council did the right thing by regulating the hoops for the sake of people who use the sidewalks in our neighborhoods. Sidewalks are for everyone and all citizens should be mindful of others' needs.

This issue is an example of how democracy works on the grass roots level. If you have a complaint, send an email, letter or appear before city council to share your concern. The city council and the city staff do not pass intrusive legislation on their own. Your concern is the concern of the city.

—LAZ



## Cans for the band



Saturday, Sept. 7 is Band Day in Keizer. It is the day that members of the McNary High School band and color guard programs spread out throughout the city to solicit donations of recyclable cans and bottles to raise funds.

The money raised by redeeming the donated cans and bottles is used to by the bands to fund travel to competitions and other needs not covered by the normal school budget.

When members of a McNary band appear at your door this Saturday, we hope that Keizer households will clear out their bins and donate their empty cans and bottles. Each team will deliver them to a central location where volunteers will sort.

For those households that do not have cans and bottles to donate, the band will also accept cash donations.

The McNary High School band programs are important and should be supported. They are certainly a source of pride for the community. Would a Friday night football game at Flesher Field be the same without the march-

ing band playing the fight song and other game night classics?

The two parades in town—KeizerFEST in May and Holiday Lights in December are more enjoyable with the marching Celtics.

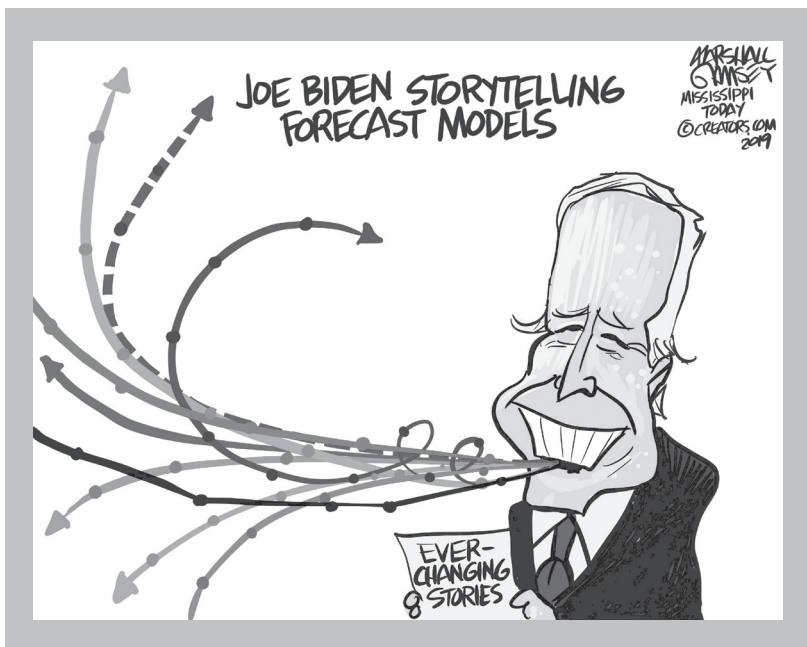
Band Day is the single major fund raising effort of the year for the band programs. The student musicians do the work of gathering, hauling and sorting. They are engaged.

Keizerites have many organizations to donate to, all of them worthy. Our generous residents always open their hearts and wallets when asked to help. If you love marching bands or music in general, do your a service, clear out your garage and help make the new year great for the McNary High School bands.

—LAZ

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142 Chemawa Road N. • Keizer, Oregon 97303  
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**MANAGING EDITOR**  
Eric A. Howald  
[editor@keizertimes.com](mailto:editor@keizertimes.com)

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**  
Matt Rawlings  
[news@keizertimes.com](mailto:news@keizertimes.com)

**COMMUNITY REPORTER**  
Lauren Murphy  
[reporter@keizertimes.com](mailto:reporter@keizertimes.com)

**ADVERTISING**  
Paula Moseley  
[advertising@keizertimes.com](mailto:advertising@keizertimes.com)

**PRODUCTION MANAGER & GRAPHIC DESIGNER**  
Andrew Jackson  
[graphics@keizertimes.com](mailto:graphics@keizertimes.com)

**LEGAL NOTICES**  
[legals@keizertimes.com](mailto:legals@keizertimes.com)

**BUSINESS MANAGER**  
Leah Stevens  
[billing@keizertimes.com](mailto:billing@keizertimes.com)

**RECEPTION**  
Lori Beyeler

**INTERN**  
Brooklyn Flint



**EDITOR & PUBLISHER**  
Lyndon Zaitz  
[publisher@keizertimes.com](mailto:publisher@keizertimes.com)  
2019-2020 President  
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## The coming implosion of our electoral system

By E.J. DIONNE JR.

The assumptions underlying a controversy are often more important than the controversy itself.

Take the case of our blithe acceptance of the electoral college. There is nothing normal or democratic about choosing our president through a system that makes it ever more likely that the candidate who garners fewer votes will nonetheless assume power. For a country that has long claimed to model democracy to the world, this is both wrong and weird.

