

Region greets new publisher with warm, eclectic welcome

Seeks reader participation in letters, comments

By DAVID PERO
The Daily Astorian

Fifty-seven business cards. Dozens of high-end brochures, booklets and information packets. A host of colorful and detailed maps. Invitations to myriad local events. Offers for personal guided tours. A nifty baseball hat. A fancy can each of albacore tuna and shrimp. Coupons for half-price theater tickets and a free cookie. Delicious candies. A small tube of sunscreen. Even a wooden nickel.

All were small gifts for “the new guy” at The Daily Astorian along with, of course, countless handshakes and warm welcomes.

After a busy week of orientation at EO Media Group’s headquarters in Salem, followed by four fast-paced weeks of meeting, greeting and learning everything I could about the North Coast in a relatively short time, I went solo this past Monday as group publisher at the helm of The Daily Astorian, Chinook Observer, Seaside Signal, Cannon Beach Gazette, Coast Weekend, Coast Marketplace, Coast River Business Journal, Our Coast magazine and our associated websites.

It’s been a whirlwind that blew by quickly and has been everything I hoped it would be in moving to the coast from Eugene, both eclectic like the region itself and extremely welcoming by those who live and work here.

Becoming a group publisher for EO Media was a logical step for me in a media career that has spanned for more than 35 years in three states with positions on both the news and business sides of companies.

On the news side, there were big stories I was involved in, providing and directing coverage of a tragic bridge collapse, five highly destructive natural disasters, two high-profile executions and a highly controversial church. I also participated in producing three “Extra” editions.

On the business side, I’ve celebrated the satisfaction of connecting readers with advertisers, the improvement of customer service and delivery, the streamlining of processes with the advancement of publishing technology and my participation in creating and improving digital publishing sites on different internet platforms. I also helped guide a newspaper through an industry-changing recession with the resulting turbulent business drop-offs and painful downsizing.

My career began immediately after college graduation from the University of Florida with stints as a reporter at a small newspaper in Punta Gorda, near Fort Myers in southwest Florida. I then moved to a reporting position in Clearwater, in the Tampa Bay area, at a larger paper then-owned by The Hearst Corp. Later during my tenure in Clearwater, I was named the newspaper’s top editor after advancing through the ranks of newsroom management.

From Clearwater, I transferred to an even larger Hearst paper in Beaumont, Texas, moved to the business and operations side of the company and was promoted into general management.

After a long Texas tenure, I accepted an offer to move to Oregon and become the chief operating officer at the family-owned Register-Guard in Eugene and spent 5 1/2 years in that posi-



Photos by Danny Miller/The Daily Astorian

Assorted informational gifts and souvenirs from local businesses and industries given to David Pero, the new group publisher of EO Media Group’s coastal publications and digital enterprises.



Incoming Group Publisher David Pero, left, and retiring Publisher Steve Forrester, share a laugh with guests last week at a community open house at The Daily Astorian office.

tion before taking some time off from the media business.

But my passion for the industry remained throughout, and when I learned the longtime publisher of The Daily Astorian, Steve Forrester, would be retiring, I knew the North Coast was where I wanted to be.

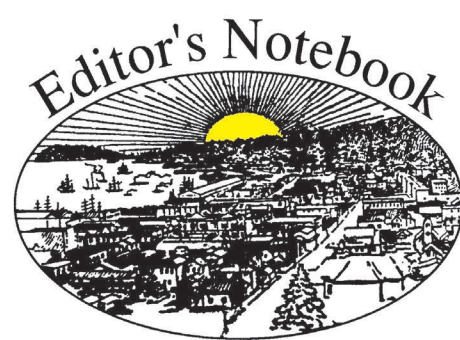
During my orientation, I was showered with business cards and other very informational and unique welcoming gifts from business, civic and professional leaders in Astoria, Warrenton, Cannon Beach, Seaside and the Long Beach (Wash.) Peninsula during more

than 50 hours of individual and group meetings.

While I briefed them on my background, they filled me in on the challenges and hopes for their businesses, organizations and cities. All told me they felt the region’s housing crunch is the No. 1 issue that must be tackled. They all asked about my approach to news reporting and my editorial leanings.

In news I believe in deep, balanced reporting with all sides of any controversy covered fairly and accurately, and importantly, in highlighting the good things that make us all call the coast our home.

And as I told those I met with, editorially



I’m a common-sense guy more than a person who leans right or left. I’m also someone who believes strongly in openness and transparency, civility and agreeing to disagree sometimes, and in living what you advocate.

As we go forward, we may make subtle changes to our news and presentation approaches, but our core values of common sense and progressive ideals remain solidly in place.

