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OUR VIEW

Each week we recognize those people and organizations in the community deserving of public praise for the good things they do to make the North Coast a better place to live, and also those who should be called out for their actions.



SHOUTOUTS

This week's Shoutouts go to:

• **Ryan Snyder**, president of **Martin Hospitality in Cannon Beach**, who this month became the chairman of the Oregon Tourism Commission, which also oversees Travel Oregon. As commission chairman, Snyder will have one of the most influential voices in the state's tourism industry, leading the nine-member state board which approves and oversees the budget and strategic plan for Oregon's \$10.8 billion tourism industry. Snyder has been a vocal advocate for sustainable tourism, and has served on the commission since 2011. He became vice chairman last year.

• **Columbia Memorial Hospital**, which was recently designated as a Level IV trauma center by the Oregon Health Authority. **Trece Gurrad**, the hospital's vice president of patient care services, said the designation sets Columbia Memorial apart from other hospitals by providing comprehensive trauma services that meet national clinical excellence standards. CMH is the only hospital with the trauma designation in the Columbia-Pacific region.

• Organizers and the roughly 400 participants of last weekend's **Clatsop County Relay for Life** at Astoria High School, which raised awareness and more than \$29,000 for the American Cancer Society in the fight against the disease.



Damian Mulinix/For The Daily Astorian
Astoria Relay for Life chairwoman Laura Parvi speaks to the crowd prior to the start of Saturday's event at Astoria High School.

The event, in which 22 teams of walkers took pledges and raised money, included a survivor's walk on the high school's track and also a luminary service that honored those who have been lost to cancer.

• **Walt Ferguson**, of **Ferguson Timber**, who donated the funding for Warrenton High School's new indoor batting-cage facility. The facility was on display during the fifth annual Warrenton Alumni Baseball game earlier this month at Huddleston Field. The event drew more than 30 alums to play, many themselves in their 30s, and benefited the Warrenton Baseball Club. Participants included players from the Class of 1976 to 2016 and also featured a post-game Home Run Derby with a celebrity participant, Dane Gouge of Astoria Ford.

• **Sue Glenn**, of Warrenton, who represented the Astoria chapter of the **Daughters of the American Revolution** recently at the organization's 126th Continental Congress in Washington, D.C. More than 3,500 members of the DAR attended the event and Glenn was recognized for her third-place entry in the Fiber Arts division of the American Heritage competition.

• The **Best Western Astoria Bayfront Hotel**, which recently earned the Champion Green Award at the hotel chain's District II meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia. The award recognizes hotels that have a commitment to sustainable resources and to reducing their carbon footprint while meeting other high quality and service standards. The Astoria hotel was one of only 87, out of more than 2,100, of the chain's properties in the U.S. and Canada to receive the designation this year.



CALLOUTS

This week's Callouts go to:

• The **mindless driver** of a car that was dragging its muffler that caused sparks and ignited a mile-long series of small grass fires near Oregon City Wednesday afternoon. The fires temporarily closed a portion of southbound Oregon 213 while firefighters doused the flames from five separate fires, authorities said. Fortunately, there were no injuries and the incident certainly could have been worse given the dry conditions and the potential for wildfires in many areas of the state. It serves as a large reminder that small things like sparks from a dragging muffler or hot ash from a dropped cigarette can cause big problems this time of year.

Suggestions?

Do you have a Shoutout or Callout you think we should know about? Let us know at news@dailyastorian.com and we'll make sure to take a look.



All roads now lead to Kushner

By NICHOLAS KRISTOF
New York Times News Service

For a year, the refrain from the Trump camp has been a defiant mix of "Lock her up," "but the emails" and "fake news."



Now it turns out that what was fake wasn't the news but the Trump denials, that the truly scandalous emails were in the Trumps' own servers and that the person who may have committed a felony is actually Donald J. Trump Jr.

The writer Stephen King put it this way: "The news is real. The president is fake."

The question is where this goes next. I suggest two directions.

