

# 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.

## Stay in the room

No one likes uncomfortable conversations but working through that discomfort can have enormous pay-offs.

Case in point: a work session of the Keizer City Council Monday, Nov. 9.

After receiving heated backlash from residents of the city over a refusal to condemn white supremacy, members of the council worked through the issues and drafted a statement of values that might live up to Mayor Cathy Clark's claim a few weeks ago of Keizer "leading the way" through inclusivity in local politics.

The new draft includes a definition of white supremacy, a repudiation of it and a nod to the tribes that once inhabited Keizer.

Members of the council have yet to vote on the statement — they legally can't vote on issues in work sessions — and some may still dissent, but the new document is a giant step forward from the mostly watered down statement of a few weeks ago.

Each of the councilors, even in lieu of recent comments, should be commended for their work Monday

night, but the accolades don't end there.

For the past few months, a steady cadre of residents have spoken out on issues of inclusivity and what a Keizer resolution should embody. Some of the faces have grown familiar during that time, but new ones have shown up to make their voices heard at every meeting.

Each added a unique perspective and moved the conversation forward in valuable ways. Over the course of weeks and months, they have shown the power inherent in individuals coming together for a more perfect union.

We also don't want to forget the efforts of those who first brought a resolution proposal to the city two years ago. They started a ball rolling that others were able to pick up and run with.

All of these individuals who stood up and spoke up during the meeting deserve recognition for their courage and work as well.

Lastly, it should not go without noting that the five candidates for city council seats in the election

earlier this month were in the room Monday night.

To Kyle Juran and Ross Day: As Keizer's next city councilors, inclusivity in all forms is a baton you will need to take up, and we hope that the messages of the people you will represent resonated in your chests.

To Mike De Blasi, Dylan Juran and Michele Roland-Schwartz: It took courage to show up at the work session in the wake of election defeat, but we have come to expect that from each of you. Salve the wound of the loss, but don't let it dissuade you from public service. Stay involved on the city committees you already serve on, join another when you are ready and live to fight another day.

Councilors have grown fond of the phrase "The Keizer Way," which feels like code for doing things frugally in word and finances. This time around "The American Way" appears to have won the day.

There are lessons there for all of us in the process that is taking place, and we can continue to build on them, but everyone needs to stay in the room.

—Editorial Board

editorial

## Welcome to city council

COVID-19 changed the way political candidates campaigned in 2020. In Keizer, where grassroots, door-to-door canvassing has been the norm, candidates relied on social media, lawn signs and advertising to promote themselves.

In January 2021 the council will seat an incumbent and two new members.

Laura Reid won election to her second term. Her historical knowledge will position her as a key councilor since Marlene Parsons and Kim Freeman did not seek re-election. Parsons and Freeman

both will have served two terms when they make way for their replacements.

Ross Day and Kyle Juran will be Keizer's newest councilors when they are sworn into office on Jan. 4.

Ross Day, an attorney with his own firm, specializes in land use, real estate and business law. As the city moves forward on discussions about future growth and any expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary, his experience will help navigate Keizer through the process. His fellow councilors will do well to turn to Day for advice and information

that will be important to laying the groundwork for growth.

Kyle Juran will bring to the council a background and experience that will be as important as Day's land use knowledge. Juran is the owner of Remodeling by Classic Homes in Keizer and he has served on the Keizer Planning Commission. He will be able to confidently discuss growth issues and the accompanying aesthetic components.

We welcome Day and Juran to the council and look forward to their contributions. —LAZ

## How to protect migrating animals

By JIM AKENSON and LORI MCKINNON

Oregon Hunters Association (OHA), a group of conservation-minded sportsmen, urges Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to develop and implement a policy to enhance and conserve migratory habitat for big game, and all wildlife that make seasonal movements.

Habitat connectivity, the degree to which separate habitat patches are connected, is a crucial factor for conservation of wildlife. Increases in urban and energy development has resulted in extensive habitat loss and fragmentation for many species in Oregon. Fortunately, advances in wildlife tracking technology have allowed wildlife managers to more accurately identify where animals move on the landscape, as well as impediments to wildlife space use. For ungulate species (e.g., deer, elk, pronghorn, bighorn sheep), migration corridors are fundamental to their life history, but until recently, these corridors were thought of as conduit between seasonal ranges rather than essential habitat.

Many big game migration corridors are currently obstructed by transportation infrastructure and energy development sites. Therefore, state agencies must consider the full extent of migratory habitat to better manage ungulate populations.

ODFW is making leaps and bounds through the Oregon Connectivity Assessment and Mapping

Project, an innovative effort to map wildlife movement and corridors across the state. Oregon has an opportunity to ensure this new information leads to sound management solutions by developing agency policy to formally identify migration corridors.

This action will bolster current conservation projects where many groups (including OHA) are working to conserve and enhance migratory habitat. For example, OHA has pledged over \$114,000 and many volunteer hours to the Gilchrist Wildlife Underpass Project aimed at reducing ungulate mortality and vehicle collisions on U.S. Highway 97. Additionally, a migration policy will frame new partnerships between private landowners, non-government organizations, and government agencies, which will result in additional conservation projects and funding sources. Recently, Coastal Farm & Ranch, after obtaining the low bid to provide fencing material, supported the Gilchrist Wildlife Underpass Project by providing fencing materials at a discount below their initial low bid. OHA's Bend chapter has invested hundreds of volunteer hours maintaining the fence that funnels wildlife to the Lava Butte wildlife underpass on U.S. Highway 97, approximately 50 miles north of the new Gilchrist underpass. The Lava Butte wildlife underpass has reduced vehicle-wildlife collisions by 86%. Individuals can support and help fund habitat connectivity and migration

corridor projects by purchasing a specialized watch for wildlife license plate voucher at [www.myowf.org/watchforwildlife](http://www.myowf.org/watchforwildlife).

