

# Public Square

Public Square welcomes all points of view. Published submissions do not necessarily reflect the views of the Keizertimes. Submit a guest opinion, column or letter to the editor to [publisher@keizertimes.com](mailto:publisher@keizertimes.com).

## Treatment of Explorers posting flags was disgraceful

Keizerites are generous and they are patriotic. That's why it is so unsettling to hear of how members of Keizer Fire District Explorer Post 350 were treated when posting flags.

The Explorers, comprised of young men and women, aged 14 to 20, post flags in Keizer to mark holidays, Labor Day was no exception. The group of Explorers were met with derisive comments and gestures as they posted flags along River Road on Wednesday, Sept. 2.

These young people—residents of Keizer—were treated in the most ugly manner, according to the volunteer firefighter accompanying the flag posters.

It is unbelievable that our young people, conducting a task that should fill our hearts with pride and respect, were victims of behavior that most people decry and find offensive. The American flag is the most respected symbol of our nation. The Explorers take on the responsibility of posting flags as part of their duties, and they all do it, not because they have to, but because they want to.

We all have enough to be concerned with here in September 2020: COVID-19, nearby rampaging wildfires and the resulting evacuations, people in need of jobs and food. The unruly and disgusting behavior of fellow citizens aimed at our teens doing a patriotic duty is something we should not have to confront.

One can only image what went

through the minds of the Explorers after being verbally accosted. Were they scared? Were they questioning the worth of their task? In our current political climate of polarization in which we see people being injured or killed due to their beliefs, it is understandable for anyone to be fearful for their safety.

Were the Explorers to think that the disgusting behavior was aimed at them personally, or at what they were doing? Either way, it is frightful. Regardless of one's beliefs, there is a time and a place to wage a protest and express one's opinion. That place is not on River Road, targeting our young people.

Explorer Scouts are future first responders. Members must be between the ages of 14 years and 20, maintain a good GPA and be active in all aspects of the Post.

Members of Explorer Post 350 train once a week throughout the year. Explorers are trained by firefighters in all aspects of firefighting and pre-hospital care. Training includes fire behavior, search and rescue, ropes and knots, CPR and much more.

Explorers also participate in various fire district functions such as Open Houses, fund raising events, parades and many other community events.

The young people who comprise the Explorers need to be honored, not with derision but with gratitude. When we see them working in the community we should give a friendly honk, not ugly words. —LAZ

editorial



## Married to the mob

By DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

In what *The New York Times* described as a “forceful rebuttal,” Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden delivered a speech last week in which he said, “Ask yourself: Do I look like a radical socialist with a soft spot for rioters? Really?”

The former vice president also offered, “Does anyone believe there will be less violence in America if Donald Trump is reelected?”

Does anyone believe there will be less violence in America if Joe Biden is elected?

It took Biden and company months to figure out that voters are terrified of the violence they've seen in American cities in the name of racial justice. Hence Monday's remarks.

For the record, Biden declared: “I want to be clear about this: Rioting is not protesting.” Still, in remarks that were supposed to show Biden has zero tolerance for mob violence, he stumbled.

Taking press questions, Biden brought up the murder of Portland resident Aaron J. Danielson, 39, apparently the handiwork of a Portland anarchist. Biden did not refer to Danielson by name.

But he did say: “I think what happened in—in Portland, where a—one of the Trump guys riding along in vans inciting response—shooting rubber bullets, I guess, or paint balls—apparently, there was someone shot by someone in the crowd with a bullet, killed. I think that person should meet the legal requirements of whatever that calls for; they should be investigated; and they should follow through on

what needs to be done. Let the judicial system work.”

Since the May murder of George Floyd, an unarmed black man, at the hands of Minneapolis police, progressive activists engaged in nightly rampages during which they tried to destroy Portland's federal courthouse, set fires near precinct doors and obliterated small businesses vital to a city's livability.

Forgetting that he was supposed to denounce mob violence, Biden described a pro-Trump caravan—not the antifa thugs—as “inciting” a response. If the former veep

not.

And Biden's account of what happened is factually challenged. Video of the shooting shows a dark city street with few people. Two shots pierce the night as a man on a skateboard appears to approach Danielson, who collapses.

I don't want to suggest that Biden wasn't outraged. He was, but he seemed more outraged at Trump's rhetoric than at a man being murdered for dissenting political beliefs.

In blaming Trump for violence committed by the left, Biden has proven that he will blame anyone but the rioters, as he sees Trump, not the mob, as the extreme element in this horrific story.

Critics have hit Trump for calling out anarchists and looters without addressing what they see as systemic racism in the criminal justice system. That's because Trump doesn't see police as systemically racist, so much as undermined by cops who, as he recently told *Fox News'* Laura Ingraham, “choke.”

