

# And so ... goodbye

## But not farewell

If I could time travel, I would like to see the Astoria harbor captured in Cleveland Rockwell's painting, "Early Morning, View of Tongue Point from Astoria" (1883).

This radiant oil illustration, on display in the Columbia River Maritime Museum, captures the era of cargo ships under sail.



Steve Forrester

I would like to have known Astoria when its downtown resided on wooden pilings — that free-for-all, sin city with the Finnish-language newspapers, a large Chinese quarter and the diminutive, powerful mogul Capt. George Flavel walking by.

Sixteen years following Capt. Flavel's death, my grandfather and partners purchased the *Astoria Evening Budget*. In 1929 they would purchase *The Daily Astorian* and merge the two.

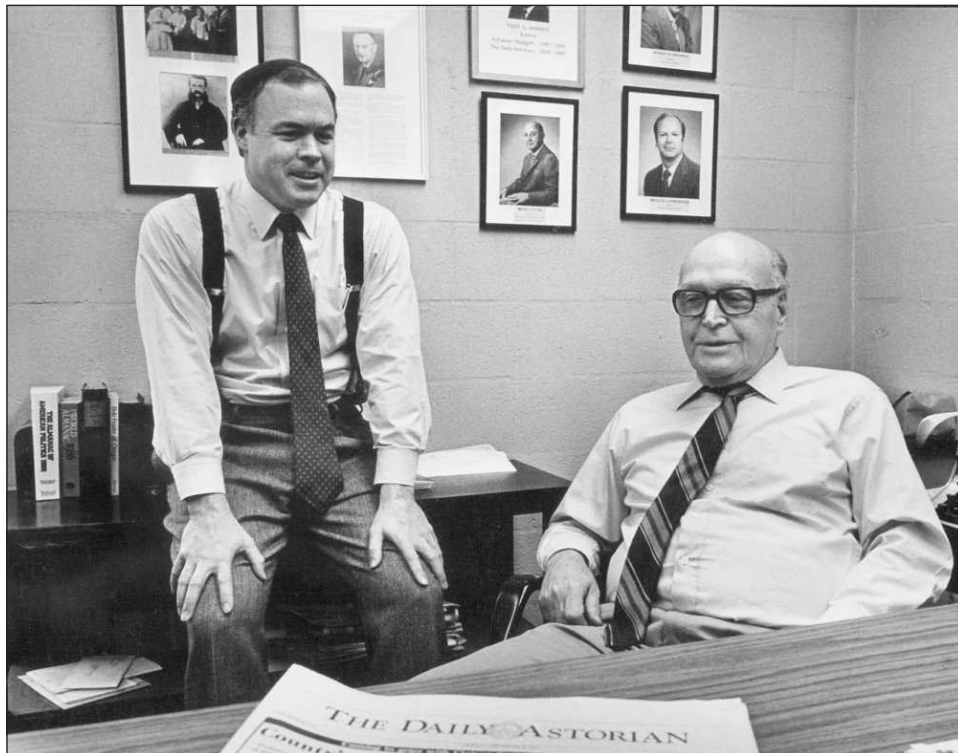
I am part of a succession that began when my grandfather, E.B. Aldrich, and partners started doing business here in 1919. To be in the third generation of a family-owned business — especially a newspaper — is to be conscious of one's moment on life's stage.

"We come on to the stage in the middle of a play," said the Rev. Alan Jones of San Francisco. "We need to discern where we are in the drama in progress and learn the part assigned to us."

There are many ways of describing my experience. One is our newsroom, which for decades has been something of a graduate school in journalism and life. Over 28 years, upward of 90 reporters and photographers have worked in our building.

Joan Herman was one of the first reporters who took me out on her beat, which was City Hall. How wonderful that Joan has recently returned to Astoria.

I will not begin to name the other remarkable talents that inhabited the desks of our newsroom over almost three decades. The list is long, and I would be negligent in omitting a name or two. The parade of photographers — Kent Kerr, Robin Loznak, Andy Dolan, Masako Watanabe, Laurie Assa, Alex Pajunas, Joshua Bessex and Danny Miller — has produced a remarkable body of work. They were preceded by another artist, Bill Wagner, who worked for my brother and father.



The Daily Astorian/File Photo  
In December 1987, Steve Forrester succeeded his father, J.W. Forrester, as editor of *The Daily Astorian*.



Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian  
David Pero, left, new publisher and editor, and retiring Publisher Steve Forrester, share a laugh with Donna Quinn of Cannery Pier Hotel, and Warrenton City Commissioner Henry Balensifer on Wednesday at a community open house for the newspaper at *The Daily Astorian* office.

