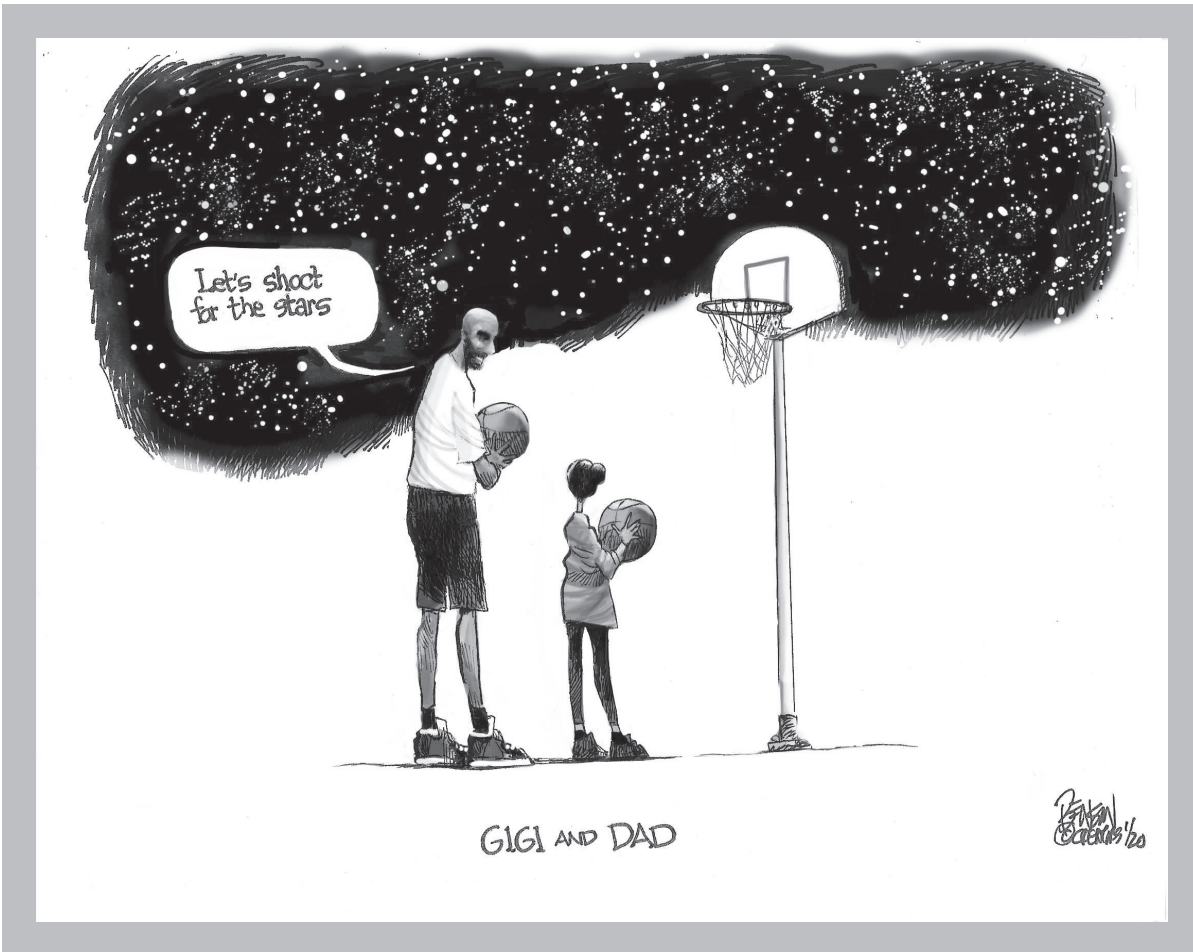


Opinion



Thoughts on the short session

In 2010, Oregon voters approved a Constitutional amendment allowing annual legislative sessions. Until 2012 the state legislature met in odd-numbered years. The 2010 measure was touted as tool for the legislature to address budget issues (this was during the height of the Great Recession) and address any legislative 'emergencies.'

Since the legislature started meeting in even-numbered years, the sessions have morphed into a free-for-all. Republican lawmakers complain that the even-year sessions have become unruly with consequential new laws pushed through without adequate time for the public to have its say.

The short session beginning next week is shaping up to be more of the same. The state's biennial budget is nary mentioned. The main action will center on another attempt at climate change legislation, primarily as a so-called cap and trade program.