Whichever view you take, it's hard to believe that any good will come from months of urban riots that degrade a city's livability and hurt an economy reeling from the coronavirus.

In a video that went viral, a man standing behind the smashed windows of a pizzeria in Madison, Wisconsin, hectoring protesters. “Are they trying to get Trump reelected?” he said. “Seriously. I've got a family to support.”

“These people don't represent our movement,” a young woman replied. The pizza guy looked at her in disbelief and said, “Well, I'm sorry ... they're with you.” (Creators Syndicate)

other voices

## Roland-Schwartz for city council

To the Editor:

I am writing in support of Michele Roland-Schwartz for Keizer City Council Position #3.

Michele is thoughtful and will consider issues with respect to how they affect all people in Keizer. Her experience working with organizations that directly support people who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault has prepared her to be empathetic to people in need, to understand how to help people learn unique skills and to understand the role of the laws needed to support the community.

Michele's priorities include housing and homelessness, issues that have become even more important under the current situation with people losing their jobs and the cost of housing increasing. The current state of the local economy, especially as it affects small businesses and non-profits, is very important as is public health and safety.

She is very personable and listens with compassion and empathy.

Please join me in voting for Michele Roland-Schwartz for Keizer City Council.

Betty Hart  
Keizer

## Mike DeBlasi for city council

To the Editor:

When we vote in November, we will make some of the most important decisions any of us have made for a long time.

We will choose leaders who will make life-impacting decisions, not only nationally, but locally. For Keizer City Council, I will be voting for Mike DeBlasi.

Mike is knowledgeable, experienced and has creative ideas that will improve safety for our kids and other walkers and bike riders on our streets. He knows what it will take to encourage critical “middle housing,” that is affordable to young families. He is concerned about climate change and the impact that is having on our health. Mike will represent all of the residents of Keizer, and reach out to communities that have not

letters

traditionally been included in city decision-making. He knows that policy changes can make a difference in people's lives.

Please join me in supporting Mike DeBlasi for Keizer City Council.

Kathy Lincoln  
Keizer

## Bill Post has represented us well

To the Editor:

As an Oregonian and a voter, we haven't had a whole lot of say during this pandemic. I want my kids to go back to school. I want my kids to be able to play music and to participate in sports. All of our Oregon kids need their education. Unfortunately, the majority party in our legislature disagrees.

In November, we have the opportunity to ensure our State isn't just represented by one party. Bill Post advocates for Oregon kids to go back to school. I wish more legislators in power would listen to us as parents.

Bill Post has represented us well and will continue fighting against the one-party rule. Please join me in re-electing Bill to House District 25 and sending our children back to school.

Jane Herb  
Keizer

## Re-elect Bill Post for representative

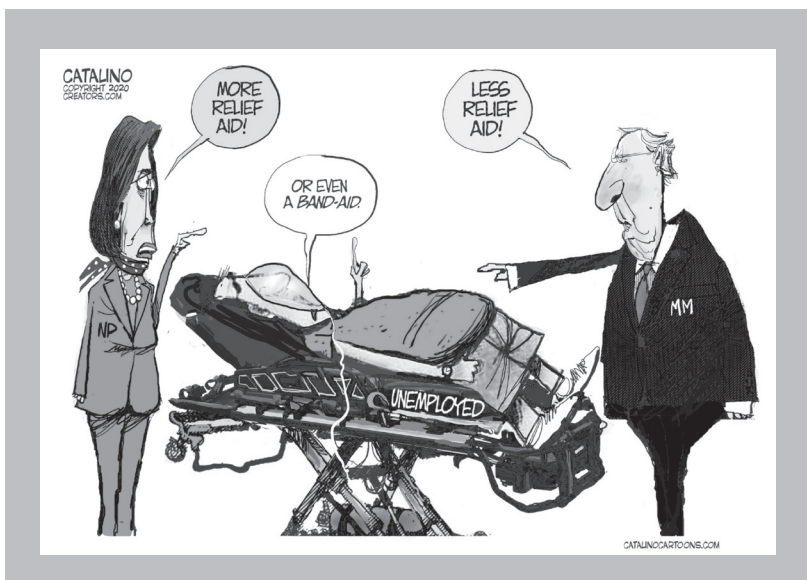
To the Editor:

Having been a resident in Keizer for many years, I have had the opportunity to vote for many different people seeking legislative office. I am proud to cast my vote this November for State Representative Bill Post.

Bill is deeply involved in this community and, more importantly, he cares. I believe our community has thrived under his leadership the past few years and I am thankful for his representation.

Don't take my word for it, go look at his track record at [www.billpost.com](http://www.billpost.com). I encourage you to join me in re-electing Bill Post.

Jon Richmond  
Keizer



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