

THE OLD EAGLE

BY DON JAMES

"We have to keep the newspapers free in the hopes that one day they will use that freedom to tell the truth for the whole people."

~JOHN PETER ALTGELD

For those who remember, we of this portion of the Oregon North Coast had our own few years of *Camelot* in the early 1970s — and we had our own unique oracle called the *North Coast Times Eagle* which was published in a ramshackle building in Wheeler and distributed worldwide to the delight of readers.

When I came to Cannon Beach in 1969 to head the writing section of the Haystack program I found the town and the North Coast to be among the most charming places I had encountered.

I had been to Carmel, the East Coast & Middle West. I had been a wire service reporter, editor, advertising "creative director," corporation president, and eventually an educator. Probably more than a million words I had written had been published. Perhaps, as an interviewer wrote about me, "The man has been around so much it is almost redundant to interview him."

A nice, but probably true observation. I have been. And I mention this to give me a measure of credence in what I have to say.

This is a tribute to that small, almost insignificant newspaper, our *North Coast Times Eagle* that attracted worldwide circulation. Not only did it delight countless readers, but it also attracted many exceptionally fine young persons who were struggling to find a voice in the disastrous aftermath of war. They worked for practically nothing but with heart, dedication and a rightful demand to be heard. They came and went, almost 200 of them, and many continue helping shape the nation's destiny.

Robert Stanley Need, its founder and editor, was one of the finest men I have known. He wrote an outstanding novel about Vietnam (*his war*) which, because of the literary market of the time, was never published. It should have been.

We met one summer afternoon in his newspaper office near deadline for the next edition. He was tall, somewhat gangling, with dark friendly but penetrating eyes, and a welcoming smile. His voice was thoughtful and passionate. The one thing he did not say but you quickly knew — he was a man with a dream and he was on the way to making it come true for himself and others.

When you knew him better you learned that he was a man of unusual depth. Although a pragmatist he was also an idealist, a scholar, a humanist. In his small house above the Nehalem River was a grand piano that almost filled the living room. He played beautifully.

The afternoon we met he took me on a tour of his newspaper in an old two-story building in Wheeler that had formerly been a bank and has since been torn down. Because he could not possibly afford an expensive offset press to print the newspaper, he and his continually revolving staff wrote, composed and 'stripped' in the pages to be photographed for the offset plates elsewhere. It is a common practice with small newspapers across the country.

To get his publication ready many steps were necessary that called for specific equipment that ranged from typewriters to light tables. Somehow Bob Need and his people collected, improvised and put together a startling array of used, discarded, worn, homemade and unusual equipment. The crew could work at any of the tasks from covering and writing stories to stripping in the layout sheets.

Although they had their own photographers, they established their distinctive trademark by using very old line drawings clipped from old catalogues, magazines, books, or any printed artwork that often dated back to the 1850s and 1860s. Combined with "spot" news stories of what was happening at publication time, the total effect was unusual and outstanding, including headlines in old type fonts. When necessary they used photos by staff photographers which were often of high quality.

If the *Times Eagle* had its old fashioned image, readers quickly learned that the news it printed was highly contemporary, on-target and frequently startling. Need inspired his staff to write as they saw it and heard it. They did, possibly shockingly so at times, and thankfully so at others.

It is a well known fact a newspaper needs advertising to exist. Although advertisers from metropolitan areas frequently saw the value of the *Times Eagle*, possibly too many local advertisers for one reason or another failed to recognize certain truths of marketing, audience penetration and advertising intricacies well known to advertising agencies and experts.

Perhaps it can be almost amusingly illustrated by advertising by a dairy firm that tags its ads with: "Support your local cow."

Unfortunately too many advertisers in the area did not see the advantage they could probably garner if they would "support their local newspaper."

The *Times Eagle* folded at Wheeler. Robert Stanley Need's dream was almost lost.

But not entirely. One of that original staff kept the dream and faith alive.

The late Don James was a well known and beloved Oregon writer, teacher and mentor. He was a frequent contributor to the original *Times Eagle* and wrote this memoir in 1984 for the *Born Again Bird's* 5th anniversary when he was 79 years old.

This 24th anniversary issue of the resurrected NCTE is in memory of my father William Copeland McCusker, 90 on June 2 (he died 5 years ago), and Hideo Hashimoto, world renowned peacemaker, friend and spiritual mentor for half of my life, who died June 22 at age 92.

~MICHAEL PAUL McCUSKER



EUGEN MAIER-KRIEG

ACTUAL FREE SPEECH TV

BY KATE O'NEAL

There is an amazing channel now available over the DISH satellite system called 'Free Speech TV'. A listener sponsored station with no corporate underwriting, FSTV is truly free to do investigative reporting and air documentaries and films not necessarily corporate/government friendly. (Yes, dear ones, there really is such a critter.)

"Democracy Now!," the FSTV news broadcast available three times each weekday, comes from the loft of an old firehouse just blocks from Ground Zero, NY. The walls are papered with news articles, posters and photographs. Cuts from songs of protest and videos of demonstrations from around the globe often comprise the brief interludes between the stories. And these are stories one is hard pressed to find anywhere but perhaps the internet and foreign newspapers. Some have been headlined around the globe, but covered only scantily or not at all in U.S. media. Broadcasts direct from Baghdad and Palestine and even reports from small independent videographers around the world help make this the most informative, astonishing news program available in the United States.

