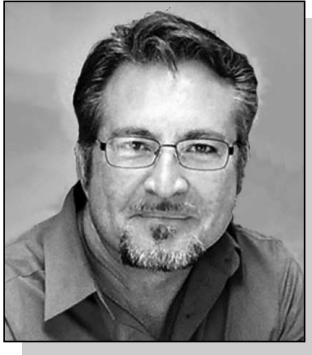


**Siuslaw News**  
**P.O. Box 10**  
**Florence, OR 97439**

# Opinion



## Trust, partnership with you are worth striving for

ence materials that had been collecting along a wall of shelves in our newsroom since the late 1990s.

With 2017 looming, it seemed like the perfect time to sort through the past in order to benefit our newsroom's future.

Coincidentally, it also got me out of washing the dog, but you didn't read that here.

Over the course of a few hours, I time-traveled through about 50 years of local history captured in aged clippings, folded newspaper pages, pamphlets and long-defunct smaller community publications like "The Fog Dog" and "Beachcomber," all of which played a role in chronicling our area's colorful past.

They are also things you'll never find with a Google search. They exist now only in the memories of those who wrote the stories, lived the experience or, in this case, remain preserved in the

However, my trip through the past served to reinforce the unique responsibility and privilege we have, as a newspaper, to be the keepers of the past, chroniclers of the present and conversation for the future —

these pages each week.

"Integrity" is a term that has come into question within the realm of journalism far too often in recent years, particularly at the national level where the need to be first is sometimes more important than the responsibility of being factual. And while we aren't perfect, we certainly try — even if it means holding a breaking news story to make sure the information is complete and not open to speculation or assumption.

As we head into 2017, I look forward to the conversations we'll have together on the phone, through emails, visits here in my office or while waiting in the grocery line.

It's these conversations that build the trust and partnership I spoke about earlier, and the integrity I hope you will feel is reflected on these pages with each issue.

My hope is that some day, when another Siuslaw News editor is reading and organizing the archives of our history, like me they will be moved by the same sense of responsibility and privilege that now rests easily in that series of boxes along the shelves in our newsroom.

*Write Siuslaw News editor Ned Hickson at nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com or P.O. Box 10, Florence, Ore. 97439.*

I spent part of my New Year's weekend here in the newsroom, tackling a re-organization project of files and materials that have been staring at me for nearly a decade — the gaze of which grew stronger after becoming editor in September.

The project entailed sifting through boxes of old newspaper issues, special publications, documents, journalistic guidelines and historic refer-

### From the Editor's Desk

NED HICKSON

archives of a small newsroom.

I have to admit, I came into the New Year without any concrete resolutions aside from the usual — and ongoing — intentions of eating healthier, exercising more and procrastinating less (something I keep putting off).

all while serving as a reflection of our community's hopes, challenges and particular moment in time.

That being said, I'm not making a resolution as much as offering you my resolve, as editor, to continue striving for your trust and partnership on

### LETTERS

#### Checks and balances

The Dec. 24, 2016, article concerning the Port's audit, I believe, needs some clarification. The article reports a decrease in net position of \$189,420. It's accurate to say there is a change in the value of the Port's assets, but this is not a loss.

"Net position" includes all of a business' cash, property, expenses and liabilities. It measures everything.

The Net Position Statement on the audit includes both cash and the value of our properties.

As the article reported, Port revenue was up by \$65,868. Port expenses were down \$19,378. Our revenues (from the marina, campground, leases and property taxes) are about \$1.4 million. Our expenses are about \$951,000 (excluding depreciation).

The Port owns seven buildings, a marina and a wharf. The value of our assets exceeds \$12 million. Every year, these assets depreciate in value. Depreciation is treated as an expense on the Statement of Revenues.

This year, our depreciation expense was calculated as \$378,876. When the depreciation is included, it appears as if we are operating at a loss because there is a decrease in net position.

Depreciation does not appear on a balance sheet or Statement of Cash Flows.

