

KEIZERTIMES PUBLIC SQUARE

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The city enters middle age

By LYNDON ZAITZ

The city of Keizer is turning 40 years old in 2022. When voters approved incorporation in November 1982, Keizer became Oregon's 13th largest city. The impetus to become a city was in part not to be annexed by Salem.

Keizer was created as a limited services, low cost city. Keizer still has the same tax base of \$2.09 per \$1,000 as in 1982. That is the lowest in the state for a city of its size. It is a great story what the city has been able to do over the past four decades with such a low tax rate.

That low tax rate helped Keizer grow, as high property tax refugees from Salem moved to Keizer. It was not only the low taxes but the image of the our community as a small, quaint town.

Keizer had clean, orderly neighborhoods. The schools produced college-bound students. Driven by volunteer power, the Keizer Little League program and its fields were second to none in Oregon.

Keizer's city council was filled with citizens who volunteered their time to assure that the vision of the city's founding fathers was maintained and secured for future generations. Service organizations and their volunteers were instrumental in building and improving the city.

Identified as the Iris Capital of the World in the 1980s, Keizer's premier community event, Keizer Days, morphed into the Keizer Iris Festival, which boasted one of the largest parades in Oregon.

City leaders had a vision for the property along Interstate 5. The Chemawa Activity Center (as it was called at the time) became the Keizer Station we know today. That area is also home to Volcanoes Stadium.



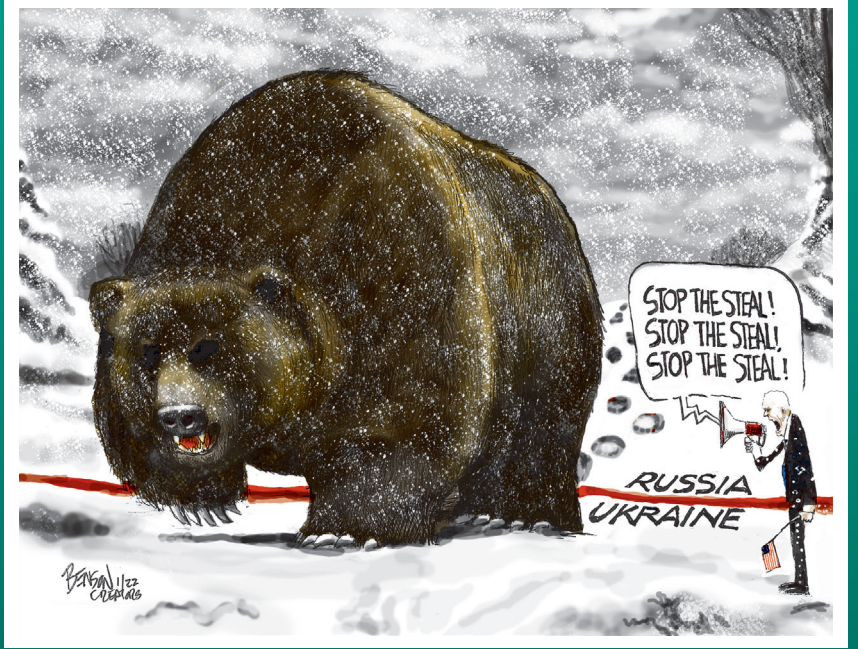
Since 1982 Keizer has added thousands of homes and subdivisions. The city has been bumping up against its border for years now, which led to serious discussions of expanding the Urban Growth Boundary that keeps Keizer lassoed inside its 1982 border.

There is not much difference between Keizer of 1982 and Keizer in 2022. The city is home to family and senior households. The people in those houses are not much different than families anywhere else—they all want a sense of community. They want to feel safe and secure. They want the opportunity to partake in the American dream of achieving any goal, personal or professional.

Forty years on we need to assure that the idea of Keizer lives on. We all get distracted by coverage of national issues. There is no major effort to ban certain books in our local schools. There is no move to limit voting opportunities. The issue getting the biggest reaction is mandatory masks in schools. That will soon be a moot point since the state will lift its mandatory mask regulation on March 31.

Those who choose Keizer for their home do it for the same reason that our founding fathers did in 1982: to live in a small town with a sense of community and brotherhood. Let's not lose that as the city enters middle age.

