

Opinion

The future is not so rosy

At a work session this week, the Keizer city councilors received grim news from City Manager Chris Epley and Tim Wood, the city's finance director: there is no money now or in the foreseeable future to add desired positions.

Revenues from taxes and franchise fees are estimated to be more than \$100,000 less than forecast. The city is also had to absorb \$130,000 in accrued time off payments for retiring city employees.

Add that bad news with the city's ongoing Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) and health insurance obligations and the city will have to live with a status quo budget for years to come unless some major decisions are made. Unfortunately, the decisions needed are not up to Keizer.

Due to the voter approved Measure 50 in 1997, the city is locked into a tax rate of \$2.08 per \$1,000 valuation, the lowest of any city of similar size in Oregon. Keizer cannot change its tax rate unless state voters amend the state constitution. Voters show little appetite to see their property tax rate increase, regardless of where in Oregon they reside.

Keizer's recently instituted parks fee and police fee were the city's

solution to a general budget that couldn't keep up with expenditures. Those fees were established without the benefit of a public vote, though there were public hearings and town hall meetings explaining the need.

The city's PERS obligation will continue to take a hefty percentage of Keizer's general fund budget for decades to come. Oregon's public employee retirement system is more than \$20 billion in debt. Governmental agencies across the state won't see relief until at least 2041; that's more than 20 years more of PERS payments.

This all means that any new staff positions the city hopes to add will not be developed or filled.

At the work session this week city department heads presented the need to add six additional employees throughout the city, including a police officer. Finance director Tim Wood reported that adding those six positions would add \$800,000 to the budget; that is money the city just doesn't have now and doesn't expect to have for years.

Some may say that the city must live within its means. That is impossible to do when expenditures continue to rise while revenues stay

stagnant. Borrowing money is not an attractive option for the city. Establishing a third fee to pay for administrative costs would be a non-starter. There are few options and all would need to be sold to the public as a necessity to have the kind of town people want.

One option is to make cuts in city operations (which means layoffs) at a time when department heads say they need more personnel. How loud would the outcry be from Keizer citizens if they were informed that fewer police patrols or decreased street maintenance would be the new normal?

Another option would be to follow the example of other Oregon cities that augment their general funds with a five-year levy. A local option levy would require voter approval. This option for require an all-hands-on deck campaign to educate the electorate on the need.

We all want to maintain this city we call home. Though our budgetary hands are tied due to decisions made over the last decades, Keizer can continue to be a wonderful place if we agree we are all in this together. Tough times call for tough decisions and, sometimes, a little sacrifice.

— LAZ

editorial

MLK's passion for justice was not synonymous with defeating an enemy

By MICHAEL GERSON

Usually our civic holidays inspire us. But sometimes—as in the case of Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2020—the spirit of a holiday is so at odds with our current practice that it judges and indicts us.

That spirit is impossible to summarize in one King quote from a lifetime of quotable eloquence. But if I were forced to try, it would be this: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

Is it possible to find a more routinely violated principle in our public life? We have a president who boasts of avenging slights and criticism with multiplied viciousness. Donald Trump has political opponents (including, on occasion, myself) who feel obliged to attack his breaches of decorum, morality and ethics with an intensity that continues the country's rhetorical escalation. Partisan media and talk radio make their money through incitement and answering fire with fire.

And much of this conflict is based on a trend that threatens to become a tragedy. Political divisions in America are becoming less ideological than sociological. Americans are increasingly taking opposition to their views as an assault on their way of life. So issues such as gun control or climate disruption—instead of being matters requiring debate and offering the possibility of compromise—

become signifiers of cultural identity. Among those who hold this mindset, losing an election raises the fear of cultural extinction. The strongest and loudest political advocates tend to think their loss might end America as they know it.

If there is any common ground left in our political life, it is the general belief that hatred is the only thing that can drive out hatred.

The depth of our divisions would not, of course, surprise King, who lived in a time when social

divisions were far deeper, and the level of political violence far higher. King was not optimistic about human nature. He strongly rejected the false idealism of white liberals who thought that education and economic development could overcome racial divisions under the guidance of benevolent experts. "This particular sort of optimism," King said, "has been discredited by the brutal logic of events. Instead of assured progress in wisdom and decency man faces the ever present possibility of swift relapse not merely to animalism but to such calculated cruelty as no other animal can practice."