The hour long news broadcast (expanded to two hours now on Pacifica radio stations) excels in its major investigative scoops and meaty interviews well seasoned with spicy tidbits. A recent goodie involved the recall of some baby car seats. What made this especially interesting was that there were no defects in the seats, only the instructions. The instructions were written above a fifth grade reading level and, therefore, not comprehensible to a large part of the American public who, consequently, installed them incorrectly. (Approximately one-third of the U.S. public is barely functionally literate now. Shows, doesn't it?)

These are the opening lines of some recently featured articles:

"The U.S. and Britain relied on a forged document in making the case that Iraq has a nuclear program."

"Did Pakistan intelligence officials fake the arrest of Al Qaeda mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed?"

"The U.S. chains and shackles naked detainees to the ceiling in Afghanistan."

"Haliburton, one of the U.S. firms set to make profits from the rebuilding of postwar Iraq, is still paying Vice President Dick Cheney a million dollars a year."

"Today we'll interview the investigative journalist Richard Perle calls 'The closest thing American journalism has to a terrorist.'"

"An Easter Bunny-dressed protester was arrested at a Kmart store in a demonstration against Easter baskets containing toy soldiers and weapons."

Democracy Now! is hosted by veteran Pacifica journalist, Amy Goodman. A Harvard graduate and a journalist for twenty years, she has won some of the highest awards in mainstream journalism while traveling the globe to report on events under-reported or completely ignored by mainstream media. She was brutally beaten in East Timor in the midst of a massacre by Indonesian troops. Repeatedly arrested for covering demonstrations from the front lines, Amy was most recently arrested covering the 'Code Pink' demonstrations at the White House. Attired in jeans and little, if any, makeup, she's not one to mince words, pull punches — or stifle a laugh.

The most exhilarating project FSTV is undertaking is work with IndyMedia, the growing international network of tiny media centers, often consisting of only a video camera and a pc. These folks produce some of the most astounding, disconcerting gritty vignettes of the people's struggle against global fascism imaginable. Some have had to be smuggled out of the countries

they were filmed in. All bring a visceral impact lacking in even the best print journalism and, of course, tell stories that turn the lies spewed by the corporate owned press upside down.

Frequently, Free Speech TV presents special programming that illuminates a critical issue through original productions as well as acquired programs and special web content. Created with partnering grassroots organizations, these national "teach-ins" mix crucial analysis with concrete steps for joining the growing movement for progressive social change. Recent campaigns include 'Mobile Eyes Against Military Intervention', 'Mobile Eyes On Creating Peace', and 'Mobile Eyes on Economic Justice'.

FSTV's current campaign is 'Mobile Eyes: Who Wants War?' This series includes the following programs and many more:

~"Good vs. Evil: Bush's Theology of War" is an original FSTV production rebutting the Bush doctrine on national security.

~"Strategy for Security or Blueprint for Empire" presents a round-table discussion on the U.S.-led war on Iraq. Hosted by Laura Flanders, this program was organized by FSTV and *The Nation* magazine.

~"Media in the Service of Empire" was co-produced by David Barsamian, founder and host of Alternative Radio, and Free Speech TV. The program analyzes the social and economic forces that shape the mainstream media's war coverage.

~"Hidden Wars of Desert Storm," a documentary that premiered on FSTV in the past year, exposes the Pentagon's extensive use of depleted uranium weapons, the history of the CIA's relationship with Saddam Hussein, and many other topics seldom discussed on American television.

~"Iraq: War Against the People" documents the allied force's invasion of Iraq during the Gulf War, and the social and environmental devastation that followed.

~"Good Kurds, Bad Kurds" examines the political foundations of the U.S. government's alliances with Iraq, Turkey and the Kurdish peoples who form the world's largest dispossessed population.

"In Whose Interest?" Informed by scholars and analysts like Noam Chomsky and Howard Zinn, this documentary traces the history of the U.S. military's global expansion.

Riveting films such as Noam Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent*, brilliant satire, and even a gay & lesbian news program round out FSTV's astonishing lineup.

Because Free Speech TV is what is known as a "public interest" channel, part of a set-aside required by federal statute for non-commercial, non-profit channels, it is available to any DISH subscriber, regardless of whether subscribed at a high or low rate and is far less expensive than cable. (Also included in the basic package is World Link TV, which airs unfiltered news programs, films and music from around the world.)

This is incredible stuff, folks. Get it while it's still possible. Who knows what monstrous corporate entity might gobble up DISH and knock off the only independent stations now available in this, our "land of the free." (Rupert Murdoch is acquiring Direct as I write.) And if Ashcroft finds out about it — well, let's just keep it under our hats, alright?

I don't work for DISH TV and won't make a dime off this article. I just want y'all to know there is a way to stay informed, sane and even hopeful in these most Orwellian of times.

For a sampling of the fare visit www.democracy.org and freespeechtv.org.

Kate O'Neal lives in Astoria and among other activities is a member of the Clatsop County Bill of Rights Committee. KMUN-FM has begun airing Democracy Now! news headlines at 10 a.m. every weekday.