

Opinion

Greg Frank, 1957-2019

There are two things one got right away when they met Charles "Greg" Frank: no one laughed louder or more heartily at his own jokes than Greg himself; and, his smile was as wide as an ocean and that smile put everyone at ease.

Frank, a former chief of the Keizer Fire District and a community leader, sadly passed away on Nov. 5 after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

He may have departed this mortal coil but his legacy will outlive him.

He emulated his father and started to volunteer for the Keizer Fire District in 1981. By 1990 he had been hired as the district's chief, a testament to his work ethic, his leadership skills and his management vision. Frank served as chief until his retirement in 2007.

The Keizer Fire District greatly changed under his leadership. He oversaw the construction of a new state-of-the-art fire hall that continues to be the pride of the district. The station's large meeting room has hosted a number of community events.

Ambulance service was established with the requisite paramedic staff. That service now accounts for more than 90 percent of all calls answered by the district.

Hundreds of Keizer's youth—male and female—got a taste of what a fire district does when they enrolled as an

Explorer Scout, another Frank legacy. The Scouts were established, in part, to have a pipeline of future firefighters and paramedics. That's vision. That's a legacy.

Not one to stand on his laurels, Greg went back to the fire district two years later as an elected member of the Keizer Fire District Board of Directors, serving one term. That's dedication.

Greg's passion for service was evident as a member of the Rotary Club of Keizer, of which he served

as president in 2010-11.

A man of faith, Greg and his wife, Jan, were dynamos with their church's children's ministries. It is easy to think that hundreds of kids have a firmer hold on their own faith because of Greg and his wife.

In his post-fire district years he ran the family's two hardware stores. But the store seemed to be a sideline to his real passion: travel. Personally, Greg never met a travel itinerary he didn't like. He, with family members, posted photo after photo of their global destinations. He might travel the world but he always came back home to Keizer.

The memory of his laugh, his ready smile and the legacy he leaves behind makes us thankful that Keizer had Greg Frank, even for a short time. —LAZ

our
opinion

Holiday shopping, meet small business

The day after Black Friday is Small Business Saturday. Some may consider it a frivolous event, but that is not true for the many small brick and mortar retailers, not just in Keizer but across the nation.

Small Business Saturday was established in 2010 as a counter to Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales, in a campaign to get the American consumer to consider options other than big box stores and online for their holiday shopping needs.

The face of retailing is evolving fast. Familiar names are gone or are on their last legs. The indoor mall, ubiquitous across America in cities big and small for decades, is facing tough times, some are even closing, sitting empty. Retailers of every size say that competition from discount stores and online shopping has made the future of their livelihood uncertain.

Big name stores and malls may be under threat, but small businesses are as vibrant as ever. Aside from owning one's own house, owning one's own business is a dream of many. Keizerites can find many owner-operated stores in the city.

Small businesses are the main driver of employment in the nation. Most

retail businesses have one or two, if not more employees besides the owner. Those employees rely on these jobs. Employees and owners pay the taxes that fuel the city's operations.

Frivolous or not, small businesses count on customers from their market area. A majority of retailers look to the holiday shopping season to turn their accounting books black.

In a world of discount stores and Amazon.com, why would a harried shopper visit store after store? Owners of small retail businesses and their staff are knowledgeable of their inventories. They provide quality, friendly and personal help. They are eager to please their customers—offering free advice and suggestions.

If retailers want you to come into their store to support them on Small Business Saturday, they must do their part. They must assure their store and their staff are clean and tidy. They must assure all customers receive a friendly greeting. Customers are not a guarantee or a right; it is a privilege, and we all must do the utmost to assure customers—old and new—have a great experience that propels them to return. —LAZ

Arboretum honors one man

One day in the future, visitors to Keizer Rapids Park will see a stand of trees in the southwest part of the park.

The visitors won't have to wonder why they are there; there is a sign to mark the Keizer Rotary Arboretum in honor of Wilbur Bluhm.

