

Siuslaw News  
P.O. Box 10  
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# Opinion

**The First Amendment**  
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend." —Thomas Jefferson (1800)

## LETTERS

### NEED TO OPEN OUR EYES TO BULLYING

There is a movie available to check out at the Siuslaw Public Library that I recommend for all people to see. It is called "Bully" with a red circle around the title and a red line crossing the circle. It will open your eyes to the terrible hazing that many young people experience if they have any little thing in their appearance or demeanor that makes them different from others.

For too long, adults let it go with "it's just growing pains or they'll get over it." A bully doesn't stop until he or she is made to stop — either by another standing up to him or her or by the intervention of another person.

Too many young people are taking their own lives when they simply can't live with bullying anymore. Some of the students commenting in the movie said that they were always the last to be chosen for games and that many events in school were like popularity contests in which they could never participate.

Last Sunday evening, I attended (along with about 150 people) the Serve 2 Unite

Mission presented at the Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw.

We listened to the story of two men who became friends after a terrible shooting at a Sikh Temple in Wisconsin. Their message is about turning hate into kindness and love — something we all need to work at.

My hope is that bullying in schools and playgrounds could be eliminated altogether.

For that to happen, we all need to take part.

—Nancy Rickard  
Florence

### INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES OVERTHROWING OUR OWN GOVERNMENT

The Mueller investigation is a sham intended to portray U.S. intelligence agencies as being opposed to tyranny.

I predict it will exonerate Trump and proclaim justice being served by indicting Russians beyond the reach of U.S. law and, ultimately, prosecuting a few Trump associates for blatantly illegal but

not relevant activities.

With a 60-plus-year record of overthrowing democratically elected leaders worldwide and replacing them with fascist dictators or extreme right-wing conservatives, why would our intelligence agencies suddenly change direction?

They have not; they are just bringing it home.

—Bill Durst  
Florence

### TRIP ABROAD WAS SIMPLY AN EMBARRASSMENT

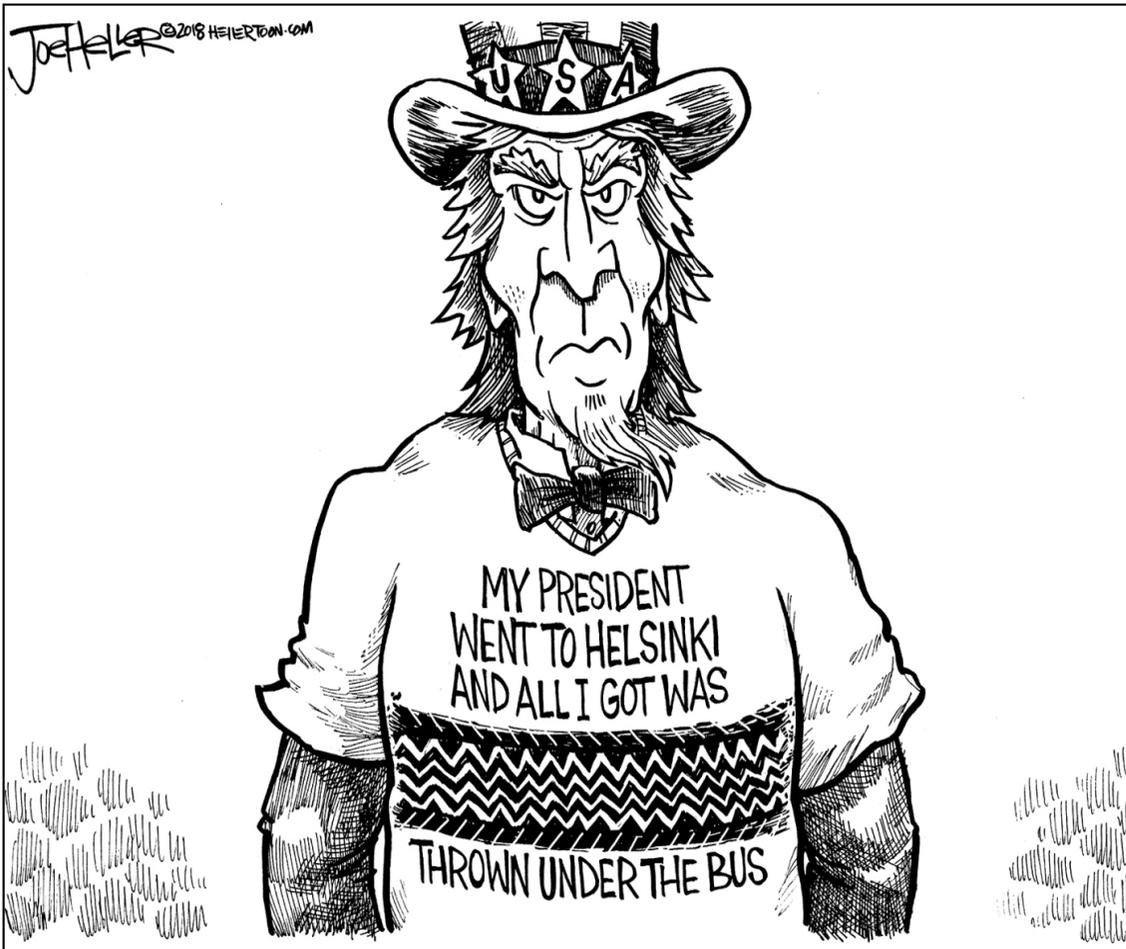
"The Donald" made a fool of himself during his trip to Europe, both verbally and physically. He tripped over himself from the meeting with NATO; the embarrassing time spent with the Queen of England; and bowing to Putin.

