

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

KATHRYN B. BROWN
Publisher

DANIEL WATTENBURGER
Managing Editor

TIM TRAINOR
Opinion Page Editor

Founded October 16, 1875

OUR VIEW

EOU a rural rescue

In a nation that too often looks down on its rural residents, Eastern Oregon University embraces them.

Its ties to rural America are so strong that the just-concluded 2018 Oregon Legislature unanimously declared EOU as “Oregon’s Rural University.” State Sen. Bill Hansell of Athena carried House Bill 4153 on the Senate floor, and Gov. Kate Brown last Tuesday signed the bill into law.

The designation through HB 4153 is more than symbolism. It is a recognition that EOU has achieved a remarkable niche in higher education. EOU combines a sense of place — the La Grande-based university operates 11 centers throughout rural Oregon — with a well-regarded distance learning program that enrolls students from throughout Oregon, and beyond.

Regional universities such as EOU were cast adrift when Oregon’s big research universities convinced the Legislature five years ago to dissolve the State Board of Higher Education in favor of independence for each institution. Meanwhile, EOU had suffered such

turnover in leadership that state Rep. Greg Smith of Heppner has worked with seven EOU presidents during his nearly 18 years in the Legislature.

EOU has prospered under the homegrown leadership of Tom Insko, an Eastern Oregon native and EOU graduate who was plucked from the private sector to become university president in 2015.

Insko has been a consistent advocate for EOU in the Oregon Capitol. The 2018 Legislature approved \$9.9 million in bonds for a new EOU fieldhouse, which will be constructed with cross-laminated timber, and \$390,000 for replacing the track and related infrastructure.

Every Oregon university has its niche. Western Oregon University serves many first-generation students, and promotes itself as providing a close-knit, private-college style of education at a public-university price. The University of Oregon is the state’s flagship university and one of only 62 institutions in the prestigious Association of American Universities. Oregon



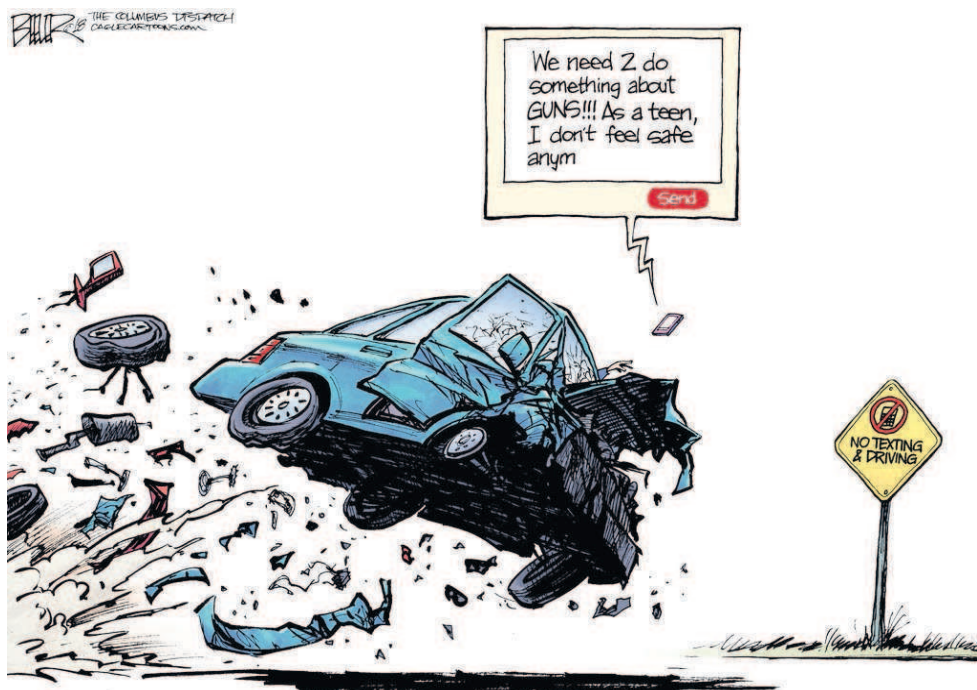
EOU file photo
Eastern Oregon University in La Grande was designated as “Oregon’s Rural University” during the 2018 legislative session.

State University is a land, sea, space and sun grant university — one of only three U.S. universities to obtain all four designations.

