

# Opinion

## We're all in this together

The *Keizertimes*, along with every other media outlet, is working overtime to keep the public informed on the constantly changing information about the coronavirus (COVID19) pandemic. Information and news is updating on an hourly basis.

Though this expanded issue of the *Keizertimes* went to press on Wednesday, Keizer can keep up on the latest at keizertimes.com and our Facebook page.

The owners and the staff of the *Keizertimes* is as worried as everyone else. These are truly times that try men's souls. Gov. Kate Brown's order for restaurants and bars to close their dining rooms as well as the order for gatherings of no more than 10 or 25 people (that number is in constant flux), will undoubtedly cause economic pain across the board.

Why can the public do? The most important thing is to follow the directives of the experts. That includes staying home. If that is not an option, then keeping distance from others is key. For those not exhibiting any symptoms, it is important to wash one's hands, and not just a cursory once-over. Medical experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say that vigorously washing hands for at least 20 seconds is the new normal. And that is for every man, woman and child.

Hopefully everyone now knows of this pandemic. Cases of COVID19 have now been identified in all 50 states, and not just in big cities. The virus is even appearing in small towns, miles from population centers.

Events are being canceled—concerts, festivals—any place where large numbers of people gather. Life as we know it is changed and we all need to do our part for ourselves and our families, and for each other. More people are staying home

and sheltering in place, along with all school-age children, since schools are closed until at least the end of April. That is not an option for everyone, especially those who own small businesses. Restaurants must rely on take out orders to survive these uncertain times.

Unfortunately, there will be some small businesses that will not be able to remain in operation for long. Everyone's first priority is the safety of their family and their households. When possible, to help others, ordering take-out meals from area restaurants several times a week during this crisis will help our fellow citizens.

The public's thirst for updated and correct information is palpable. This is not a time for opinion, it is the time for news that is trustworthy. Oregon media is working in collaboration, sharing news across many platforms to keep the public informed.

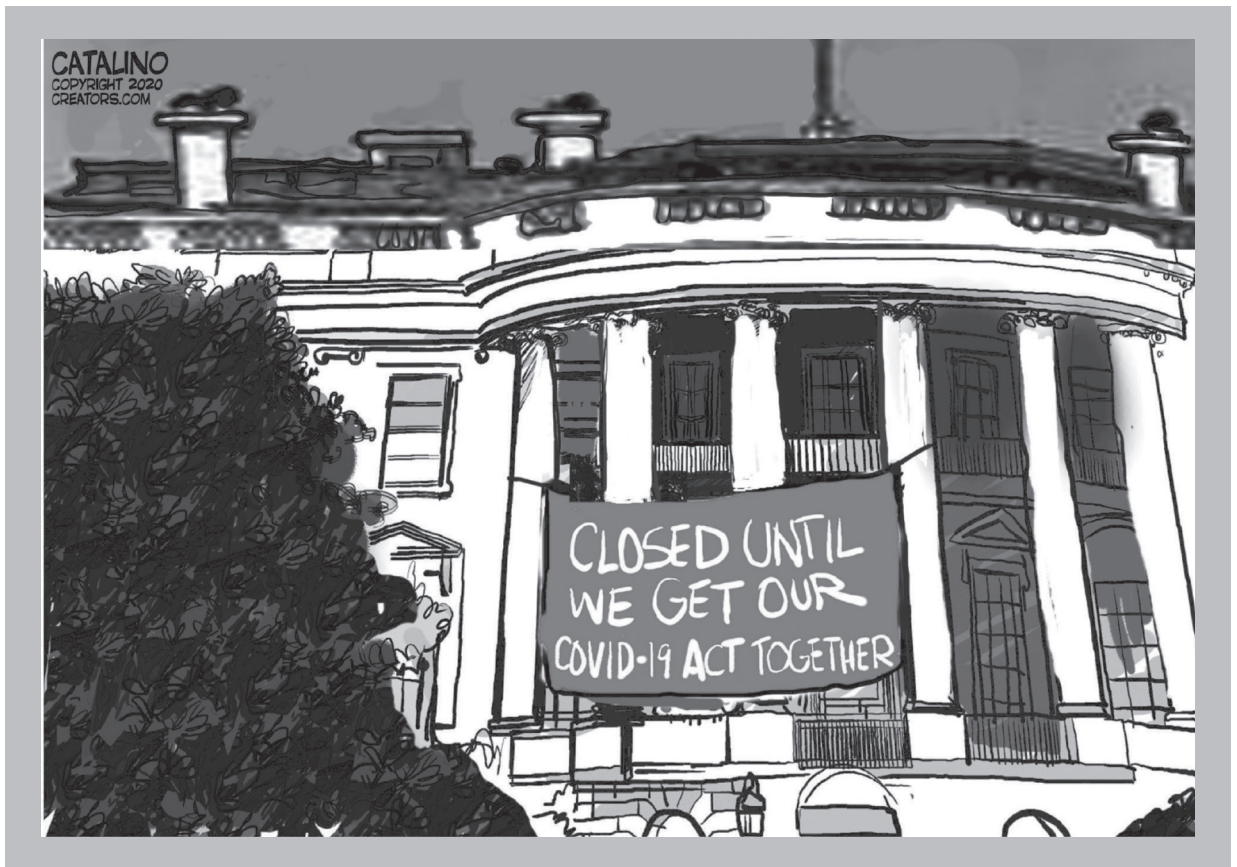
Our website is sharing up to the minute news from sources such as *The Oregonian* and Oregon Public Broadcasting. This week's issue of the *Keizertimes* has been planned for months—we are mailing it to almost 14,000 Keizer homes. The fact that it comes in the middle of a pandemic allows us to get local information out to as many households as we can. This twice-a-year expanded issue of your local newspaper allows us to report what is happening in your community. We take our mission of covering the seven square miles of Keizer to heart. It is never so important as during a time of communal distress.