Under a cap-and-trade system, carbon emissions are capped at a certain level and companies can earn credits for reducing their output below that threshold. The credits can then be sold to other firms that exceed it.

A similar House bill passed in 2018. Once it arrived in the other chamber, 11 Senate Republicans walked out, denying a quorum. The tactic worked and the bill died. The

2020 version of the climate change legislation is expected to be just as contentious.

zaitz writes

Though the short session was designed to address budget issues and emergencies, there are a number of bills waiting to be introduced that are neither. Sen. Kim Thatcher of Keizer wants to introduce a bill to send to voters a measure to undo the Constitutional amendment that allowed even-numbered year legislative sessions. She is right, especially if any bill on any subject can be introduced in the short session.

There are plenty of proposed bills to raise one's blood pressure. One of the problems with a short session is that often there is a very short window for the public to be engaged, especially if they live hours from the Capitol and can't get to Salem in time to testify for or against a bill. Of course, that is by design. If nobody speaks against a bill, it can pass, especially with a supermajority, with hardly a word heard from the public.

State representatives and senators are doing the people's business, but not when they give the people scant chance to respond and testify. Too often legislation is something done to the people rather than for the people.

The corridors of the capitol are

filled with lobbyists; they are paid by their clients to be there, speak to lawmakers and persuade them to support their point of view. It is difficult for the average citizen to do the same. Where do they start? How do they do it?

We think organizations, such as Chambers of Commerce, service clubs houses of worship and other groups, should establish tutorials or classes that would teach how to get involved with the legislative process. Tutorials can teach how to write effective letters to lawmakers. Not just to own representative or senator but also those who chair committees that hold hearings.

Organizations should also have classes on how to testify before a committee. That is a scary prospect for most people, speaking in public before powerful politicians. Lesson number one: politicians are just people. All a citizen needs is the interest time and desire.

Barring a personal trip to the capitol, people have three powerful tools at their disposal: phone calls to legislators, letters or emails. A lawmaker's attention will be grabbed if their office is inundated with messages. Calls, letters and emails will have more impact if they are polite and rational. Everyone responds better to courtesy than rants and anger.

The people's business is too important to be conducted without input from the people themselves.

— LAZ

What Canada can teach us about health care

Polls have determined that Medicare For All is newly-popular among Americans in the 18 to 36 age range. Those of more youthful years may want to find out that what they wish for in deliverance is what they get.

What's interesting about that age range is that those years of life are usually the most healthy. In other words, Americans, typically, do not need the kind of coverage Medicare typically assists to provide to those 65 and older. Nevertheless, younger ages under Medicare For All would likely pay for coverage like anyone now who's 65 or older.

Facts report that the average monthly premium currently paid by Medicare recipients is \$144.60 effective January 1, 2020. However, coverage annually does not kick in until the recipient has generally incurred \$198, again, effective January 1, 2020.

It works like this: recipients pay the federal government an average of \$144.60 on January 1 but then must pay-out-of-pocket of about \$198 before the Medicare benefit kicks in. Further, federal bureaucrats in D.C. decide what Medicare cov-

ers. It's not uncommon for a beneficiary to be denied coverage.

Also, comprehensive coverage, coverage to address the cost of medical visits, exams and tests, and medical procedures means additional supplementary medical insurance at eye-popping, budget-breaking expense. Also, the typical co-payment at service is an additional cost, not anywhere close to a nickel-dime exchange. All together, the Medicare premium, supplementary medical insurance along with co-payments can lighten one's wallet by hundreds of dollars every doctor visit.

Medicare is directly taken out of Social Security before one receives his check and, if there's a tiny raise or no raise at all, which happens with exasperating regularity, then the amount of the "raise" gets zeroed out. For 2020, the increase in Social Security and simultaneous increase in Medicare premiums will be close to a wash. Meanwhile, the cost of living index proves that everything we need, young to old, just to survive, goes up every year, some

items exponentially.

As an American citizen, I worked for three years as a program administrator at a public community college in British Columbia. Free medical insurance was provided me and my family from day one. A child of ours got so sick we took that child to a Canadian physician. It was determined that a surgical procedure was required to correct the problem. End of that story: All related costs, doctor visits, tests, and a Canadian hospital stay of three days, were paid in full by the government plan. Our out-of-pocket cost literally amounted to one Canadian dollar.

After working for awhile in Canada, all my withholdings were refunded. Canadian medical services for every citizen are mostly government managed while we have government only for Medicare after 65, Medicaid in places and the Affordable Care Act. Canadians pay a higher practical tax rate of 28 percent compared to 18 percent in the U.S. but cost of living in Canada is lower.