(Lyndon Zaitz is publisher of the *Keizertimes*.)



Why is Ukraine our problem?

By MARC A. THIESSEN

A new *Politico-Morning Consult* poll shows most Americans support the people of Ukraine in the face of Russia's aggression. 63% want to impose crippling sanctions on Russia if Vladimir Putin invades; 58% support allowing Ukraine to apply for NATO membership; 49% say NATO should not stop Ukraine from joining the alliance to prevent a Russian invasion; and 48% support sending U.S. troops to Eastern Europe to bolster NATO allies in the region.

Only small minorities oppose most of these policies. But a significant number of Americans tell pollsters they are just not sure what to think. Many understandably wonder: Why is this the United States' problem? It's a fair question. And the answer is: Because if the United States allows Russia to invade and overthrow a European democracy, the consequences of our inaction would reverberate across the globe.

China is watching. If Putin can invade Ukraine, Taiwan may be next. In October, following President Joe Biden's disastrous August retreat from Afghanistan, China flew a record number of fighters and bombers into Taiwan's air defense zone -- the largest Chinese air force incursion ever against Taiwan. A few weeks ago, as Putin massed forces along Ukraine's border, China made another major incursion. If the United States fails to deter Russia less than a year after surrendering in Afghanistan, Beijing may calculate that it has a short window of weak U.S. presidential leadership to invade and crush Taiwan's democracy. The result could be a war in the Pacific.

North Korea and Iran are watching as well. If Putin invades, both countries will have every incentive to accelerate their development of nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them. They both know that after the Soviet Union collapsed, Ukraine inherited an arsenal of nearly 2,000 strategic nuclear weapons. But in December 1994, the United States brokered an agreement called the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances in which Ukraine agreed to give up those weapons along with its intercontinental ballistic missiles and strategic bombers. In exchange, Russia pledged to "refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine," while the United States and Britain promised "to provide assistance to Ukraine . . . if Ukraine should become a victim of an act of aggression."

In 2014, Russia violated that agreement when it invaded Ukraine and annexed Crimea. Now, Putin is threatening to finish the job. If he is allowed to do so, no nation will ever give up its nuclear weapons in exchange for U.S. security assurances again. To the contrary, the lesson from Pyongyang to Tehran will be that the only path to

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security is to develop and deploy nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them.

This could spark a global arms race. Saudi Arabia has pledged to develop its own nuclear arsenal if Iran becomes a nuclear power. Indeed, Amos Yadlin, former head of Israeli military intelligence, has warned that "the Saudis will not wait one month" to go nuclear. Other countries could follow suit. Nuclear nonproliferation as we know it would be dead.

And United States' credibility would lie in tatters—as would the credibility of NATO. The transatlantic alliance is already reeling from Biden's debacle in Afghanistan. But the founding purpose of NATO was to deter Russian aggression in Europe. If allies can't agree to take steps necessary to do that, then it's fair to ask: Why does NATO still exist?

The consequences of NATO's failure to deter Russia would resound across every alliance. NATO remains the touchstone of the U.S. commitment to its allies around the world. Every U.S. treaty alliance is measured against NATO. There is a reason 17 nations—including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Jordan and Israel -- are designated under U.S. law as "Major Non-NATO Allies." U.S. law also requires that Taiwan be treated as a Major Non-NATO Ally, without formal designation as such. Those commitments will be rendered meaningless if NATO's credibility is destroyed. The web of U.S. security alliances that has guaranteed peace and stability internationally would be decimated.

Since the end of the Cold War, democratic self-government has spread throughout the world. Of those still living in autocracy, most live in just two countries: China and Russia. It is no coincidence that those are the two countries that pose the greatest threat to peace. The unprecedented expansion of liberty over the past three decades has produced unprecedented prosperity at home and abroad. All of that is at risk if the last remaining autocracies are emboldened by the failure of the world's democracies to deter their aggression.

It happens in Ukraine. Standing by and allowing Russia to invade without cost or consequence would project weakness. And when our adversaries believe we are weak, they are more likely to test our resolve -- and more likely to miscalculate. And that could have consequences far beyond Kyiv.

(Washington Post)

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PUBLISHER & EDITOR

Lyndon Zaitz

publisher@keizertimes.com

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