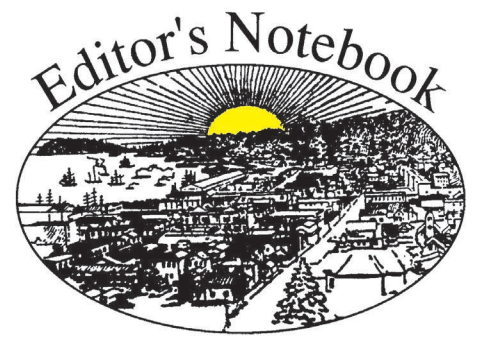
In the Vietnam War memoir *Dispatches*, Michael Herr writes of "... remote, closed societies, mute and intractable." That would overstate the Astoria of 1987. But as I got to know that community, people told me about the group of Astorians who opposed all change. I never found them. Instead, it seemed to me that inertia had frozen the town.

The town has changed dramatically, due in no small part to the influx of new blood with

new ideas. Some of these were adults who had grown up here, gotten experience elsewhere and returned.

My Astoria career has coincided with dramatic shifts in the technology behind our product. Laura Sellers described the last 20 years quite well in her Notebook of last Friday.

My father died only 16 years ago. But he



## Succession is everything for a family-owned business.

would not recognize what we do to bring this 144-year-old newspaper to a digital audience. He would, however, recognize the human comedy of Astoria and Clatsop County that finds a home in our pages.

Succession is everything in business and nonprofit organizations. The succession from me to David Pero, which occurs today, began over one year ago, with planning by our board of directors. We advertised, interviewed candidates, analyzed and interviewed again.

David will be the second of two nonfamily editor-publishers of this newspaper since our family entered the scene in 1919. My father's partner Merle Chessman enjoyed an especially long tenure (1919-1947). His son Bob was publisher until 1960, when we hired an outsider, Morgan Coe, who had been active in Alaska publishing.

Running a newspaper these days involves having one's foot in at least two eras. While working at the Hearst Corp., David Pero drafted the first white paper for entering the digital world for Hearst newspapers. He brings a broad range of news and publishing talent to Astoria.

For the past four weeks, I have introduced David to a broad range of business people, civic leaders and professionals in Clatsop County, while Matt Winters did the same in Pacific County, Washington.

As I walk out the door today, I anticipate a new era that our readers will find exciting.

My main role now becomes president and CEO of EO Media Group, our family's company that operates 11 newspapers in Oregon and Washington.

From time to time, I will be asked to be this newspaper's institutional memory. My words occasionally will make their way to this page.

And in my corporate role, planning for succession will continue to be my primary task.

—S.A.F.

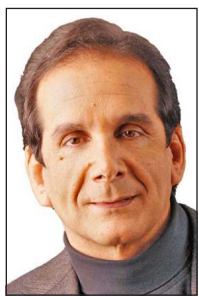
# Donald Trump and the fitness threshold

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump, the man who defied every political rule and prevailed to win his party's nomination, last week took on perhaps the most sacred political rule of all: Never attack a Gold Star family.

Not just because it alienates a vital constituency but because it reveals a shocking absence of elementary decency and of natural empathy for the most profound of human sorrows — parental grief.



Charles Krauthammer

Why did Trump do it? It wasn't a mistake. It was a revelation. It's that he can't help himself. His governing rule in life is to strike back when attacked, disrespected or even slighted. To understand Trump, you have to grasp the General Theory: He judges every action, every pronouncement, every person by a single criterion — whether or not it/he is "nice" to Trump.

Vladimir Putin called him brilliant (in fact, he didn't, but that's another matter) and a bromance is born. A "Mexican" judge rules against Trump, which makes him a bad person governed by prejudiced racial instincts.

House Speaker Paul Ryan criticizes Trump's attack on the Gold Star mother — so Trump mocks Ryan and praises his primary opponent. On what grounds? That the opponent is an experienced legislator? Is a tested leader?

Not at all. He's "a big fan of what I'm saying, big fan," attests Trump.

