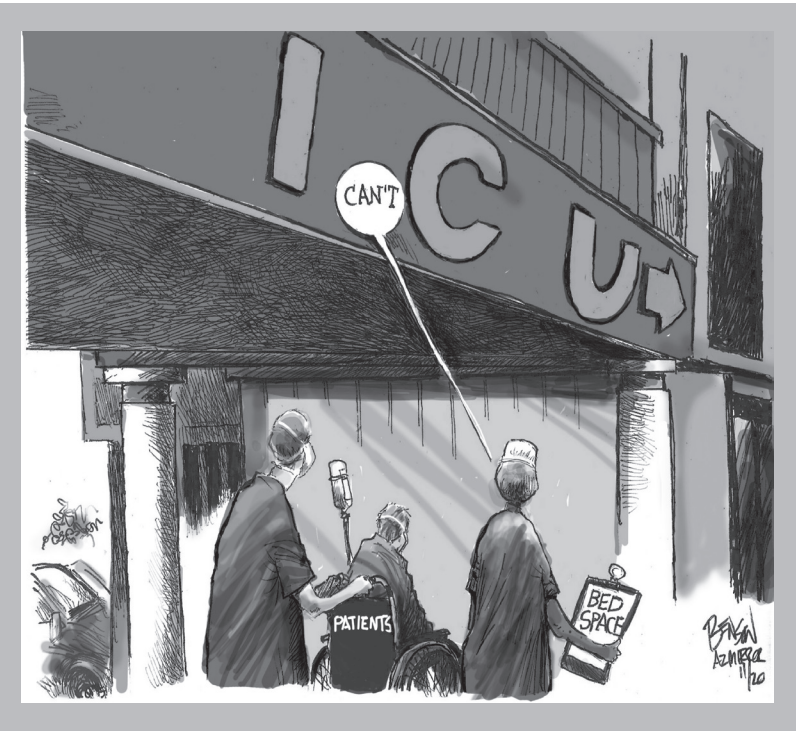


# Public Square

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.

## Correction

The guest column titled *Defiance is not leadership* that ran on the Public Square page in the Nov. 27, 2020 *Keizertimes* was erroneously credited to John Morgan. The actual author is John Mangan. We deeply apologize to both John Morgan and John Mangan for the error.



## Small businesses

Many small businesses in Keizer and around the country are holding on by the fingernails. The pandemic has changed, perhaps forever, the way we shop for goods and services. The new restrictions imposed by Gov. Kate Brown will make the holiday season anything but jolly.

Small businesses are owned by our friends and neighbors; they need the support of their communities right now.

Restaurants can't offer the dine-in option now yet take out and delivery is available from many eateries. During COVID, many have rediscovered the art of cooking and baking at home. Eating out is convenient and holds its own allure, but when that is not possible, picking up your favorite food or having it delivered to your door is the alternative.

Dozens of restaurants in big cities such as Portland and Seattle have permanently closed. That translates to thousands of lost jobs, not to mention the demise of livelihoods for the owners.

Many restaurant employees have been laid off or had their hours reduced. Their households are just like anybody's: they have bills to pay, too.

Restaurants are not the only small businesses to suffer during the pandemic. Small owner-operated retail stores have seen their customer traffic

plummet. Billions of dollars of shopping has shifted to the web, a trend that will only grow.

Not every small business can match the slick websites to sell their goods. However, they can use social media sites to promote themselves. If today's consumer wants convenience, a local business can present their products, make it easy for a shopper to call, order and have the item shipped, or pick it up curbside in a contactless transaction.

Consumers should not turn a blind eye to the smaller businesses in their area. Supporting local businesses is supporting the community. Our friends and neighbors who own a business are more likely to contribute to community organizations such as school programs and youth sports teams. A business that is closed or has less revenue cannot donate to the things that maintain our quality of life.

Local restaurants are ready to have an order ready for pick-up or delivery, a local retailer will bend over backward to have your business.

Bigger isn't always better, sometimes bigger is just bigger. During the final weeks of holiday shopping, Keizer consumers should consider which small businesses in the area are selling what they need. We should all endeavor to help our friends and neighbors.

—LAZ

editorial

## Our wild geese

By JIM PARR

In his column, *We can still be thankful regardless of 2020* (On my mind, *Keizertimes*, Nov. 20)) publisher Lyndon Zaitz reflected upon an observation when he was able to set aside the rancor and stress of our current times and let, if for only a moment, nature render its magic.