But Eastern Oregon University is the first institution to have its official designation — “Oregon’s Rural University” — incorporated into state

law. That status should enhance its opportunities to promote rural economic development and to obtain grants that support its rural mission.

Most of all, the designation underscores the value of a rural education and EOU as the right place for that education.



YOUR VIEWS

Founding Fathers wanted citizens to be armed

I am responding to an opinion from Tom Hebert “Time to talk about guns” that was published March 10.

Was there a misplaced comma in the Second Amendment? If there were many misspelled words, then there is a reasonable argument to say there should be a comma. Some experts can be wrong for many reasons. Some reasons are that they misinterpret data, or hide data that disproves their theory.

Here is some history. The beloved militia were actually traitors and outlaws. Paul Revere was a traitor. Here are the facts. The 1783 Peace of Paris was signed by the British saying they no longer own America. Before 1783, the British were the law of the land. Now the federal and state government is the law of the land. So the National Guard is like part-time British military prior to 1783.

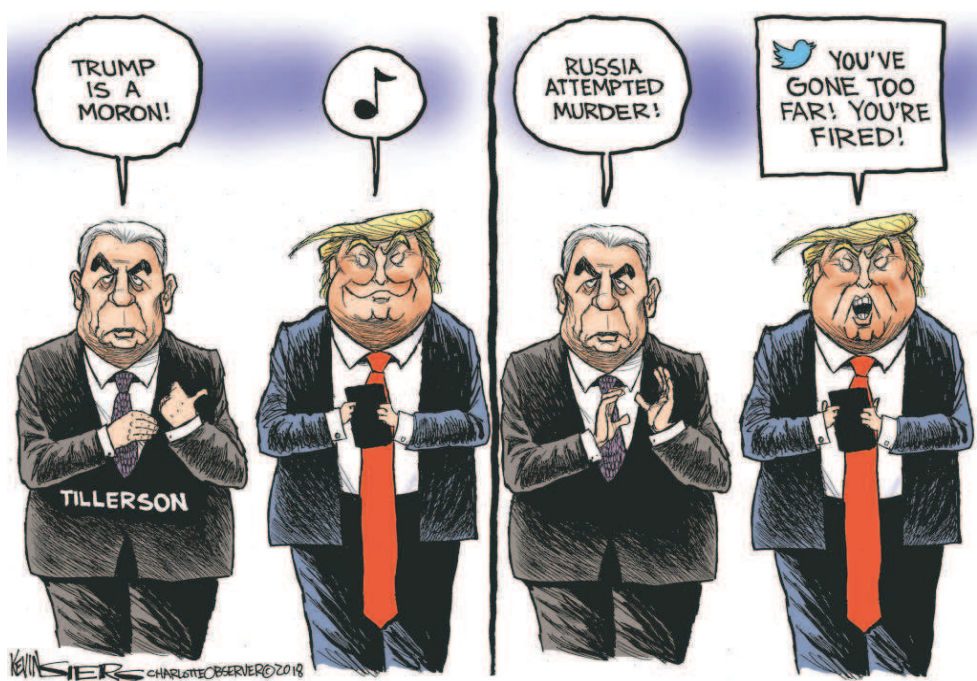
Paul Revere rode in 1775 against the

government. All those rebels that broke the law of the land and killed government soldiers gave us freedom from the British. We came to love them, as people who sacrificed everything to give us freedom. That is why it is said “Victors write the history books.”

Six of those traitors (in British eyes) who wrote the Declaration of Independence also wrote the Constitution. Was the Founding Fathers’ intent that regular citizens should not have a right to own guns? Our Founding Fathers knew power corrupts over time. That is why they tried to balance powers of the government.

Did our Founding Fathers forget the comma? Both sides have some valid considerations. The Founding Fathers knew that any government becomes corrupt over time. They wanted to ensure freedom from tyrannical governments. They knew armed citizens may need to fight and kill government soldiers, like they had to.

Walter Hammermeister
Hermiston



OTHER VIEWS

York: House GOP delivers blow to Trump-Russia collusion story

It has long been the key question of the Trump-Russia affair: Did Donald Trump’s presidential campaign collude with Russia to influence the 2016 election? Now, we have the first official, albeit partisan, answer.

