

PUBLIC SQUARE welcomes all points of view. Published submissions do not necessarily reflect the views of the Keizertimes

## Council goes for a Starr

To fill a vacant council seat, the Keizer City Council had a rich and diverse roster of applicants to choose from at a special session on Monday, Dec. 20.

After two ballots the council voted for Shaney Starr, an excellent choice by any measure.

Starr currently serves as executive director of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Marion County, where her work to serve and protect the county's children has resulted in more volunteers for the organization.

Keizer's newest councilor has a long history of working with organizations and agencies that assist those in our society whom need help.

Starr is good addition not only because she is smart, she is knowledgeable about the world in general and is intimately involved with the issues that challenge us locally everyday.

With a focus on diversity, inclusion and equity at the city these days, Starr can be leader on those issues right out of the gate.

She cares about children (obviously)

## It's always the season to be an American

'Tis the season for believing' arrives again as a time to be thankful. I have been equally thankful all year 'round, every year, for being born an American citizen.

As a school child, I pledged allegiance to the American flag and learned about the U.S. Constitution, rule by law, our institutions, norms and traditions, all adding up to what has been a mainly wonderful life for me in the United States. Meanwhile, I took what we have for granted until my studies inspired more deep thought and serious contemplation while jobs and travel overseas took me to places where democracy is a foreign idea.

As a matter of fact, my freedoms and opportunities would not have been possible in many foreign lands. Besides, I was born to a working family without financial means beyond daily-bread-with-roof-overhead status, where no member of the larger family could claim wealth, fame or "connections." Nevertheless, by working after school and summers, I had the prerogative and opportunity to earn a higher education, thereby free to broaden my horizons, realizing personal goals and objectives.

These liberties by birthright here have provided a life about which I have no complaints. There have, of course, been the required rules, procedures and laws I had to follow along the way, serving mostly to keep me safe and healthy throughout my life. Now I wear a mask to protect others and myself. I have been vaccinated against diseases and had to work diligently to pass programs of study, enabling ultimately a peaceful existence in a mostly orderly



but also civil rights and equality for all. As a former director of the Marion Polk County Medical Society and Medical Foundation of Marion & Polk Counties, she is no stranger to wellness issues, especially in a time of a global pandemic.

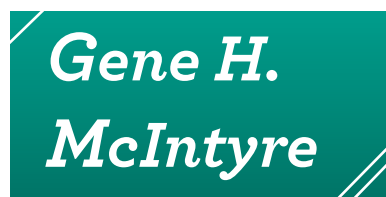
Despite her background and experience, Shaney Starr will not be a one-issue councilor. As a long-time Keizer resident, she understands what concerns residents and will add an important voice to future policy debates on the council.

We welcome the voice of Ms. Starr to the council.

In a town where our friends and neighbors serve on the city council, she would rather be called Shaney then councilor Starr.

Alright, welcome aboard Shaney, we expect great things from you.

—LAZ



America, one copied by other nations also seeking success.

What presently confounds and depresses is the number of Americans who apparently no longer want a peaceful, orderly nation where we can be safe and successful. Those among us want order gone, no rules and laws. Also, these same Americans want to rid the nation of our Constitution and laws, opting for an autocratic, dictatorial government led by the personal whims and desires of one-person rule.

What's not known by those who want a despot is what will become of the American character. Such a new order will find only a select-by-leader small group of survivors with freedoms where protests of any kind lead to imprisonment and loss of privileges. The new America will be unfortunate should we allow such a government to take control of our nation, having been the case elsewhere in the world when the old order is replaced by a new order characterized by total subjugation. Almost always then, sooner or later, the country deteriorates into civil wars within its borders and wars delivered by outsiders, those ready to step in and control the created "vacuum."

(Gene H. McIntyre lives in Keizer.)

## Meeting about schools misrepresented in column

By ANNA MUNSON

Rebutal to Andrea Smith column (*Meeting about schools an eye-opener*, Dec. 18, *Keizertimes*):

I have been a community member of the city of Salem for over 40 years. I have raised my children in the Salem-Keizer schools. I have been concerned about our schools, hearing about the increase in violence as well as the curriculum being taught to our children.

I, too, attended the *SK We Stand Together/Oregon Mom's Union* meeting on Dec. 12. I observed that you wore a mask. My background has been in health-care. I worked in hospitals for most of my career. I have also taken high school science, and a multitude of science classes. Because of my experience I know the true value of a mask in stopping a virus. Especially the cloth mask you wore.

It has been scientifically proven in multiple studies that it is ineffective. "Coronavirus is 0.125 microns. therefore these masks wouldn't protect you from the virus" Ms. Smith, you mentioned that literature was handed out at the meeting. This is a false statement. Literature was available, but everyone had to go to a back table for review before picking it up. Everyone and anyone in attendance could review or take it. Nobody "handed it to you."

I did notice that you took at least one copy of all the literature that was on the table. Dr. Satya Chandragiri's talk was on safety—about how the most important thing to parents are their children. He gave some examples of history, both good and bad. He understood that when families feel that their most important treasure and responsibility, their children, are not safe or cared for properly it is natural for them to want to stand and defend them.

He pointed out that this is the state of Oregon, a part of the United States of America where we still have a Constitution (actually two Constitutions, one state and one federal) and a Bill of Rights, that allow us to go and speak to anyone about our concerns. Parents and community

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members have a very legitimate right to go to board meetings if they have concerns about their children's education: safety or curriculum, or anything else in regards to their child.

If a parent is told by their child that they feel pressured into doing things that they don't feel comfortable doing in a class it is that parent's right and responsibility to seek out the truth. In regards to your description of the Heritage Foundation, as a "far right-winged" group. That is false. It is a conservative group. In fact, as stated on their website, "Heritage (Foundation) works in our nation's capital to build an America where freedom, opportunity, prosperity, and civil society flourish for the benefit of all."

As many of us have discovered, sex education that we or our children were taught in the past is not what is being taught in our schools today. Today it's called Comprehensive Sex Education. "Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)" has many highly controversial components that can be harmful to children.

World Health Organization (WHO) programs have CSE concepts targeting children. I believe that parents know their children best. Every parent has the right and responsibility to teach and protect them as they choose. This group, *SK We Stand Together/Oregon Mom's Union* priorities are to stand together to increase community engagement and respectfully advocate with one voice for parents rights, educational transparency, opportunity, excellence, and choice for every student.

You have the right to your opinion. Be sure that it is verified with facts and not false statements.

(Anna Munson lives in Salem.)



### Guest column was enlightening

To the Editor:

Excellent guest column by Andrea Smith. (*Meeting about schools as an eye-opener*, Dec. 17) Enlightening, to say the least (sex education as....Marxism?!)

Keep up the good publishing!

Jo Williams  
Keizer

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or **guest column** (600 words),

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