Canada does not tax their middle class so their wealthiest citizens can receive big tax reductions. Medicare For All will not serve as a panacea for those aged 18 to 36 or any other age group. Americans want reforms that other so-called post-industrial nations appreciate: Most of us want medical service availability where profit is not the only determiner and affordability occurs through laws that provide livability through dignity and health for all citizens. Meanwhile, we could do so much better. The U.S. could do so much better at providing medical services to our citizens while Canada serves as a model for what could be here.

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

cuffed in Keizer



Rudy Contreras
Arrested Jan. 20 for: Unlawful possession of a firearm
Previous convictions: Assault, unlawful use of a vehicle



Acea Lee Clark Anderson
Arrested Jan. 25 for: Drug possession
Previous convictions: Drug possession, coercion, strangulation



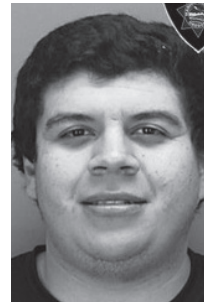
Eduardo Ray Munoz
Arrested Jan. 22 for: Fugitive from justice
Pending charges: Charged with obscene communication in Virginia



Joshua Jabryce Thompson
Arrested Jan. 22 for: Aggravated harrasment
Previous convictions: Theft, menacing



Effrem Demonds Davis
Arrested Jan. 25 for: Parole violation
Previous convictions: Assault, DUII, theft



Abraham Romero-Angeles
Arrested Jan. 23 for: Theft
Previous convictions: Strangulation, theft



Pauline Elizabeth Hanson
Arrested Jan. 25 for: Drug possession
Previous convictions: Theft, identity theft



Rody Langimeo
Arrested Jan. 24 for: Major traffic violation
Previous convictions: Trespass, giving false info to a police officer

Celebrate heart health throughout February

Wear Red Day, is on Friday, Feb. 7. Salem Health is encouraging the hospital and the community to wear red to kick off American Heart Month and promote heart health. Salem Health is celebrating American Heart Month this February by offering community activities and other heart-health related events.

On Tuesday, Feb. 11, and Thursday, Feb. 13, Salem Health is offering free health screenings from 6:30 to 10 a.m. in the Salem Health Community Health Education Center at the Salem Hospital, 939 Oak St. S.E., Building D.

The screenings will measure cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure, height and weight. In addition to the screening, hospital staff will help patients understand their results. Members of Mended Hearts, a non-profit support group for patients and families affected by heart disease, will be there from 8 to 10 a.m. as well.

Call 503-814-2432 to reserve a 15-minute appointment. Remember to fast for 12 hours before the cholesterol test.

Kaiser Permanente cardiologist Priya Kansal, MD, will be speaking at Talk with a Doc: Living healthy with gadgets, on Thursday, Feb. 13 from noon to 1 p.m. at the Salem Hospital, 939 Oak St. S.E. Building D. She will share the latest advancements on leading a heart-healthy lifestyle and how fitness gadgets help.

Three times this month KYKN will have radio tips featuring hearth health at 12:45 p.m. Gabe Gaetner will be on the air on Monday, Feb. 3 to share how some patients are able to stop taking blood thinners with the WATCHMAN device.

The following Thursday, Feb. 6, Andy Walker, a cardiac nurse navigator, will explain heart medications.

The final radio tip will be on Friday, Feb. 21, and will feature Dan Voy as he sares his journey after a quintuple bypass and how the Mended Hearts support group made a difference.

On the last two Wednesdays of the month, Feb. 19 and Feb. 26 from 6 to 8 p.m. Chef Andre Uribe will teach several hearth healthy recipes.

capitol auto group

FEEL GOOD STORY

Saluting the people that make us proud of our community

capitolauto.com

Come hungry and ready to learn. There is a \$15 fee. Register online at www.salemhealth.org/checc or call 503-814-2432.

Because many open-heart surgeries depend on donated blood, Salem Health is encouraging community members to donate blood in honor of American Heart Month. Schedule to donate at www.redcrossbloo.org or call 1-800-RED-CROSS.

This could save your life.

diabetes.org/FindOut

Type 2 diabetes can be deadly. But it can be prevented.

If you're overweight or over 45, take the free diabetes risk test, and Stop Diabetes®... before it stops you.

American Diabetes Association.

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