The audit reports states, "The Port's net position at June 30, 2016 at \$5,384,440 is a 189,420 decrease from \$5,573,860 at June 30, 2015, which represents a change of 3.4 percent. This decrease mostly occurred because depreciation expense was larger than capital expenditures."

In terms of our budget, we generated more money this year than last year, and spent less. The Port's financial picture is strong and healthy. The Port can do better, for example, by reducing its debt burden, and we are actively working on this, but the amount of depreciation expense we incur is a function of the amount of property we own.

Our cash position is good.

All of the Port's financial information is on the website ([www.portofiuslaw.com](http://www.portofiuslaw.com)), including the most recent audit. I invite readers to review these documents for themselves, and to attend a Port Commission meeting.

We are always happy to hear people's concerns.

*Steven Leskin  
 Port of Siuslaw Manager*

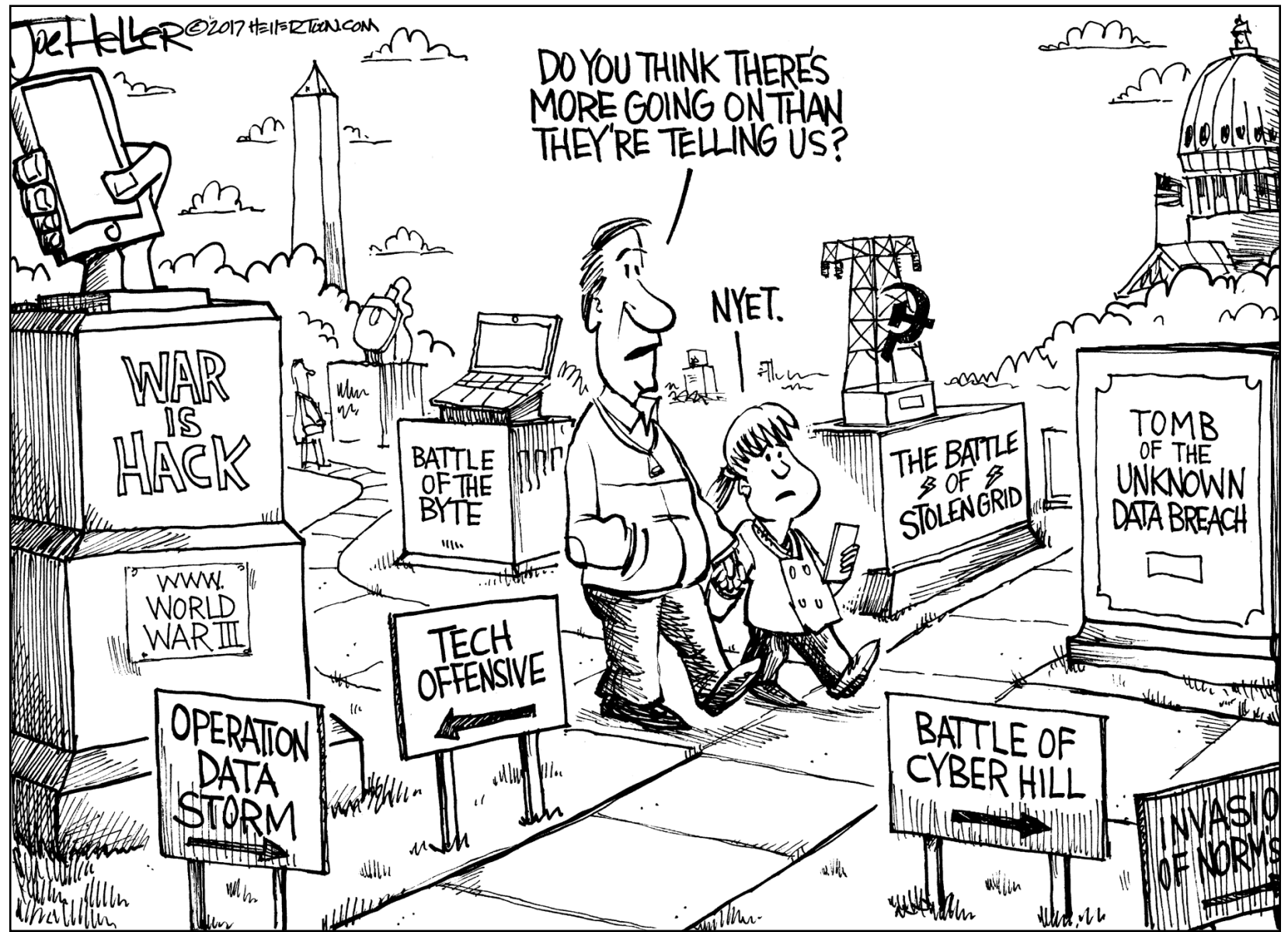
#### Russian ties

The President-elect's failure to take seriously the threat to American democracy by Vladimir Putin is frightening to me. The CIA and other American intelligence agencies have determined that Putin hacked the DNC and released information in an attempt to meddle in our free and fair election.

This is cyber warfare.

When the President-elect won the Republican primary, one of the first things he did was to change one of the planks in the Republican platform language from providing "lethal defensive weapons" to "appropriate assistance" for Ukraine in their efforts to remain a free country.

The President-elect also has stated his opin-



ion that NATO is obsolete. NATO has been a thorn in Putin's side in his quest to take Eastern European free states by force to put them under Russian rule.

There were rumors throughout the campaign that the President-elect and/or some of his staffers had connections to Putin. What happens if President-elect owes money to Russian state controlled banks?

We wouldn't know because he won't release his tax returns.

His nominee for Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson (who is the CEO of ExxonMobil) is a personal friend of Putin's. Should he get the 2014 sanctions against Russia (for the takeover of Crimea) lifted, ExxonMobil stands to make billions of dollars from its partnership with Russia and its Arctic oil field.

The President-elect has made no secret of his admiration for Putin, a man known by many as a brutal, vengeful dictator who would like nothing more than to see American democracy fail.