As long as the coronavirus is affecting life in Keizer, the *Keizertimes* will do its best to provide readers the information they need to stay safe. Any story about the virus on keizertimes.com is available free to anyone at any time.

We are all in this together.

—LAZ

our opinion



## Fighting a virus with truth and transparency

By KEN PAULSON

As the scope and threat of the coronavirus pandemic becomes clear, people all over the world hunger for two things: an effective vaccine and truthful information about the disease.

The former may be more than a year away, but the latter is critical to stemming the pandemic in the meantime.

This is Sunshine Week, a time each year when people like me write columns about some legislature's wrong-headed move to limit access to public records, and then try to make the case for greater access to public information and transparency in government.

But we're facing something far more dangerous than any state legislature could conjure up. It's a worldwide crisis worsened by governments whose impulse is to hide, control and censor news and information.

When a Chinese doctor shared with his colleagues his concerns that a mysterious new virus might be emerging, he was reprimanded and silenced. The doctor, Li Wenliang, died last month of coronavirus. After China mishandled and hid the virus from the public, the epidemic dramatically worsened. The Chinese government "is now leading a sweeping campaign to purge the public sphere of dissent, censoring news reports, harassing citizen journalists and shutting down news sites," according to the *New York Times*.

Similar suppression has appeared in

other nations, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists. In Thailand, the prime minister has threatened to arrest journalists who publish "fake news" about the virus and Iran detained a journalist for posts critical of the government's response, according to the CPJ.

But even a democracy is going to be tempted to manage the messaging, as the U.S. did by initially channeling the government's comments through a single spokesman—Vice President Mike Pence.

That has improved significantly over the past week.

When the public is desperate for information, government needs to maximize authoritative information from scientists and experts on the public payroll. That appropriately gives Americans what they need to know, and counters irresponsible pundits who have sought to minimize the threat to score political or ratings points.

Most encouraging, though, has been the response of state and local governments, schools and the private sector. Governments at every level resist disclosure and scrutiny, but this has been a refreshing change, with leaders saying: "Here's what we need to do, here's why we're doing it and here's how you can find out more."

Sports leagues and private businesses, not known for transparency, have been refreshingly transparent. How many emails have you received this week that began "Out of an abun-

sunshine week

## Rules for COVID19 actions

In case you missed it, Governor Kate Brown has enacted new rules in regards to the coronavirus. All that is posted below is effective from Tuesday, March 17, for four weeks:

1.) The practice of social distancing is now 25 persons (most stores including grocers and pharmacies will be exempt).

2.) Restaurants must do carry out or delivery only with no dine in or on-site consumption (non-compliance will lead to a Class C Misdemeanor).

3.) All businesses should evaluate social distancing practices.

4.) A committee/group will be formed for mitigation of economic impact of these decisions. Gov. Brown says she's convening a council on economic relief for those affected by COVID19: "We want to make sure Oregon families have the resources they need to pay rent/mortgage, and purchase essentials."

5.) Metro area hospitals will act as a unified health system to increase bed capacity and private entities will be opened for bed capacity.

