

# K PUBLIC SQUARE

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## It is time to vote on a library

By LORE CHRISTOPHER

Fifteen years ago, Councilor Richard Walsh and I were chair and vice chair of a library task force. It failed.

We were proposing a custom, Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library System (CCRLS)-approved library that met Keizer's specific needs in a cost-effective manner to be voted on by the citizens in Keizer. We were denied our proposal by the CCRLS.

The Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service, a co-op of 17 libraries that share resources, databases, library loan and tax dollars collected *required* every new member to meet the minimum requirements as established by the Oregon Library Association (OLA). Those standards were overly onerous and would have required us to build and staff a 24,500 square foot building and 12 full-time employees and purchase and maintain two books for every resident of Keizer among other factors.

We asked to build a custom-designed library to meet Keizer's specific needs in a more cost-effective manner and we were denied.

So, what has changed?

CCRLS has agreed to change their by-laws allowing them to accept a library without meeting the OLA standards. Keizer will finally be able to determine what is right for Keizer and not be required to build a library we cannot afford.

We have a billing method.

We have ARPA funds to help with the costs.

In 2017, the Keizer City Council added two "Fees for Service" (taxes) to our water bills. The "fee for service" is a loophole in tax law that allows elected officials to add taxes without a vote if they choose to. This action was taken *without* a vote of the people of Keizer. It was voted on by the seven city councilors only. It was voted on after a year of "public education" that included five public meetings and a Parks Survey that was returned by

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1,100 parks supporters. This was an awesome effort to educate the Keizer public, it was a low, low bar and not enough to *tax* the Keizer public. This action taken by the 2017 Keizer City Council silenced 25,000 voters. None of us had an opportunity to vote for these taxes.

I am a supporter of public parks; the current tax is \$4 per month. This raises approximately \$500,000 per year for public parks. It is capped at \$8.00 per month or \$1 million dollars per year. It was imposed without a vote.

I am a supporter of police, the initial tax was \$4 per month, it was recently increased by 25% to \$5 per month or approximately \$600,000 per year. There is no cap. It was imposed without a vote.

The taxes for parks and police are a done deal. This should *never* have happened without a vote, and it should *never* happen again without a vote.

No new taxes for any reason should be added to our water bills without a vote.

I have asked the 2022 members of the city council to pass a resolution eliminating the imposing of taxes as a "fee for service" without a vote of the people. Only three of the 2017 councilors that imposed these taxes are still on the city council. The four newer councilors have agreed to support this resolution.

The 2022 City Council has wisely decided to establish a Library Task force to determine the appropriate library ballot to move forward with. This is the right decision.

There are 26,033 voters in the city of Keizer. This is our tax money. We can decide.

Let us vote for a library.

(Lore Christopher lives in Keizer.)

## Support for Paige Clarkson

To the Editor:

Here's why I am endorsing Paige Clarkson for re-election as Marion County District Attorney:

I worked with Paige Clarkson for many years while serving as a Salem Deputy Chief of Police and as the Woodburn Police Chief, so I have seen the results and rewards of Paige's work firsthand. An experienced lawyer and prosecutor, Paige believes in ensuring justice for victims with integrity, compassion and transparency. Paige takes great pride in her investment in Marion County law enforcement by providing "best practice" training to police officers, sheriffs' deputies and state troopers.

Paige is relentless in pursuing criminals who prey on victims, seeing those criminals incarcerated to keep people and our communities safe. Paige is committed to alternatives to incarceration when appropriate, through demonstrated work with drug court, veteran's court, mental health crisis coordination, and other means of diversion that gives offenders opportunities to improve while ensuring justice for victims.

Paige focuses efforts of her office on protecting children and vulnerable adults in our community from sexual and physical abuse. Paige believes public officials should be held to a higher standard and has a proven track records of holding public officials accountable. Paige works hard to coordinate precious public safety resources to obtain the most value in keeping Marion County a safe place to live, work and visit.

Elections have consequences. Make the right choice. Re-elect Paige Clarkson as Marion County District Attorney.

Jim Ferraris

Woodburn Police Chief (Ret.)

## Unequivocal support for a public library

To the Editor:

I am excited by Keizer Community Library (KCL)'s decision to seek public library status and I support their request for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. All Keizerites should.

KCL's attempt at joining the Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service (CCRLS) will do so much more for Keizer than expanding the selection of books and e-books available to residents. CCRLS membership will afford Keizerites access to research literature, academic journals, historical archives, legal materials and other important publications and media. It will also enable KCL to strengthen its available offerings in Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese and other languages spoken within Keizer.

Beyond broadening the reserve of material, KCL's metamorphosis into a public library would fulfill the library's promise since its inception: Access to the world at large, regardless of means or measure. A full-fledged public library furthers Keizer's standing as a city that values education and access to services for all citizens, including its most vulnerable. Keizer would, once again in its 40-year history, meet the moment.

Obstacles nonetheless remain. Should KCL successfully join the CCRLS, it would need a commitment of resources to successfully unlock the promise of expanded catalogues and programming—in staff, in hours of operation, in organization, in programs, perhaps even in physical space. Such a commitment may be iterative by necessity.

It would be in the best interests of Keizer's state legislators to support this burgeoning effort throughout those iterations,

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to help the public library bring out the best in Keizer, and vice versa. As a candidate for the Oregon House of Representatives, District 21, which includes Keizer, I would unequivocally support the direction of available funding and resources toward KCL, to help Keizer's public library realize its mission. All elected officials in this city should.

Robert Husseman, Keizer

## Brutalities in Ukraine

To the Editor:

After seeing on TV and reading in newspapers about the callous brutalities and monstrous behaviors carried out by Russian troops in the Ukraine, I was temporarily led to believe that DNA, having to do with humans practicing civilized behaviors, must be missing from the Russian mental makeup.

Of course, I was wrong, remembering that virtually all wars in recorded history have involved behaviors known to involve totally unacceptable, horrible, inhumane, brutal, uncivilized, even insane behaviors. For Americans, the most poignant example visited us when members of our military behaved badly during the war in Vietnam. Yet, there are countless other bad behavior examples from every war ever fought.

My point here is that there's nothing notably unique about these Russian troops.

We should keep in mind that many Russians have made great contributions to the West. Examples include aviation pioneer Igor Sikorsky, who's given credit for inventing the helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft, Vladimir Zworykin who helped create the television set, Moscow-born Sergey Brin co-founder of Google. No one has provided a better understanding of war's unpredictability than Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. Then there are the many musical geniuses exemplified by Tchaikovsky, Rimski-Korsakov and Rachmaninoff. A thick book could be written on Russian contributions to our modern world.

At the same time this piece is being written, by the reckless, feckless invasion of Ukraine by Russia's Putin, it's well-known that many of Russia's best and brightest are fleeing Russia, taking their brains, talents and aspirations with them. Coincidentally, we have a huge and growing shortage of medical doctors and, while our competition with China heats up, we also need persons in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Taking in these young Russians with brains full of ability, eager for freedom and western culture, who typically and already speak English, could help America immeasurably.

All this information leads the casual observer to suggest that, in addition to helping Ukraine fight Putin's war machine, we could directly help ourselves by recruiting and placing able Russians who see a future for themselves in America. We now send overseas a "King's Ransom" in guns and ammunition when we at home could practice our great wealth's use in moderation, investing in the multiplicity of challenges here, now in dire need of attention and resolution.

Gene H. McIntyre, Keizer