Let us hope that the President-elect doesn't prove to be a Putin puppet.

Without a free press, we would know none of this about the President-elect, who prefers to get information to the public through Tweets that are not fact-checked and often full of misinformation and confusion bordering on blatant propaganda.

*Marybeth Marengo  
 Florence*

#### Playing into Putin's hands

It would seem that, unwittingly or wittingly,

Donald Trump is playing into Putin's hands with his denial of Russian hacks, his refusal to accept 15 U.S. intelligence agencies confirmation of the Russian hacks and the statements he has made to the effect that he knows more than the generals of the U.S. military.

His complimentary remarks about Putin being "very smart" are true; as the former head of the Russian KGB, he is fully capable of manipulating President-elect Trump and the U.S. through cyber hacking.

One would hope that he accepts the information from intelligence briefings and that he continues the tradition of daily briefings regardless of how "boring" he has said they are.

Also of concern to me is how debts to Russian and Chinese banks could influence U.S. policies? I definitely don't trust Putin and, with Trump's high regard for him, I'm uncertain as to how much we can trust our President-elect with the nation's military and financial security.

*Jon Tipple  
 Florence*

#### Not grounded in reality

I am perplexed by the attitude of letter writers like Mr. Buttke (Dec. 28). The spike in hate crimes, bigotry and intimidation I lay at President Obama's doorstep. Since he took office eight years ago, the deaths of law enforcement has risen dramatically, along with rioting, destruction of property and the burning of the American Flag.

I feel the reason the Democrat Party is in disarray is because it is not grounded in reality and,

instead, would rather blame Donald Trump for everything before he has even taken office.

It is time for our leaders to start healing the racial divide that has been encouraged by members of the Obama administration.

*Pamela Richardson  
 Florence*

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor concerning issues affecting the Florence area and Lane County.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters should be limited to about 300 words and must include the writer's full name, address and phone number for verification.

Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Libelous and anonymous letters or poetry will not be published.

All submissions become the property of Siuslaw News and will not be returned.

**Write to:**  
**Editor@TheSiuslawNews.com**