A long-time Rotarian, Bluhm is the city's unofficial tree expert and historian. Several years ago he personally trod the streets of Keizer doing an inventory of all the city's trees—all 241 species. Bluhm knows his stuff as he is a retired horticulturist.

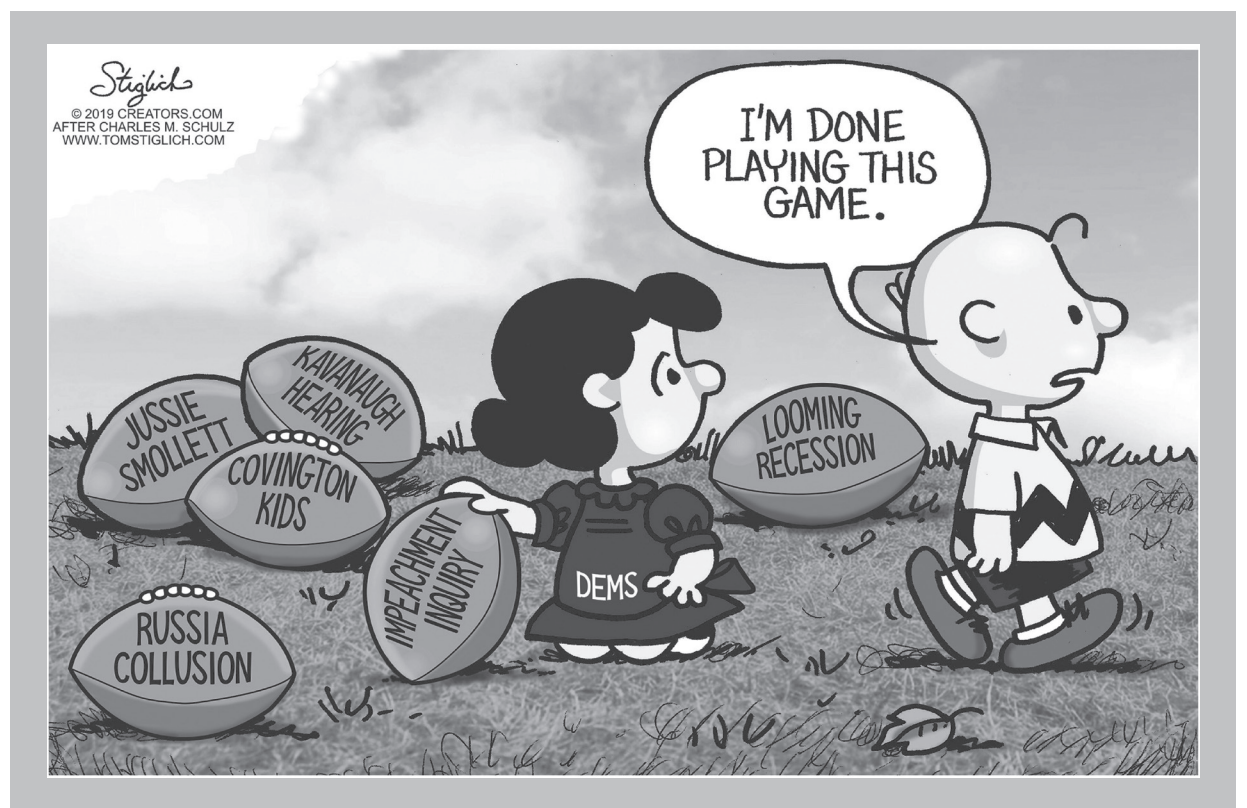
The arboretum was borne out of a suggestion from the president of Rotary International in 2018 for each of

the world's more than 33,000 clubs to plant a tree for each club member.

The Rotary Club of Keizer never sits still and went right to work, planting an initial 36 trees in 2018. There have been subsequent tree additions since then.

Bluhm was key in the decisions of what trees to plant. There was no second thought for the Rotary Club to honor him on the sign marking the grove.

The Rotary Club of Keizer doesn't sit still and that is certainly true of Wilbur Bluhm. —LAZ



Let the people decide Trump's fate

By PATRICK J. BUCHANAN

Was there linkage between the withholding of U.S. military aid and the U.S. demand for a Ukrainian state investigation of the Bidens?