First, look beyond Donald Trump Jr. to Jared Kushner and to President Donald Trump himself.

Second, explore how Trump Jr.'s attempt at collusion with Russians may relate to the bizarre effort by Kushner to set up a secret communication channel with the Kremlin.

To back up, just in case you've been stuck on a desert island, here's what you missed this week. Donald Trump Jr. received an email in June 2016, eight days after his father clinched the Republican nomination for president, that said the Kremlin had "offered to provide the Trump campaign with some official documents and information that would incriminate Hillary. ... This is obviously very high level and sensitive information but is part of Russia and its government's support for Mr. Trump."

In 1960, the Kremlin made a similar offer to support the candidacy of John F. Kennedy against Richard Nixon, but the Kennedy campaign rebuffed it. Likewise, when the Al Gore campaign in 2000 received confidential materials relating to the George W. Bush campaign, it called the FBI.

Trump Jr. didn't call the FBI; instead, he responded, "I love it." He apparently arranged a phone call to discuss the material (we don't know that the call happened or, if it did, its content), and then set up a meeting for him, Kushner and campaign chairman Paul Manafort to meet with a person described in the emails as a "Russian government attorney."

In other words, informed of a secret Kremlin effort to use highly sensitive information about a former secretary of state (presumably obtained by espionage, for how else?) to manipulate an American election, Trump Jr. signaled, "We're in!"

"This was an attempt at collusion," noted U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon. It may or may not have amounted to a felony, for soliciting a foreigner to contribute something



AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster

Jared Kushner, right, senior adviser to President Donald Trump, and Ivanka Trump, the president's daughter, sit in the front row in the East Room of the White House in June.

"of value" in connection with an American election. The Predict-It betting website now lists gambling odds about whether Trump Jr. will be indicted.

The Trumps' defense is that the meeting was a "nothingburger" with no follow-up. That would be more compelling if the Trumps hadn't previously denied at least 20 times that such a meeting had ever taken place. Their credibility is in tatters.

Crucially, this is bigger than Donald Trump Jr.

The meeting gave the Kremlin potential blackmail material against the Trumps, and thus possibly leverage over them.

The Trumps insist that the president himself was unaware of the Russian offer. Yet the day after Trump Jr. received the first email and presumably had his phone conversation about the supposedly incriminating material, his father promised to give "a major speech" in which "we're going to be discussing all of the things that have taken place with the Clintons. I think you're going to find it very informative and very, very interesting."

That speech targeting Hillary Clinton didn't take place. But on June 15, the first leak of stolen Democratic materials did.

Then there's Kushner. Trump Jr.

forwarded the emails to Kushner, whose response was to attend the meeting, although he apparently left within 10 minutes. Kushner later neglected to report the meeting and others with Russians on his SF-86 forms to receive national security clearance (intentional omission is a felony).

The meeting gave the Kremlin potential blackmail material against the Trumps, and thus possibly leverage over them.

In addition, McClatchy reports that investigators in Congress and the Justice Department are exploring whether the Trump campaign digital operation — supervised by Kushner — helped guide Russia's remarkably sophisticated efforts to use internet bots to target voters with fake news attacking Hillary Clinton.

Then there was the extraordinary initiative by Kushner in the transition period to set up the secret communications channel. There's no indication that the channel was actually established, and the assumption has been that the communications would have required visits to Russian consulates — which would be bizarre.

But Barton Gellman, a careful national security writer, has another theory. He notes that James Comey, the ousted FBI director, in testimony to Congress referred to the risk that this channel could "capture all of your conversations." Gellman suggests that this may mean that Kushner sought mobile Russian scrambling equipment to take to Trump Tower.

Look, this is a murky, complicated issue. But this much we know: Kushner attended a secret meeting whose stated purpose was to advance a Kremlin effort to interfere in the U.S. election, he then failed to report it, and finally he sought a secret channel to communicate with the Kremlin.

One next step is clear: Take away Jared Kushner's security clearance immediately.

WHERE TO WRITE

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