



The Bunkhouse Chronicle

Craig Rullman
Columnist

Don, Jr. goes to Hollywood

For sheer overwrought political drama, vigorously milked for every last drop of click-bait and ratings potential, last Tuesday was certainly a hoot.

Revelations that Donald Trump, Jr. “took a meeting” with the mysterious Russian attorney Natalia Veselnitskaya created the largest case of mass apoplexy in the politico-media machine since the final, uninspiring episode of “Seinfeld.”

Veselnitskaya, methinks, has received precious little attention, as the major organs of American information vigorously post breathless headlines such as “Donald Trump Jr., What We Know,” or the more pressing version: “What You Should Know About Donald Trump, Jr.”

Then there is my personal favorite, and by far the most

insistent: “Smoke Meets Fire!”

At any rate, Veselnitskaya carries a “sketchy CV,” according to hedge fund manager William Browder, who probably carries one as well, given his slimy tentacles in world finance.

Here’s a quick cast of characters involved in the kerfuffle, which I offer mostly for amusement: Sergei Magnitsky, who died in prison, the aforementioned William Browder, who was Magnitsky’s boss, Rinat Akhmetshin, a fixer for Russian oligarchs, and a guy named Denis Katsyv, who apparently launders money obtained in tax fraud schemes.

Toss in former Attorney General Loretta Lynch, MSNBC, and Paul Manafort, and we have the makings, for those of us who view the faraway land of Washington with a shrug and a bemused smirk, of a perfect situation comedy.

Mostly, I’m interested in how Phil Donahue handled the pressure of accurately handling the revelations, given his continued relevance to the fourth estate.

Leaping in with the collected *teppichfressers* of an over-heating American media juggernaut, Mr. Donahue — moral lamplight of the hard left who, without irony, brought us KGB talk show host Vladimir Pozner during

the Cold War — opined on MSNBC’s “Morning Joy” program that: “This is the darkest political moment in American history.”

In his defense, maybe Mr. Donahue’s shoes were too tight.

He might have, after taking a deep breath, and embracing the now passé journalistic requirement to provide broad historical context, mentioned some of the truly dark political moments our republic has endured.

The events between December 20, 1860, and June 8, of 1861, for instance, when 11 of the United States seceded from the Union and sparked a Civil War that killed an estimated 620,000 people — which in today’s numbers would be the equivalent of 6 million of our countrymen.

Or, he might have, for historical accuracy and at least a modicum of balanced reasoning, mentioned Wounded Knee, the Bud Dajo Massacre, the Teapot Dome Scandal, the McCarthy hearings, Watergate, or the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr.

But none of that contextualizing sells very well, or quickly, and the Russian meme is in equal parts built on speed, money, fascination, and pandering.

So Mr. Donahue joined the chorus, doubling down

on the hype and hysteria to grace us with his summation of the Russian question — with all of the same discernment and studied gravitas with which he investigated Vince McMahon and the World Wrestling Federation’s sex-and-steroids scandal in 1992.

At least he is consistent.

Which is more than can be said for many of the Deep State retreads who populate our news networks with a dirt track variety of hourly smashups that pass for reflective, responsible, and intelligent reporting of national issues.

The legendary combat correspondent George Weller, who saw everything and met everyone, once wrote: “Everywhere I go in the world I marvel at the narrow margin by which the truth gets into print, when it does.”

Boy, howdy. And it appears now, in the Twitter age, that we must all just learn to live with the burrs of instant punditry. Never mind the damage it is inflicting on our republic.

Holman Jenkins, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, suggested that: “If there was ever a need to rein in the supercritical hysteria that the websites of the *New York Times* and the *Washington*

Post and MSNBC on-air feed when their competitive dander is up, Tuesday showed it. To their credit, all three have since calmed down. Or maybe it’s post-coital lassitude...Scoops are overrated — the public is not worse for learning the news at 6:30 p.m., instead of 11:30 a.m., especially if somebody with a brain has had a chance to reflect on its presentation.”

Which isn’t to suggest there isn’t something rancid in the center of this big babushka doll. There might be. Heck, there probably is. And what thinking person would be surprised?

But let’s at least be honest with each other about our expectations: Mr. Smith doesn’t go to Washington anymore. At least he doesn’t last there very long, and particularly if he doesn’t take a few meetings with the holders of sketchy *curriculum vitae*, which probably fairly describes most everyone killing time in the Capitol rotunda.

And who, out here, in the rain shadow of the Cascades, honestly believes we will ever know the truth about any of it?

So I’ve come full circle. Maybe it really is just another episode of “Seinfeld,” which was, after all, “A show about nothing.”

Great hair doesn't happen by chance. It happens by appointment.

R

Salon Renaissance
Tim & Ronnica Westcott
Jenny Duey

541-588-6611
220 W. Cascade Ave.
Come in, Relax, Enjoy!

Northwest Wines, Friends & Cuisine

Exceptional Cuisine at the Metolius River

Kokanee Cafe
Camp Sherman, Oregon

SERVING DINNER TUESDAY - SUNDAY, 5 P.M. TO CLOSE
Go to www.kokaneecafe.com for reservations or call 541-595-6420

Summer is here! Not recovered from winter yet? Low energy? Poor mood? Still getting sick?

FREE CONSULTATIONS

MEANINGFUL MEDICINE

Kim Hapke, Naturopath
971-409-0908
Sisters Art Works Building

SISTERS ARTS ASSOCIATION

Presents 1st Annual Artist Studio Tour
Saturday, July 29

Paul Alan Bennett
Clarke Berryman
JoAnn Burgess
Gary Cooley
Caroline Stratton Crow
Jan Daggett
Michelle Deaderick
Linda Hanson
Sandy Melchiori
Ken Merrill
Randall Tillery
Susie Zeitner

sistersarts.org
for details

Lazy days of summer are a great time to SCHEDULE KIDS' DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

We're committed to your family's dental health!

Ben Crockett, D.D.S.

Check us out on facebook

541-549-9486 / 541-549-9110

410 E. Cascade Ave. ■ P.O. Box 1027 ■ Sisters, Oregon 97759
Hours: Mon., 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Tues.-Wed., 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Thurs., 7 a.m.-3 p.m.

SPRD SISTERS Park & Recreation DISTRICT

DON'T MISS IT!

ELEMENTARY FALL SPORTS

SOCCER • FOOTBALL • VOLLEYBALL

REGISTER BY AUGUST 5

For Information or to Register:
SistersRecreation.com
541-549-2091
1750 W. McKinney Butte Rd.

SNO CAP MINI STORAGE

- State-of-the-art Security Technology
- Sizes from 5x5 to 12x40
- Individual Gate Codes
- Long-term Discounts
- On-site Manager

Sisters Industrial Park
157 Sisters Park Dr. • 541-549-3575
www.SistersStorage.com