"Was there a quid pro quo?"

This question has bedeviled Washington, D.C. for months now. "The answer is yes," said U.S. Ambassador to the EU Gordon Sondland in sworn testimony last week.

Sondland added that President Donald Trump, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney, national security adviser John Bolton and Vice President Mike Pence were all wired in to what was up:

"They knew what we were doing and why. ... Everyone was in the loop. It was no secret."

And so where are we headed now?

The House intel and judiciary committees will advance one or more articles of impeachment against Donald Trump to the House floor, where they will be agreed upon in party-line votes and sent to the Senate for trial.

Impeachment appears as inevitable as anything in politics today.

Some are pressing the House, after Sondland, to slow down, cast a wider net, and demand the sworn testimony of Pompeo, Mulvaney, Pence, Bolton and Giuliani. Others are urging the House to strike while the iron is hot, move impeachment swiftly, and get it all done before the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary.

As the goal of the more rabid anti-Trumpers is to impeach, convict and remove the president, and then proceed with civil and criminal charges, this looks to be a fight to the death.

Mulvaney may have shown the White House the way to fight a month ago. Asked whether the withholding of aid to Ukraine until an investigation of the Bidens had been announced was

not the definition of a "quid pro quo," Mulvaney blurted out:

"We do that all the time. ... No question about it. ... That's why we held up the money. I have news for everybody. Get over it. There's going to be political influence in foreign policy."

Welcome to the real world.

In return for meeting with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Trump had a right to demand that Ukraine initiate an investigation into its most corrupt company, Burisma. Especially since the ne'er-do-well son of Vice President Joe Biden had been given a \$50,000-a-month seat on Burisma's board just days after Joe demanded and got the resignation of the state prosecutor and signed off on a billion-dollar loan guarantee for this third-most corrupt regime on earth.

We read often that allegations of corruption in the smelly deal that put Hunter Biden on Burisma's board are "unfounded."

Who did the investigating?

And what are we to make of the crocodile tears of Democrats that Ukrainian soldiers battling secessionists and Russians in the Donbass have died for lack of U.S. weapons held up by Trump?

Is this not manifest hypocrisy?

Most Ukrainian government officials were not even aware that the military aid for which Congress voted was being held up. And from 2014, when Vladimir Putin's Russia seized Crimea and backed the secessionists in the Donbass, to 2017, President Barack Obama confined military aid to the Ukrainians to "sending blankets and meals," as said the late Sen. John McCain.

If Trump imperiled "national security" by withholding for two months this latest tranche of military aid, did not Obama more gravely imperil our

national security by denying Ukraine lethal aid for years?

Among the foreign service professionals who testified to Adam Schiff's intel committee this week, none chose to associate himself with charges of "crimes" or "bribery" having been committed during that controversial phone call of July 25.

Indeed, the weakness of the Democratic case may be found in the endless escalation of the charges. First, Trump was guilty of a quid pro quo, and then an abuse of power, and then throwing fighting Ukrainian allies to the wolves. Next, it was bribery.

But how is it bribery for a president, responsible for seeing that the laws are faithfully executed, to insist that a regime dependent on U.S. aid investigate a conflict of interest and potential corruption when the enriched beneficiary is the son of the vice president of the USA?

Even before his first day in office, President Trump was in the gun sights of the "deep state" and its media auxiliaries.

And the origins of that "Get Trump!" conspiracy inside the "deep state" are now under investigation by the Inspector General of the Justice Department and the U.S. Attorney for Connecticut John Durham.

The issue at hand: Criminal misconduct inside the U.S. government to determine the outcome of an election, and, failing that, to remove a president our government elite cannot abide.

Bottom line: If this country is not to be torn apart for a decade, the decision to retain or remove President Trump should be made by those who put him in the White House and not by rabid partisans like Adam Schiff.

Let the people decide the fate and future of the president of the United States. After all, they were the ones who hired him.