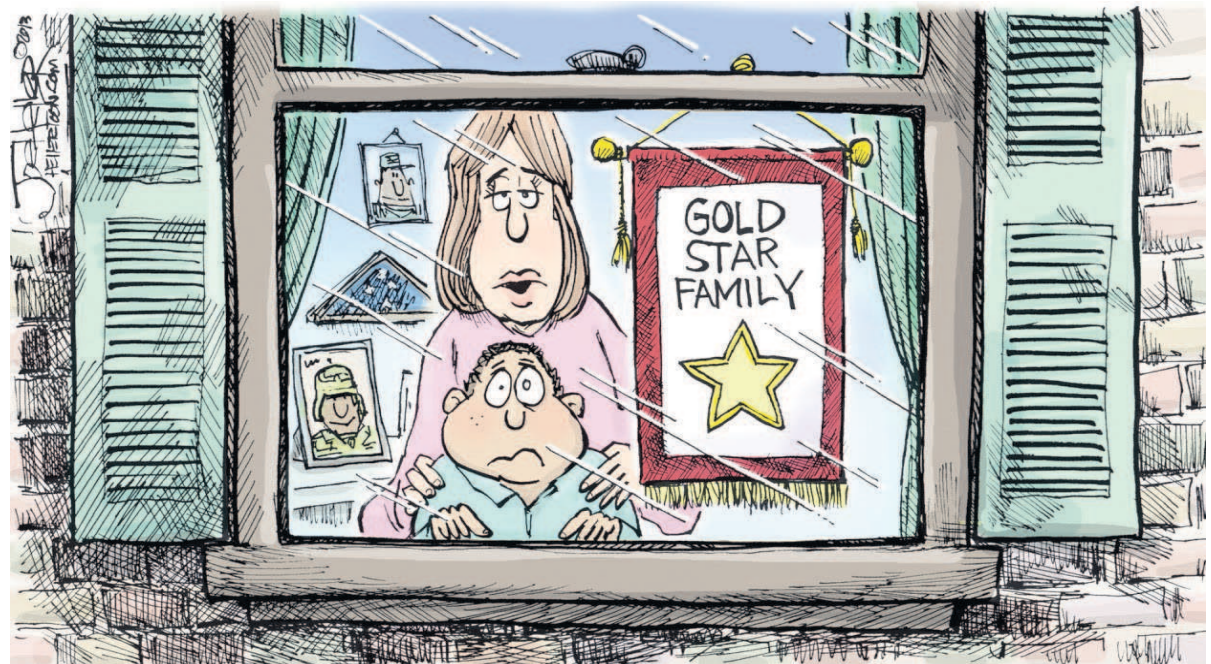
You're a fan of his, he's a fan of yours. And vice versa. Treat him "unfairly" and you will pay. House speaker, Gold Star mother, it matters not.

Of course we all try to protect our own dignity and command respect. But Trump's hypersensitivity and unedited, untempered Pavlovian responses are, shall we say, unusual in both ferocity and predictability.

This is beyond narcissism. I used to think Trump was an 11-year-old, an undeveloped schoolyard bully. I was off by about 10 years. His needs are more primitive, an infantile hunger for approval and praise, a craving that can never be satisfied. He lives in a cocoon of solipsism where the world outside himself has value — indeed exists — only insofar as it sustains and inflates him.

Most politicians seek approval. But Trump *lives* for the adoration. He doesn't even try to hide it, boasting incessantly about his crowds, his standing ovations, his TV ratings, his poll numbers, his primary victories. The latter are most prized because they offer empirical evidence of how loved and admired he is.

Prized also because, in our politics, success is self-validating. A candidacy that started out as a joke, as a self-aggrandizing exercise in xenophobia, struck a chord in a certain constituency and took off. The joke was on those who believed that he was not a serious man and therefore would not be taken



"YES, WE ONLY HAVE ONE STAR ON OUR HOME. BUT THINK OF THE YUGE SACRIFICES DONALD TRUMP MADE TO GET A FIVE STAR RATING ON THE TRUMP TOWERS!"

seriously. They — myself emphatically included — were wrong.

Winning — in ratings, polls and primaries — validated him. Which brought further validation in the form of endorsements from respected and popular Republicans. Chris Christie was first to cross the Rubicon. Ben Carson then offered his blessings, such as they are. Newt Gingrich came aboard to provide intellectual ballast.

Although tepid, the endorsements by Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell were further milestones in the normalization of Trump.

But this may all now be jeopardized by the Gold Star gaffe. (Remember: A gaffe in Washington is when a politician inadvertently reveals the truth,

especially about himself.) It has put a severe strain on the patched-over relationship between the candidate and both Republican leadership and Republican regulars.

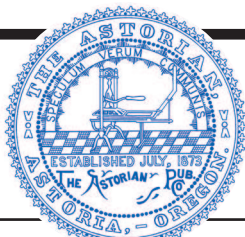
Trump's greatest success — normalizing the abnormal — is beginning to dissipate. When a Pulitzer Prize-winning liberal columnist (Eugene Robinson) and a major conservative foreign policy thinker and former speechwriter for George Shultz under Ronald Reagan (Robert Kagan) simultaneously question Trump's psychological stability, indeed sanity, there's something going on (as Trump would say).

The dynamic of this election is obvious. As in 1980, the status quo can-

didate for a failed administration is running against an outsider. The stay-the-course candidate plays his/her only available card — charging that the outsider is dangerously out of the mainstream and temperamentally unfit to command the nation.

In 1980, Reagan had to do just one thing: pass the threshold test for acceptability. He won that election because he did, especially in the debate with Jimmy Carter in which Reagan showed himself to be genial, self-assured and, above all, nonthreatening. You may not like all his policies, but you could safely entrust the nation to him.

Trump badly needs to pass that threshold. If character is destiny, he won't.



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Founded in 1873

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