What he did was embarrass us, those who live in the United States of America.

If the GOP does not sanction and defy him come November, there will no longer be a country as we know it.

Impeach him.

—Win Jolley  
Florence



## We've come a long way since The Dixie Chicks controversy — but in the wrong direction



this violence, and we're ashamed that the president of the United States is from Texas."

Reaction from the other side of the pond in America was swift and, as the coming weeks and months would prove,

I was living in Texas at the time and I can tell you that the sense of betrayal felt by the Lone Star State ran deep.

Ultimately, the backlash ended what had been a cosmic rise to superstardom.

generalities when he specifically called out the FBI, remarking "They said they think it's Russia. But I have President Putin; he just said it's *not* Russia," later adding: "President Putin was extremely strong and powerful in his denial today," effectively saying he took Putin at his word.

Regardless of the president's personal feelings on the Mueller investigation and talk of collusion between foreign and domestic interests participating in swaying the 2016 election, to shake hands and openly express supporting the word of a strongman dictator over America's top intelligence agency and the people it serves is, at the very least, disgraceful.

At its worst, it raises the question of whether Russia's influence has already swayed its way into the White House.

In an era where taking a knee in protest has created so much controversy and division, it would seem we've come a long way since the Dixie Chicks' remarks drew disdain from so many Americans.

But, apparently, we've come a long way in the wrong direction.

### From the Editor's Desk

Ned Hickson

unrelenting. Many country fans and Americans in general felt the group betrayed a sacred trust between the American people and their elected president, regardless of which side of the vote they had landed on.

Simply put: You don't "dis" the president when you're on foreign soil.

Almost instantaneously, radio stations stopped playing the group's music, country music starts like Toby Keith and Reba McEntire spoke out against the group, one-time fans and even radio stations held CD-crushing parties during which cars and trucks were driven over stacks of Dixie Chicks albums.

Now, 15 years later, in a not-so-subtle twist of irony, it's the American people and the intelligence agencies representing their interest around the world who have been disrespected by the comments made by their president while on foreign soil.

The reaction? Swift ambiguity.

While a few in the U.S. Congress have used terms like "shameful" and "bizarre" to describe President Trump's vocal support of Russian president Vladimir Putin's denial of election meddling, the vast majority have offered little more than finger wagging and generalities.

The president offered no such

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## Siuslaw News

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 148 Maple St. in Florence, Lane County, Oregon. A member of the National Newspaper Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. Periodicals postage paid at Florence, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to [PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com](mailto:PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com).

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### NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$76; 6-month in-county, \$52; 10-weeks subscription, \$23; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$99; 6-month out-of-county, \$65; 10-weeks subscription, \$29; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$125; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$71.

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The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. 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.

Letters that are anonymous, libelous, argumentative, sarcastic or contain accusations that are unsourced or documented will not be published.

Letters containing poetry or from outside the Siuslaw News readership area will only be published at the discretion of the editor.

### POLITICAL/ELECTION LETTERS:

Election-related letters must address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.

Letters must 1) Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates; 2) Ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay; and 3) explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.

Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.

As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

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