For King, the passion for justice was not synonymous with defeating an enemy. Influenced by thinkers such as Jesus, Henry David Thoreau and Gandhi, King believed that moral goals must be pursued by moral methods—by means that bring credit

to the principle itself. In this way, suffering for a cause can be more powerful than killing for a cause. Violence leads to escalation and makes future reconciliation very difficult. Unmerited suffering, in King's view, can reveal the moral bankruptcy of racists while maintaining the possibility of future reconciliation.

"Nonviolence, according to King, was based on the belief," said historian Albert J. Raboteau, "that acceptance of suffering was redemptive, because suffering could transform both the sufferer and the oppressor ... and it was grounded in the confidence that justice would, in the end, triumph over injustice ... By accepting the violence of the oppressor, without retaliation and even without hatred, the demonstrators, he insisted, could transform the oppressor's heart."

"I think I have discovered the highest good," said King. "It is love. This principle stands at the center of the cosmos." And he found this true for a specific reason. "Agape [meaning God-like love] means a recognition of the fact that all life is interrelated," King wrote. "All humanity is involved in a single process, and all men are brothers. To the degree that I harm my brother, no matter what he is doing to me, to that extent I am harming myself."

Many will find this impractical. But in the midst of our zero-sum politics, it is worth asking: How practical and successful is the theory that hate can drive out hate?

(Washington Post Writers Group)

other opinions

The danger in fewer regulations

The understanding part eludes me; I simply do not get it. We, the American people, have now experienced three years of consequential efforts to rollback environmental oversight in all construction projects that will now, directly, and into the immediate future impact our health, safety and survival.

The new year is merely a few days old and already President Donald Trump has taken action to clear the way and speed up development of more commercial projects by significantly cutting back on federal review of their effects on the environment. Trump says "our nation cannot compete and prosper if a bureaucratic system holds us back from building what we need." However, the projects he references are simply big money-makers for businesses and corporations whose profits remain at-

tractively good-enough, even if there's as much attention to regulations by controls as to making-money.

What Trump calls for greatly narrows the scope and effects of a half-century-old National Environmental Policy Act, signed into law by former President Richard Nixon exactly 50 years ago. That law, now targeted for elimination, has required federal agencies to consider whether a project would harm the air, land, water and wild-

life. It also has demanded that the public be afforded the right of input, review and opportunity to object where high risk is anticipated.

The bottom line in this matter is that the proposed rollback will gut environmental protections and take

away the public's right to know about and comment on potential project harm. The affected projects would include those out-of-pocket taxpayer-funded public and private projects; yet, American citizens negatively impacted by them will have no recourse.

It has been said and repeated often of late that there's a new order of doing things in the U.S. What this means in practice is an end to regulations and protections by taking a virtual sledgehammer to decades of progress during which time the imposition of environmental controls has become the way we do things here. Meanwhile, it's not bad enough that our planet is warming-up considerably, resulting in climate changes that bring more and more of the worst wind storms, flooding, higher tides and massive destruction of property and loss of life, but that we deliberately add to the problem by a federal administration that views matters through a prism of dollar signs.

The very viability for human life on Earth is in the balance when environmental regulations are thrown out and profit becomes the only recognized American value worthy of consideration. Apparently, we shall face imminent failure of the planet to support human life before any hue and cry effort is made loud enough to force changes that will save humankind. And then, what's direly needed, may come too late.

(Gene H. McIntyre lives in Keizer and shares his opinion frequently in the *Keizertimes*.)

gene h. mcintyre

Keizer author at community library

Keizerite Christel Jonge Vos was born and raised in Berlin, Germany, where she experienced the effects of World War II, the Berlin Air Lift and the Berlin Wall first-hand.

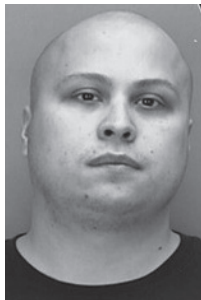
On Friday, Jan. 17, Jonge Vos will share her experiences while reading from her poems and book, *Scenes from a Life*, at the Keizer Community Library.