As for schools: Gov. Brown previously ordered schools closed through March 31. She now says she's "reevaluating" the length of that, considering her cancellation of gatherings of 25 people for four weeks. Also, Gov. Brown says she'll likely call a special

session in the next few weeks to address economic impacts already hitting Oregonians. As a legislator that concerns me with "social distancing" measures in effect so if we do meet, I would hope it's by teleconference or otherwise remotely.

I absolutely realize the impact this will have on all Oregonians but especially those in the food services industry. For quick updates regarding COVID-19, follow my Facebook page. I will continue to do my best to keep you up to date as I learn more.

President Trump this week said 10 was the social distancing that the CDC recommends and that he believes this will not be over until July

or August. So my friends, get used to spending time with your immediate family, stay home, when out stay six feet away from everyone, wash your hands, sterilize everything.

These are scary times. It helps my anxieties when I remember to place my trust in the Lord. Philippians 4:6-7.

Be safe out there and remember to be a good neighbor.

(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  
By BILL POST

## Finding ways to adjust life during crisis

The idea that *every cloud has a silver lining* can be traced back to the writings of John Milton in 1634. It was adopted later by many writers including Noel Coward in the 1930s where he inserted in his plays "There's a silver lining through the dark clouds shining" and "Every silver lining has its cloud."

Meanwhile, the phrase may fit well into the pandemic that has virtually swallowed the entire world in 2020. Americans by the millions do not have current sports events to attend or view on TV. That means there are a whole lot of us not doing the usual at this time of year: sitting on a sofa, eating snacks and cursing at or cheering on our favorite basketball team.

Instead, the very next clear day we might want to get out and take a hike, western Oregon provides thousands of public-access hiking choices. We can play basketball with family members, one on one, two on two, etcetera. Who knows but that we can put our cell phones down and get to know each other better. Thereby, we can use some muscles that have been idle and maybe even reduce that mid-body bulge that's been growing for some time. All are "silver lining" stuff.

Then there are the many brain-enhancing games a family of all ages can bring out to play together. There's Monopoly for learning to count money and buy property, Scrabble for the spelling of common words, and checkers for kids and chess for those ready for a greater challenge. Time on hand could be put to building a model ship, learning to knit, remodeling a bathroom, planting a garden, and reupholstering a chair. What better way to discover "silver linings" than finding ways in which persons can learn a new skill, master the use of tools or broaden their knowledge?

Cruise ships are docked. What was at one time, four to five decades ago, a real opportunity to experience a week

or two of life at sea have now become behemoth monsters of extraordinary size that offer enough rooms aboard to house literally thousands of people. They are floating cities of near mountainous size that any more, and too regularly, provide outbreaks of life-threatening disease. Nowadays, they sail our planet's oceans, dumping unprocessed tons of garbage in the form of plastics, paper, spoiled food and human waste. They serve to kill species of fish and mammals and pollute at horrific scale. A "silver lining" would be a return by them to the smaller vessels of yesteryear that include the means of taking disposables back to shore.

Besides, at present, the shutting down of the annual NCAA March Madness basketball tournament, Disneyland, Broadway shows, Coachella's fabled music festival, Austin's SouthXSouthwest culture conference, and an alphabet soup of sports leagues, the NBA, NHL, MLB and Major League Soccer we are encouraged to avoid large gatherings, handshakes and close encounters with fellow members of the human race. SARS, Ebola and influenza are now

generally controlled by immunizations and a dedicated, when realized, national effort will also bring a "silver lining" to COVID-19.

A precursor of the coronavirus was the 1918 Spanish Flu. It killed 50 million globally and close to 700,000 in the US when our population was less than one-third of today's 330 million. Research shows that responses to that pandemic varied from state to state and city to city. Philadelphia officials, for just one example of poor timing, demanded that a popular Liberty Parade be held in the face of warnings about large gatherings. Three days after the parade, all 31 hospitals in that city were filled with the sick. At least 2,600 died in them.

We're not doomed by any stretch as the human race will see the end to this pandemic and build a means through inoculation in future to control it. Meanwhile, it's a threat to each of us, our family members, friends, neighbors and fellow workers.

The "silver lining" factor is recognition that this pandemic knows no partisan politics and will be defeated through our humanity by caring for each other and all Americans.

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

gene h. mcintyre

# 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**  
Stephanie Wittman  
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  
Publishers Association

facebook.com/keizertimes

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

One year:  
\$35 in Marion County,  
\$43 outside Marion County,  
\$55 outside Oregon

**PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY**  
Publication No: USPS 679-430

**POSTMASTER**  
Send address changes to:

Keizertimes Circulation  
142 Chemawa Road N.  
Keizer, OR 97303

Periodical postage paid at  
Salem, Oregon

twitter

twitter.com/keizertimes

