

K PUBLIC SQUARE

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Bravery in the line of fire

The Oregon State Police and the Marion County District Attorney's Office have released the names of the persons involved in last week's incident, including the name of the pedestrian, Ms. Becky Dietzel, 64, of Salem, who was struck and killed by 47-year-old Sean Beck (of Olympia, Wash.). Beck is still being treated at the Salem Hospital. His charges are forthcoming.

I think it's important to pause and observe that the greatest tragedy in this incident, by far, is the death of Ms. Dietzel. Due to the investigation I am not at liberty to expound upon her circumstances or the grief of her family.

That said, I can tell you that the Keizer Police Department is worn thin. We're presently in the process of hiring four officers and we're now entering a late-planned KeizerFEST weekend down six more officers, thus each of us who remain are carrying an additional load. Thankfully, every one of our police officers is mentally and emotionally strong, thus our only hurdle is time. Each of the six is anxious to get back to work, but that won't happen for a week or more as we run through the standard, time-consuming processes, including grand jury and other, statutorily required events.

In time, of course, we'll speak more



plainly about this incident. In the meantime, it's notable that we have good, diligent officers who knowingly entered a dangerous situation and were unexpectedly drawn into a gunfight. The vast majority of police officers serve their whole careers without ever firing a firearm in the course of duty, and for the vast majority of those who have, I'm rather certain that they found it to be surreal, prepared for but nevertheless unexpected. The fact of the matter is that we cops are a lot more like you than we are like whatever stereotype might exist, especially as we hire good, solid, people of character, which all of these men are.

Thank you Kevin DeMarco, Scott Keniston, Michael Kowash, Jeremy Darst, Chad Fahey, and Cody Stupfel.

And thank you, residents of Keizer. We are thankful for your support. We are also thankful, by the way, for your criticism: our interest is in working with you to keep Keizer safe.

(John Teague is Chief of the Keizer Police Department)



A conversation, not tweets

By DEBRA SAUNDERS

Ahead of and after the 2020 presidential election, a number of my friends who also are Republican women engaged in what came to be known as "The Conversation."

As special House Committee hearings on the Jan. 6 Capitol attacks have begun, there's a new conversation in the air.

In 2016, many Republican women I know—men, too—told each other they didn't vote for Donald Trump because they didn't like the way he talked and tweeted. But also, they weren't sure Trump would govern from the right.

Some voted for Libertarian Gary Johnson. Others wrote in the names of whomever they'd prefer as the GOP nominee.

But in 2020, we voted for Trump. We liked his Supreme Court picks, his foreign policy and his approach to economics. I especially appreciated how he ignored the experts and pushed for rapid vaccine development.

We voted for Trump because, unlike Trump, we didn't let our egos dictate our politics.

I told myself that I would vote for Trump but would not change my standards for him.

After he lost in November, Trump kept bumping up against those standards.

During the infamous Jan. 6 rally, Trump told supporters to "demand that Congress do the right thing and only count the electors who have been lawfully slated" (according to his definition) and "get rid of the weak" members of Congress.

His definition of "weak" naturally meant: strong enough to stand up to Trump.

After supporters stormed the Capitol and attacked police, America found out how many Republicans are "weak": 139 House Republicans and eight senators cast votes against certifying President Joe Biden's victory.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy

was one of the 139, because he is not so much a leader as the head hostage.

Every time the California Republican shows any distance from Trump, the former president yanks the leash and brings the leader to heel.

Last week, a small tear in Trump's hold on the GOP came to light when his chosen candidate lost a primary battle in Texas.

Also Tuesday, four heroes—Washington, D.C., police officers Michael Fanone and Daniel Hodges, as well as Capitol Police Officer Harry Dunn and Sgt. Aquilino Gonell—testified about the physical and verbal abuse they endured at the hands of the Trump mob.

Fanone found mercy only when he told his tormentors he had children. Dunn, an African American, testified that it was the first time anyone called him the n-word while he was in uniform.

The decent response would be to voice sympathy with these four officers. McCarthy instead spoke as if he were the victim when he claimed he couldn't put in solid Republicans such as Rep. Jim Jordan on the panel. Jordan, you see, challenged House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other Democrats for not providing sufficient security.

"On Jan. 6, these brave officers were put into a vulnerable and impossible position because the leadership at the top failed," McCarthy told reporters.

GOP strategist Alice Stewart likened that criticism to "arsonists blaming the firefighters for not bringing enough water."

If party leaders aren't doing everything possible "to win back the white suburban voters, we're not going to win," Stewart told me.

So, here's The Conversation going forward. For 2022 and 2024, support for Trump is optional, but blind obedience is over. Or the GOP can get used to losing. It's a choice.

(Creators Syndicate)

Pride is more than one month

By BROOKLYN FLINT

Even though June (also known as Pride month) is over, that doesn't mean that Pride is over. I have been out of the closet for a few years now. I was first out as bisexual, but soon realized that I was a lesbian. Although, I didn't come out as a lesbian until recently.

I experienced my first pride event this year at the first ever Keizer Pride Fair. At the event I felt so much love and warmth. It felt refreshing to be in a community of people just like me, yet so diverse as well. I met dozens of new friends and felt completely welcomed.

I stayed at the event for hours. When I went home I was completely sunburned and my legs felt like they stopped working. However, it still didn't feel like I was there long enough. I instantly wanted to go back.

And soon after, June was over. Every company that applauded itself for supporting the LGBTQ+ community went back to the way they were before, homophobia online and in person continued to grow, and many members of my community felt like we were back in the closet. A month full of love and acceptance disappeared in a matter of hours, like it never even happened.

But it did.

For years LGBTQ+ members have fought for our rights and our chance at equality. We faced harassment and torture simply for who we loved and for wanting to feel comfortable in our own body. We lost friends and family members who told



us that they would love us no matter what, but it wasn't true.

We have been told by countless organizations and businesses that they were on our side and that they wanted to help us, but they didn't.

I never chose who I loved and who I didn't. No one in the community chose to be trans or to feel like they didn't belong in their body. I did not choose to be told that I am a sinner and that I am going to hell. I did not choose to be told that I'm being tormented by a demon who is forcing me to be a lesbian. I did not choose to be harassed simply for loving someone. I did not choose any of this. None of us did.

People need to be better. Do your research, join LGBTQ+ support groups, look into what you can do to help in your community, donate to trusted LGBTQ+ organizations, learn to be open, and try, for at least a second, to understand what it is like to be us.

Members in the LGBTQ+ community and close allies will continue to fight for our rights and for equal opportunities. We deserve to be seen and we deserve to be heard.

(Brooklyn Flint is a community reporter for the Keizertimes.)

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