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## Ron DeSantis' order to honor Rush Limbaugh is unworthy of our flag | Opinion

**Donato (Danny) Pietrodangelo** Your Turn

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A large swath of the nation gasped — no, actually, gagged — when Donald Trump awarded Rush Limbaugh the Medal of Freedom. This wasn't E. B. White, T. S. Eliot, Edward R. Murrow, Walt Disney, Carl Sandburg, Jonas Salk, Colin Powell, Walter Cronkite, Yo Yo Ma or Rosa Parks — past honorees.

This was a man who called a 12-year-old girl the “White House Dog,” and called former president Obama a “Halffrican American.”

Now, adding insult to injury, Ron DeSantis plans to recognize Limbaugh by directing flags in the state be lowered to half-staff. Like the medal, lowering a flag to half-staff is a sign of profound respect meant to honor the honorable, the peacemakers, the patriots — not to acknowledge the death of a hate-filled buffoon who got filthy rich spewing anger and insults in a pitiful attempt to be clever.

**More:** Plan to lower flags for Rush Limbaugh causing controversy, consternation in Florida Governor, say it isn't so. Assure us you're not really going to subject Florida to yet another embarrassment. Wasn't this week's "shots for my supporters" national call-out enough?

DeSantis is quoted as saying Limbaugh inspired “a loyal army of American patriots” and “no one could replace him.” Please, God, make it so.

This was a cut-out of a man who was a racist, sexist and divisive hypocrite, whose stock in trade was riling-up his listeners with hateful, dishonest commentary and claims of fictional conspiracies. Most of all, he was just mean.

Among his litany of absurd ramblings: He claimed the Deep Water Horizon oil spill and the mass murder of 50 worshipers at two mosques in New Zealand were staged by leftists and that

the governor of Virginia let the Charlottesville white supremacist riots in Charlottesville worsen for political advantage.

He compared the deadly Capitol riots to the American Revolution, and fabricated stories about what happened last summer, saying, “They’ve burned down political federal courthouses, after barricading people inside of them. They’ve taken over freeways. They’ve taken over entire cities.” “They” being Black Lives Matter.

**More:** When are American flags lowered to half-staff? It comes down to honor and respect

A recounting of his caustic divisive commentary could go on for pages. And this is the guy the governor wants to lower the flags for.

A man whose purpose in life was to denigrate women, Blacks, Asians, Native Americans, gay people — most anyone whose trashing might get a rise out of his listeners. This was a man who professed to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. As someone with 12 years of parochial schooling, I find that baffling.

Limbaugh went to his grave denying Joe Biden was president. In the past, following Trump’s disparaging comments about Haiti, I wrote about how, if we hope to teach our children well, a president’s words matter.

Gov. DeSantis, please remember: A governor’s actions speak louder than words.

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