He watched the wild geese flying overhead and more importantly, noticed that another person had also stopped to watch and listen. Like people, geese are social beings and their noisy appearance can touch a person's soul. If you let it.

Wild geese are durable, enduring, strong, purposeful and totally in tune with the seasons. As individuals, they are selfless, vigilant, and protective of each other and their flock and will, without hesitation, die defending their mate, their nest, and young.

Yes, they can be a nuisance in parks, golf courses, and even destructive to some farm fields. But if we can abide this aspect of their nature, there is much to enjoy in the sight and sound of the geese as they fly back and forth between the fields where they feed and loaf at local wa-

terways like Staats Lake where they spend their nights in safety on the water.

Except for a few year 'round residents, the truly wild geese, including the small Cackling Canada Goose subspecies, depart for the far north during early May. You can tell when departure time is getting close as they congregate in large flocks and become very vocal as if excited in anticipation of the trip to north of the Arctic Circle. And then suddenly they are gone and the quiet of summer without the presence of the geese descends upon us. They spend the short summer season of the far north nesting and raising their young. As soon as the young are flying strongly, they turn around and begin the trip southward to their favorite wintering areas, escaping the onset of the brutal Arctic winter.

They begin to arrive back in Keizer in September. "Right on time" you might say as they are creatures of habit and there is no mistaking their return. The long noisy lines of geese announce their arrival as if with great joy in the success of their journey. Perhaps you also have been listening for and anticipating

their return with some sense of excitement. In a world where there seems to be so little to depend on, you can depend on the geese. They are reliable.

There is something about their distant calls when flying high and direct in the night that can bring a smile and a sense of wonder. If we let it. Is it their wildness and freedom that spark our imagination? Do we wish that we could find life as purposeful and ordered as is theirs where the "what, when and where" is always known and without so many questions?

As for that occasional single bird that is flying alone and not with the flock: its quiet calls are for a lost mate and reflect grief and loneliness. Geese mate for life and when one of a pair is lost it can take considerable time before the survivor rejoins a flock and perhaps finds a new mate. It is known that if one goose of a pair falls from the air for whatever reason, its mate will circle back to find it, often to its own detriment.

If you listen to and watch the geese, you can be reminded that there still are remnants of all that is wild and free and of life being lived for all of the right reasons. Listen to the geese. They are wise.

(Jim Parr lives in Keizer.)

other voices

## Celebrate Ag this holiday season

By BARB IVERSON

Thanksgiving is all about making time to reflect on the many things in life for which we are grateful. In conversations around the dinner table, Oregon Farm Bureau urges readers to remember the farm and ranch families who grew the food you'll be enjoying not only during the holidays, but all year long.

While Oregon isn't a major producer of turkeys, we do specialize in beef cattle; cattle and calves rank as Oregon's #3 top agricultural commodity by production value, drawing in over \$625 million a year.

Your holiday dining will almost certainly feature other prominent Oregon ag products. Oregon is Number 1 in the nation for producing hazelnuts and Dungeness crab; Number 2 for pears and onions; Number 3 for cranberries; and Number 4 for green peas and potatoes. Milk is Oregon's Number 4 top ag commodity, valuing at \$552 million, and is used to create a host of delicious dairy products.

You'll #CelebrateAg when you raise a toast during the holidays. Oregon-grown hops are to thank for many of the region's craft beers, and our state ranks Number 3 in the United States for growing hops. The Oregon wine industry has surged

over the past decade, now to 1,297 vineyards with 908 wineries. Wine grapes are the state's Number 7 top ag commodity, valuing at \$238 million.

Few things are more festive than purchasing a fresh Christmas tree. Did you know that Oregon is Number 1 in the nation for Christmas tree production? Because more people are staying at home this year due to the pandemic, there is expected to be increased interest in purchasing a live, fragrant tree that can be enjoyed all season long.

Beyond seasonal favorites, there are many other reasons to #CelebrateAg.

For one, Oregon agriculture is sustainable. Through Oregon Farm Bureau's Century Farm & Ranch Program, an impressive 1,235 farms and ranches have remained operational, on the same land, and within the same family for at least 100 years, and 47 families have reached the 150-year milestone.