(Creators Syndicate)

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How crazy is Warren's health care plan?

By LARRY ELDER

Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., wants "Medicare for All," as does Sen. Bernie Sanders, D-Vt., her self-described "Democratic socialist" rival. Unlike Sanders, however, Warren claims she can finance her plan by raising taxes only on the super-rich. The middle class, Warren insists, will see their health care costs go down and their taxes will not go up.

Some of her nearly equally left-wing rivals demanded specifics. Who pays? And how much? After a Democratic debate, one rival, Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana, said Warren was "more specific and forthcoming about the number of selfies she's taken" than about her plan.

Buttigieg said: "Not only is it important to have 'yes-or-no' answers to 'yes-or-no' questions at a time when people are so frustrated with Washington-speak, but also there's still been no explanation for a multitrillion-dollar hole in this plan."

Not that Democrats and their media sympathizers truly care about costs or whether promises about costs are even kept. President Barack Obama made numerous unrealized promises about his health care plan. He insisted Obamacare would save the average family \$2,500 a year, that it would "bend the cost curve" downward and that people could keep their health care plan if they wanted to. Politifact pronounced Obama's "if you like your health care plan, you can keep it" promise 2013's "Lie of the Year."

Democrats, of course, quickly employed their fallback position on rising

costs: blame Republicans. Sally Pipes of the Pacific Research Institute, a conservative think tank, said last year: "Despite the fact that premiums rose throughout President Barack Obama's second term, Democrats claim that the most recent rate increases are President Donald Trump's fault. In August, four liberal cities—Baltimore, Chicago, Columbus and Cincinnati—filed a lawsuit alleging that Trump is 'waging a relentless campaign to sabotage and, ultimately, to nullify the law.' That's nonsense. Obamacare is imploding under the weight of its own regulations."

A month before Warren finally revealed the cost of her plan, the Urban Institute, a cen-

ter-left think tank, estimated the cost of a single-payer plan for everyone, including illegal aliens, at \$34 trillion "in additional federal spending" over 10 years. Other conservative groups, like the Heritage Foundation, put the price almost as high. Last year, Heritage estimated the cost at \$32.6 trillion. The American Enterprise Institute warns that these cost estimates don't consider the number of health care-related jobs that will be lost. According to a recent article in *The Washington Post*, some economists estimate the number of jobs lost at 2 million.

About Medicare for All's price tag, the center-left *The Atlantic* magazine said: "That's more than the federal government's total cost over the coming decade for Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid combined, according to the most recent Congressional Budget Office projections. ... Over the next decade, the plan on its own would rep-

resent a nearly 60 percent increase in total expected federal spending, from national defense to interest on the national debt."

Under pressure, Warren recently revealed the cost of her plan: \$52 trillion over 10 years, including \$20.5 trillion in new federal spending. About Warren's plan and her promise not to raise taxes on the middle class, the executive vice president of Third Way, a "centrist" Democratic organization, said: "The gap between what she says it will cost and what it will really cost is in the trillions of dollars, and the middle class will be on the hook to fill that gap. My guess is that with accurate numbers, she's somewhere between \$5 trillion and \$10 trillion short. (Her plan taps) the rich and corporations as much as possible. Who's left? The middle class."

The Kaiser Family Foundation executive vice president for health policy told *The Atlantic*: "The only way to make that math add up is to pay doctors and hospitals and drug companies a lot less, as Warren has proposed. The fundamental question here is: Can you lower health-care prices enough to offset the increased costs from universal coverage and very comprehensive benefits?"

The answer to that question is an unequivocal yes, provided one doesn't care who pays, how much or whether a Medicare for All plan can actually achieve its objectives of insuring everyone for less money while maintaining quality. To Democrats, this isn't even a heavy lift. They believe there is such thing as a free lunch and the Republicans are stopping them from eating it.

(Creators Syndicate)

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
Lauren Murphy
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
Brooklyn Flint



EDITOR & PUBLISHER
Lyndon Zaitz
publisher@keizertimes.com
2019-2020 President
Oregon Newspaper
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