My goal for our coastal newspapers and websites is to make sure they are chock-full of relevant local news and information that highlight people and activities instead of policy and process. And I want to make sure that our Opinion areas in print and online are an open forum for readers and digital visitors to express and exchange thoughtful ideas in a civil and interactive manner on issues that affect us all.

For that, we need and seek your participation through letters to the editor and comments about stories and editorials on our website, dailyastorian.com, and through social media outlets.

So please let us hear from you, and know in the meantime that I’m very thankful to you for the unique and friendly welcome you’ve thoroughly provided.

You choose who to endorse or you lose in the end

By GAIL COLLINS

New York Times News Service

If you’re a Republican politician, announcing you’re not going to vote for Donald Trump is a little like declaring that you’re not going to rob a bank to finance your next campaign. Really, you



don’t get any credit unless you say what you’re going to do instead.

“I truly don’t know,” said Sen. Susan Collins

unhelpfully.

Collins, R-Maine, made news this week when she penned an op-ed for The Washington Post, announcing that she couldn’t support her party’s nominee because “Mr. Trump’s lack of self-restraint and his barrage of ill-informed comments would make an already perilous world even more so.”

It’s tough being a high-profile Republican these days. People are always demanding to know what you think about your candidate’s latest horrific remark. But unless

you come up with an alternative, disavowing a candidate is more like a sulk than a solution.

There’s been a lot of this going around. Sen. Ben Sasse of Nebraska, an early evacuee from the Trump train, said he was going to wait until October to deal with the problem. Sen. Lindsey Graham said he might “just pass — I may write somebody in.” Mark Kirk, who’s generally regarded as the Senator Most Likely to Be Defeated in November, gave Illinois voters an excellent example of his leadership capacity when he announced that he was going to write in David Petraeus or maybe Colin Powell.

Obviously, all these people are trying to avoid taking responsibility for Donald Trump without being accused of betraying their party. But it’s very strange to hear elected officials embracing various versions of a don’t-vote strategy. Nobody knows better than they do that politics is a world of imperfect choices.

Collins freely admits that she’s worked well with Hillary Clinton in the past. But she ruled out vot-

ing for the Democrat, telling CNN that Clinton wanted to spend too much money. (“Promises of free this and free that, that I believe would bankrupt our country.”) Faced with a choice between a guy who could compromise national security and a woman who wants universal early childhood education, the former chairwoman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee claimed to be at a loss for an answer.

Here’s the bottom line: There are only three things you can do when it comes time to elect a president. You can stay home and punt; you can choose between the two major party candidates; or you can cop out by doing something that looks like voting but has no effect whatsoever on the outcome of the race.

That includes strategies about writing in the name of a retired general, leaving the top line blank, or voting for a third-party candidate who has as much chance of winning as the YouTube Keyboard Cat.

The only third party that might have a line on all state ballots is

the Libertarian, whose platform includes eliminating Social Security, ending gun control and wiping out drug laws. This year’s Libertarian candidate is Gary Johnson, the former governor of New Mexico. Johnson does not seem to agree with the platform on many points, but to be honest, he’s not the world’s greatest explainer. Libertarians like the idea of a charisma-free candidate, since he’d be incapable of getting much done.

But truly, this is a silly choice. Voting for Johnson is exactly the same as staying home, except that it involves going outdoors. Ditto for Green Party candidate Jill Stein, a doctor who appears to have a rather ambiguous attitude toward childhood vaccinations.

Susan Collins said she could support the Libertarian ticket if only it had been reversed, with vice presidential candidate William Weld on top. You can’t totally dislike Weld, who once told me that being governor of Massachusetts was pretty much a walk in the park. (“I used to go on vacation for a week at a time and I wouldn’t even call in.”) However,

he’s been out of office for nearly 20 years. He is not the presidential candidate. And the Libertarians are never, repeat, never going to be elected.

Right now we live in a world that’s been messed up by the bad decisions George W. Bush made about invading Iraq. He was elected president in 2000 thanks to a few hundred votes in Florida. A state where Green Party candidate Ralph Nader got 97,488 votes.

Most of the Green voters undoubtedly thought they were showing their disdain for both Bush and the deeply imperfect candidacy of Al Gore. And Nader is a man of fine principles. But look where those 97,488 votes got us.

Nader himself doesn’t feel guilty. I talked to him on the phone the other day, and he argued, basically, that if Gore couldn’t win his home state of Tennessee, it’s not Nader’s fault that he couldn’t win Florida.

And he’s not voting for either Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton in November.

“They’re not alike,” he said, “but they’re both terrible.”



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