Global Positioning System (GPS) wildlife tracking collars have become commonplace in wildlife management today, and this shift to more efficient and accurate technology will allow for more precise management into the future. GPS collars collect an immense amount of animal location data on fixed time schedules, and these data are ideal for describing ungulate resource selection and utilization and migratory habitat. A migration policy will assist ODFW and their partners in obtaining additional grant funding to provide wildlife professionals with additional GPS collars, which will in turn, further our knowledge of migration corridors, resource selection, and population dynamics.

How can Oregonian's assist with protecting wildlife and their habitats? By working with their local wildlife biologist, watershed managers, ODFW commissioners and legislators to promote continued research and policy development. In addition, the public can support protection of wildlife, their habitats, and mitigation from land management, urban, and energy development and transportation infrastructure projects through county, state and federal public comment processes.

(Jim Akenson is senior conservation director, Oregon Hunters Association. Lori McKinnon is president of Coastal Farm & Ranch.)

guest column

letters

### Keizer values statement

To the Editor:

After attending last nights Keizer city council meeting (Monday, Nov. 9), I left with similar thoughts that I have experienced at times over my 37 years living in this great community.

There were times I would give the council the benefit of the doubt that the right decision would be made, only to witness that the fix was in. The majority of the council who were in attendance, led by the Mayor, decided to join with a small vocal minority of progressive supporters, led by Council or Roland Herrera, and added, what appears to be, a knee-jerk response to Keizer's Value Statement that this group had insisted on. They did it just for appeasement, in my opinion, and in the opinion of many other Keizerites.

Frankly, it's as if last week's elections didn't even come into consideration. Keizer spoke loudly that we preferred more conservative voices on the council than we did progressive ones. At times I felt lectured to, and at times I felt preached to, by two individuals specifically. Racism, hate, discrimination and violence toward anyone should, and is, roundly condemned throughout this community.

I felt at times they were being unfairly baked in with the "racist" label too frequently thrown out. Note that one speaker even encouraged the council to move quickly with this declaration, so it becomes effective before the new councilors are seated. Or does she mean the two elected by the majority in last week's election? One thing will be

absolute going forward. No matter what label you put in a value statement, it will do absolutely nothing to change the hearts and minds of those who already harbor hate in their hearts. And trust me, this won't stop here from further demands being brought from this same group of "my way or the highway."

Butch Dunn  
Keizer

### Loss of levy vote for MCFD1 will hurt

To the Editor:

Marion County Fire District #1 wants to thank those who participated in the recent election. Our local option levy was up for renewal, and the outcome was not as we had hoped.

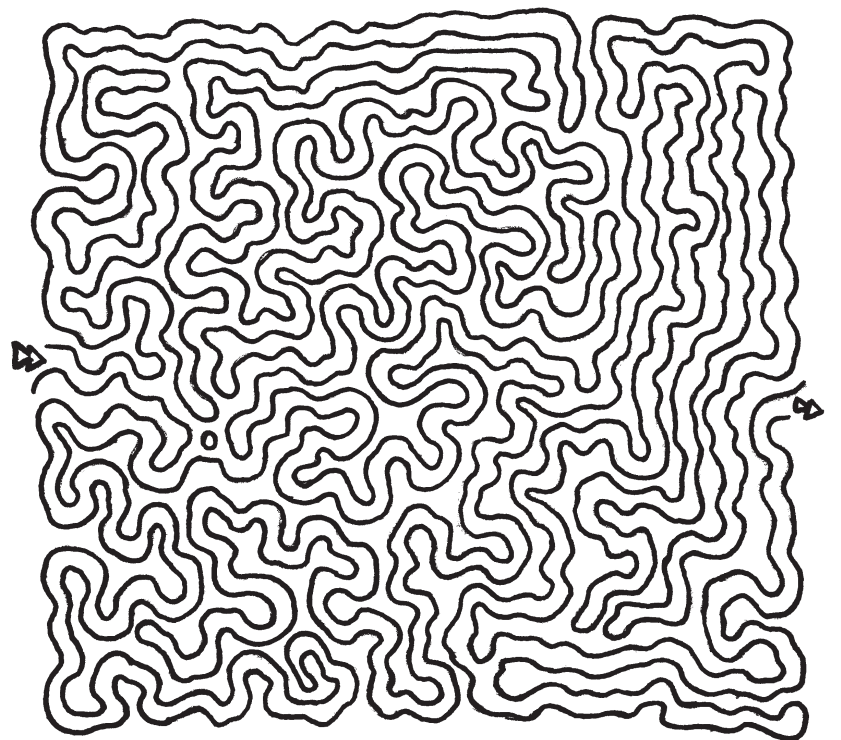
The local option levy accounted for 30% of our revenue to provide emergency services. Its loss means that we have to make cuts to service levels, which includes laying off emergency personnel, taking apparatus out of service, and closing fire stations.

New service levels will take effect on January 1, 2021. We will communicate with you in advance about these cuts, and how it could impact your family and business in an emergency.

These will be very difficult decisions for us to make, and we ask for your understanding in the days and months ahead. Please feel free to contact me with questions at [kylem@mcfid1.com](mailto:kylem@mcfid1.com) or (503) 588-6535.

Kyle McMann  
Fire Chief/Paramedic/RN  
Marion County Fire District #1

maze



Maze by Jonathan Graf of Keizer

sudoku

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