And there is also nothing neutral or random about how our system works. The Electoral College tilts outcomes toward white voters, conservative voters, and certain regions of the country. People outside these groups and places are supposed to sit back and accept their relative disenfranchisement. There is no reason they should, and at some point, they won't. This will lead to a meltdown.

Our brewing troubles were underscored last month by the kerfuffle that Nate Cohn, *The New York Times'* political numbers guru, set off with a story that ran under the headline: *Trump's Electoral College Edge Could Grow in 2020, Rewarding Polarizing Campaign.*

For election junkies, Cohn's analysis ignited quite a stir, especially since it set off a "Nate vs. Nate" Twitter skirmish between Cohn and Nate Silver, another brand-name data maven. (Yes, fate has made Nate a name of choice for people in this line of work.) Silver's main critique was fair enough: "There's just not that much we can say about the Electoral College right now beyond a couple of fairly loose priors (e.g. it's more likely

to help than hurt Trump)."

Still, Cohn's calculations were revelatory. He stressed, for example, that higher turnout in 2020, which is generally seen as helping Democrats,

could actually boost Trump in the key states of Michigan, Pennsylvania, and especially Wisconsin by bringing out more of the Trump base.

As Cohn wrote, "the major Democratic opportunity—to mobilize

nonwhite and young voters on the periphery of politics—would disproportionately help Democrats in diverse, often noncompetitive states." On the other hand, the GOP's opportunity is "to mobilize less educated white voters, particularly those who voted in 2016 but sat out 2018." This "would disproportionately help them in white, working-class areas over-represented in the Northern battleground states."

Think about it: The Democratic nominee against Trump could beat him by far more votes than Hillary Clinton did in 2016—and still lose. Clinton led Trump by 2.9 million popular votes, 2.1%. Cohn's conclusion: "It is even possible that Mr. Trump could win while losing the national vote by as much as five percentage points."

This means that the country could render a negative verdict on Trump's time in office by swinging away from him in a big way—and he would still be president for four more years.

Defenders of such a departure from one person-one vote say that if Democrats run up big leads in a few states and regions—especially California but also, say, New York, Illinois and New England—that shouldn't count.

other voices

gene h. mcintyre

## Is a recall of Brown necessary?

A democracy may not be the best possible form of government; yet, ponder on what typically takes its place when a population of people in a state or nation reject it. Meanwhile, not everyone gets personally served in the state of Oregon because our democracy is based on how the majority of voters cast their ballots. Nevertheless, elections are fairly frequent in Oregon while now provided conveniently by mail-in ballots no longer requiring a postage stamp.

We had an election last year to determine who would be governor of Oregon. There have been no claims of foul play in the election that chose Kate Brown while the two candidates campaigned for months. Thereby, the Republican candidate for governor had as many chances to sell himself to voters in Oregon as did Kate Brown. They both appeared on the same stage several times, providing voters who watched with direct comparisons.

Brown is well-known to be a progressive-minded politician who wants the people of Oregon, among her priorities, to address greenhouse gas emissions through a cap-and-trade program. She also supports more funding for public education and she wants to allow undocumented immigrants to get driver's licenses. These objectives by her would, by cap-and-trade, address a world crisis in climate change that, without action, is predicted to end life as we know it on earth, she recognizes public education as one of the only means the

non-wealthy have to secure a chance at success in America, and providing driver's licenses to the undocumented establishes state controls.

As a voter, this opinion writer was never clear on what the Republican candidate wanted. Between the lines, he seemed to suggest termination or drastic reductions of all social programs, from delivery of state-provided insurance-based medical services to cutbacks in public education funding, and the ouster of persons of color and immigrants. It sounded also like this Republican wanted wealthy Oregonians to be free of taxation. He lost the 2018 election by 130,000 votes.

Apparently, not disposed to support and honor our democratic government, the Republicans in Oregon want to recall Brown and thereby remove her from office. This move on their part is nothing less than partisan over-reach and the worst that any party can do unless its members want nothing but entrenched political divisiveness by hostile tribes per-

petually tossing threatening barbs at each other. Fueled by over-the-top emotions and mutual animosity, such a new order of politics here jeopardizes the state's future instead of finding common goals and shared solutions.

Further, Governor Brown has done nothing in her entire career that would warrant such an outcome. Other than holding opinions that differ from those of the GOP, she's been trustworthy, honest and hard-working as a legislator, secretary of state, and governor. If the Republicans in Oregon promised a better future for all of us instead of the one they seem to be advocating for Republicans only, that is, financial improvements of all kinds for their members while removal of benefits for everyone else, they'd more likely get elected. Instead of working to build a winning campaign platform that attracts more voters, they end up discouraging too many Oregonians.

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

At some point, the majority will rise up. If Cohn's worst-case-for-democracy scenario materializes, 2020 could be that year. Our founders admitted that the Electoral College system they created in the original Constitution was defective by altering it with the 12th Amendment in 1804. It's time we followed their lead in showing the same willingness to scrap a system that is sending us headlong into a national crisis.

(Washington Post Writers Group)

