



The Daily Astorian

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

## Book: 'People like a fighting newspaper'

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Depression — why some papers succeeded and others folded, and why they aggressively promoted the development of their towns. “If the paper’s going to thrive, the community has to thrive, and vice versa,” he said.

“Grit and Ink” also highlights celebrated moments for the local press — such as Astoria Evening Budget editor Merle Chessman’s bold editorial stand against the Ku Klux Klan, or EO editor Edwin Aldrich’s push to save a woolen mill and jump-start the Pendleton Round-Up.

“You learn a lot of Oregon history, actually, through this book in a way,” Willingham said. “You see what the editors saw was important in their communities, and what they reported on, and what they commented on, and tried through their editorials to shape the response of the communities to those events.”

Finally, the book shows how community journalism has changed from the late 19th century to the present — and how much of the profession remains the same.

Indeed, the values laid down by legendary EO editor C.S. “Sam” Jackson were values Aldrich, his successor, built upon — a commitment to fierce independence, accurate and fair reporting, championing the underdog and serving as the voice of the community.

### Independent observer

EO Media Group CEO Steve Forrester, The Daily Astorian’s former editor and publisher, asked Willingham to write the company’s history back in 2014.

Though “Grit and Ink” is a book about the company, published by the company, Willingham said it isn’t an “authorized biography.” The ground rules for research were “wide open,” he said.

“I had a totally free hand to go wherever the research took me, and I had no interference whatsoever with the process,” he said.

The book will be distributed by Oregon State University Press.

Willingham read through EO records, dug through documents at the Oregon Historical Society and researched secondary sources. He studied the company’s two daily papers, handful of weeklies and 20 years of online editions.

In addition, he interviewed Mike Forrester, Steve’s older brother — who like their father, J.W. “Bud” Forrester, also edited The Daily Astorian and EO — Heidi Wright, the company’s chief operating officer; John Perry, the retired COO; and John Shaver, the company’s retired chief financial officer. And he had continuing conversations with Steve Forrester and other family members.

Steve Forrester said he learned things about his family’s company that he never knew.

“From listening to dinner-table conversations, I knew that there had been an unsuccessful venture in Idaho” — namely, the company’s purchase and subsequent sale of

the Twin Falls Times in the early 20th century. “From Bill’s research I learned the details,” he said.

“The book has been four years in the making, so it is most heartening to see the finished product that is so compelling and attractive,” he added.

### Fighting newspapers

With material that errs on the informational rather than colorful side, the book may put off readers uninterested in the finer points of running a news operation.

What will make the biggest impression? “The fierce commitment of that family over three generations — four generations now — to succeeding in community journal-

ism, to really do what it took and make the sacrifices to keep those newspapers alive,” Willingham said, “because they felt the value they were adding to the community and the importance of what they were doing.”

Part of that value comes from the decision to remain a print publication, something that appears at people’s doorsteps and dentist’s offices.

“I think that’s still what you need for an identity with your community,” Willingham said. “There is that physical presence that’s really necessary, and of course the difficult job is to convince the country that that’s still important. Because when everything is online, it’s so easy to lose sight of it, or to forget what it takes to

maintain it.”

There’s a deeper value every journalistic enterprise must consider: “What are the basic principles that you won’t sacrifice over time, that you feel — under whatever economic and political and social circumstances — will stand the test of time?”

If “Grit and Ink” has a central message — a philosophy of how journalism should be practiced — Willingham said it is captured in a quote by Jackson that serves as an epigraph for Chapter 1: “Print the truth. Fight for the right. People like a fighting newspaper.”

“I think that motto really runs through the entire history of the Forrester family newspaper adventure,” Willingham said.

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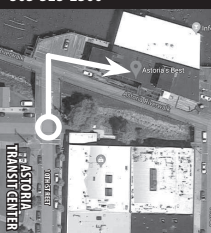
**A:** Remember baby’s teeth are not only important but part of their health and development. Cleaning baby’s teeth can be done by gauze, a finger swipe, or a small brush. Make it quick and fun!! Remember that a night-time bottle with milk has lactose (milk sugar) and juice has fructose or sucrose (sugar) and if it sits on teeth day after day problems are going to develop. Baby teeth are small with thin enamel so they are important to keep clean.



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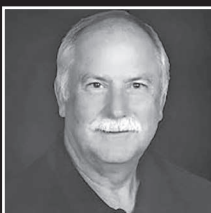
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