“We have found no evidence of collusion, coordination, or conspiracy between the Trump campaign and the Russians,” said Republicans on the House Intelligence Committee Monday, as they released findings from a 14-month Trump-Russia investigation.

GOP Rep. Mike Conaway, who formerly oversaw the committee probe, said, “We found perhaps bad judgment, inappropriate meetings, inappropriate judgment in taking meetings.” But no collusion.

Committee investigators looked at the events often cited as evidence of collusion. They looked at the June 9, 2016, meeting in Trump Tower in which Donald Trump Jr. and other top campaign officials talked to a group of Russians who promised, but did not deliver, damaging information on Hillary Clinton. They looked at the activities of peripheral Trump advisers George Papadopoulos and Carter Page. They looked at the allegations in the Trump dossier. They looked at all that, and they could not find a thread connecting events into a narrative of collusion.

“Only Tom Clancy or Vince Flynn or someone else like that could take this series of inadvertent contacts with each other, or meetings, whatever, and weave that into some sort of a fictional page-turner spy thriller,” Conaway said. “But we’re not dealing with fiction, we’re dealing with facts. And we found no evidence of any collusion, of anything that people were actually doing, other than taking a meeting they shouldn’t have taken or inadvertently being in the same building.”

The collusion question is the most contentious of the Trump-Russia investigation. Some Democrats have long said we know enough now to prove collusion. Indeed, just last month, Rep. Adam Schiff, the ranking Democrat on the Intelligence Committee, said, “There is already, in my view, ample evidence in the public domain on the issue of collusion if you’re willing to see it.”

When Republicans released their findings, though, Schiff did not mention collusion, choosing instead to accuse the majority of cutting short the investigation and placing “the interests of protecting the president over protecting the country.”

Would-be believers in collusion could suffer another disappointment later this year when the bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee releases its report. Shortly after the House findings were made public, the chairman of that committee, Sen. Richard Burr, told CNN he has not



BYRON YORK
Comment

seen evidence of collusion, despite his committee having spent more than a year looking for it.

“I’ve read a lot about it, but I haven’t seen any evidence of collusion,” Burr said, according to the CNN report. Asked about repeated efforts by Russians to coordinate with the Trump campaign, Burr said: “It’s collusion on part of the Russians, I guess, but not the Trump campaign.”

Burr’s official position is that the investigation into collusion continues, but he has sent out signal after signal that he doesn’t think it happened — an opinion that supports what House Republicans found.

Yes, the House committee findings are partisan — they were released under the leadership of the committee’s controversial chairman, Rep. Devin Nunes, are the work of Republicans on the committee, and are sure to be disputed by Democrats.

But they are still the first official report ruling out collusion in the 2016 campaign.

And they were released in the context of some nervousness on the left that the collusion narrative, a fundamental element of Trump resistance, might not work out. The comic version of that came on “Saturday Night Live,” in a skit — a parody of “The Bachelor” — in which special counsel Robert Mueller broke the news to an anti-Trump true believer that collusion might not have occurred.

“So, uh, you know that I’ve been struggling a little bit over the last few months just trying to figure this whole thing out and just grasp everything,” the actor playing Mueller said. “The reality is I don’t think I can give you everything that you want right now, and I think you sense that.”

“So ... what?” said the stunned woman. “You don’t have Trump on collusion?” “I think I need to explore the possibility that I have a stronger case with some other stuff,” the Mueller actor said. “I’m just trying to be honest with you in telling you I can’t commit to collusion right now.”

Devastated, the woman responded: “Collusion is literally the only thing that I’ve been looking forward to the past year.”

Back in the real world, none of Mueller’s indictments or pleas so far have alleged collusion. But it is important to note that we do not know what is coming next.

And in the skit, the respected special counsel Mueller delivered the news. In real life, it was House Republicans. And a lot of Democrats, and some in the public as well, will simply not believe House Republicans’ word on the matter. They’ll wait to hear from other sources.

That is coming, perhaps soon, and the collusion question will finally be settled.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for *The Washington Examiner*.

The findings are partisan, but they are the first official report ruling out collusion.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication in the newspaper and on our website. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address concerns about individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and a daytime phone number. The phone number will not be published. Unsigned letters will not be published. Send letters to managing editor Daniel Wattenburger, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.