The library is located in the Keizer Cultural Center, 980 Chemawa Road N.E.

The event runs from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Jonge Vos holds a master's degree in music, earned from Lewis & Clark College, in Portland, Ore., she has played in numerous concerts in the Portland area and has authored four books with a fifth one on the way.

In 1981, she founded The German Language Center, offering individually designed German language instruction and translation to companies conducting business in Germany.

cuffed
in Keizer



Jose Luis Brown-Ceballos

Arrested Jan. 9 for:
Restraining order violation

Previous convictions:
Assault, menacing, burglary



Sundharia Hummingbird Lifesong

Arrested Jan. 8 for:
Harrasment

Previous convictions:
Drug possession (meth), criminal mischief



Zackery Robert Francisco

Arrested Jan. 9 for:
Drug possession (meth)

Pending charges:
Rape

Previous convictions:
Drug delivery, burglary, failure to register as a sex offender



Anthony Wesley Good

Arrested Jan. 12 for:
Parole violation

Previous convictions:
Failure to report as a sex offender, drug possession, fleeing a police officer

police scanner

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1

2:19 a.m. - Driving under the influence of intoxicants in the 1000 block of Clearview Avenue NE.

3:25 p.m. - Failure to perform duties of driver when property was damaged at the intersection of River Road N. and Chemawa Road N.

5:02 p.m. - Arrested for vandalism, unlawful possession of methamphetamine and unlawful entry to vehicle in the 5000 block of Verda Lane NE.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 2

12 a.m. - Theft from motor vehicle in the 700 block of Maine Avenue NE.

3:14 a.m. - Delivery of heroin, unlawful possession of methamphetamine, arrest for arraignment warrant and identity theft in the 4000 block of River Road N.

11:47 a.m. - Shoplifting in the 5000 block Inland Shores Way N.

4 p.m. - Motor vehicle theft in the 2000 block of Kennedy Circle NE.

6:56 p.m. - Motor vehicle theft in the 700 block of Bever Drive NE.

7 p.m. - Motor vehicle theft in the 800 block of Plymouth Drive NE.

7:51 p.m. - Theft from motor vehicle in the 5000 block of McLeod Lane NE.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 3

12:30 p.m. - Bicycle theft in the 4000 block of River Road N.

12:34 p.m. - Menacing display of weapons and unlawful use of weapon at the intersection of Cherry Avenue NE. and Bever Drive NE.

3:49 p.m. - Violation of release agreement in the 5000 block of River Road N.

4:09 p.m. - Traffic accident at the intersection of River Road N. and Dietz Avenue NE.

10:16 p.m. - Arrested for driving under the influence and traffic accident in the 5000 block of River Road N.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4

2:51 a.m. - Criminal trespassing in the 4000 block of River Road N.

8:35 a.m. - Criminal trespassing in the 4000 block of River Road N.

12:02 p.m. - Theft in the 5000 block of River Road N.

5:50 p.m. - Traffic accident at the intersection of McLeod Lane NE. and Chemawa Road NE.

11:19 p.m. - Driving under the influence and traffic accident in the 5000 block of River Road N.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5

12:33 p.m. - Theft of services in the 300 block of Hazelbrook Drive NE.

7:10 p.m. - Unlawful possession methamphetamine, bench warrant and parole violation in the 3000 block of River Road N.

7:27 p.m. - Criminal trespassing in the 5000 block of River Road N.

MONDAY, JANUARY 6

2:04 p.m. - Theft in the 3000 block of River Road N.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7

7:58 p.m. - Traffic accident in the 1000 block of Trent Avenue N.

9:19 p.m. - Traffic accident at the intersection of Ulali Drive NE. and Stadium Drive NE.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8

9:46 a.m. - Criminal mischief in the 4000 block of River Road N.

6:35 p.m. - Criminal trespassing in the 5000 block of River Road N.

8 p.m. - Failure to perform duties of driver when property was damaged in the 6000 block of Keizer Station Boulevard.

8:38 p.m. - Arrested for criminal mischief, probation violation and resisting arrest in the 6000 block of Veranda Court N

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