Agriculture is also family-based. Nearly 97% of Oregon's farms and

ranches — including commercial-scale farms — are family-owned and operated. Some are "corporate farms" that incorporated for tax purposes or succession-plan reasons. In agriculture, "big" doesn't mean "bad."

Agriculture benefits the environment. The wide, open spaces created by farms and ranches not only preserve Oregon's cherished landscapes, but also provide 70% of the state's wildlife habitat. 551,000 acres of Oregon ag land are enrolled in the voluntary USDA Conservation Reserve Program, which helps improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, and reduce loss of wildlife habitat on private land. And, combined, U.S. agriculture, land use, and forestry are a net sink for carbon emissions, removing 172 million metric tons of CO2-equivalent emissions from the atmosphere in 2017.

Whether for the simple pleasure of enjoying Oregon-grown food—or for agriculture's countless other contributions to society—please join us and take a moment to #CelebrateAg this holiday season.

(Barb Iverson is president of the Oregon Farm Bureau.)

guest column

## To remove or repair sidewalk

To the Editor:

On Dec. 7, 2020, there will be a public hearing at the Keizer City Council to determine how to "fix" the issue of 10 feet of damaged sidewalk located on Harcourt Avenue at the side of a residence (1360 Ivy Way NE). Normally, it is a good idea to repair sidewalks, but not when the sidewalk goes nowhere and a decision by the Keizer City Council to have the sidewalk repaired (rather than remove the damaged sidewalk) will cause the removal of two perfectly healthy, magnificent trees—which are heritage-like landmarks for this area of Keizer.

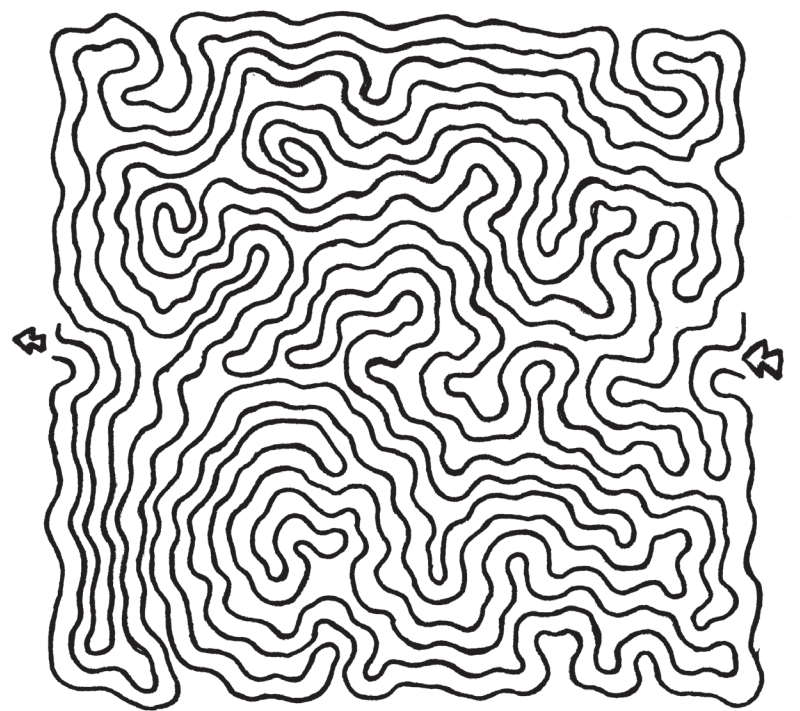
The offending sidewalk goes behind these two trees and goes no further. That is, from the corner of Harcourt and Ivy Way NE to the trees is about four feet of "good" sidewalk.

Then, there is about ten feet of damaged sidewalk behind the trees. After that, the sidewalk stops—completely. That's because the remainder of Harcourt (going south) has no sidewalk. Neither does the next cross street. As a consequence there is no foot-traffic on that offending portion of the sidewalk. Despite that, according to Shannon Johnson, Keizer city attorney, there has been a complaint to which the City of Keizer has to respond.

According to Shannon Johnson, even the complainant doesn't want the trees cut down, but repairing the sidewalk isn't feasible without destroying the trees. Unfortunately, one cannot simply reroute the sidewalk because of the way the land slopes. And, Keizer ordinances require the owner of the residence only "to repair or replace this existing sidewalk." There is no provision for the simple removal of this side-

letters

## maze



Maze by Jonathan Graf of Keizer

## sudoku

1		9	3		7	4	6	
	3							
2				6			5	
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