



By Marguerite W. Wright

"All I know is what I read in the newspapers." Will Rogers said it. It goes for everyone in Oregon who is interested in what is happening at the Statehouse.

Practically all legislative news you read, listen to someone else read over the radio, or watch someone else read on television, first is written by a member of Oregon's most elite group of reporters, the Statehouse press corps.

Most information that the public, state officials, and legislators themselves get about government and lawmaking first is filtered through the minds and typewriters of the even dozen full-time news-writers who make their headquarters in the daylight-base-ment pressroom at the Capitol. Their importance cannot be overestimated.

They are the best-informed people in Salem in terms of "the big picture." Their job is to communicate this broad knowledge to the public through all forms of mass media - press, radio and TV.

One Scene Daily Every Oregon citizen who wants to know about the people he elected to take care of the public's business depends on these few reporters who are on the scene daily to write first-hand accounts.

Every Oregon editor (dailies, weeklies, periodicals) who tries to analyze news events and influence public opinion depends to a large extent not on his own personal observations at the Statehouse but on written observations of the press corps.

Every public employee, from the governor in the executive suite to legislators in the marble halls to a highway department flagman in a remote and dusty construction shack, depends on these reporters to give accurate, timely, unbiased news reports.

The reporters have a lot in common with the legislators, besides long hours of work and low pay. Temperamentally, they must be able to get along well with people, inspire confidence, keep cool under sometimes agonizing pressure, fight boredom and cynicism, ignore unfair criticism, and find their greatest satisfaction in their own pride in their work.

There are differences. The reporters are more inclined to be intellectuals than the legislators, although both groups probably are above average in education and mental endowments. The newsmen also tend to be more shy and modest about themselves, less egotistical, less sure they know all the answers, more inclined to question motives and reasons. They have the egghead's healthy skepticism, combined with a disarming sense of humor.

They are hard to impress, and can spot a phony quicker than anyone. Whereas a good lawmaker's reward sometimes may be public acclaim and election to higher office, a good reporter's reward is another Statehouse assignment.

Salaries Generally Lower Most of the newsmen work a 50-60 hour week, and some get no overtime pay. Their salaries, generally, are lower than those of state employees with comparable responsibilities.

Their output is almost incredible. Up to 5,000 words of copy (news stories) per day are sent out by both the Associated Press and United Press International. Both wire services have two reporters. That means each reporter may write up to 2,500 words (about twice the length of this column) per day, after covering the day's events (committee meetings, House and Senate sessions, press conferences, individual interviews). This does not leave much time for reflection, double-checking, or prose-polishing.

Reporters for individual newspapers at the Statehouse depend largely on AP and UPI for daily routine or basic news, and then work on their own stories.

While there is cooperation to avoid needless duplication, there also is a lively sense of usually good-natured competition between the AP (serving 11 dailies plus radio and TV stations) and the UPI (serving 14 dailies, a weekly, radio and TV), between the Oregonian, Oregon Journal and Portland Reporter, and between the Salem Oregon Statesman and Capital Journal.

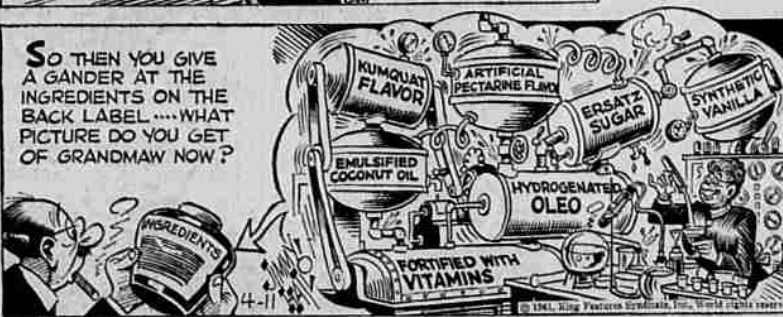
The contest is not so much for the old-fashioned dramatics of stop-the-presses "scoop" as it is for the professional satisfaction of doing a better all-around job than the other fellow. Unwritten Rules There are unwritten rules in the newsmen's code - irresponsible writing, sensationalism, or deliberate distortion is immediately recognized and resented by the other reporters. Brisk, bright, laconic writing is admired.

A good reporter would rather have the respect of his peers than sit in the councils of the mighty, and any newsman who toadies to high state official or is suspect of being a spokesman or patsy for some group of politicians is held in low esteem by the rather rigid purists in the pressroom. In these respects, the Statehouse press corps is made up of typical contemporary newsmen, not the legendary boozebesotted inklinger of Grade-B movie fame. Most of these men would rather spend their few leisure hours at home with their kids, working in their gardens, reading a book, or listening to good music than hanging around bars and barflies. Their occupational hazards are ulcers and overweight, rather than delirium tremens. They spend Sunday mornings in church or lawn-mowing, not getting over hang-overs. Dean (senior in years of Statehouse service) of the press corps is Paul Harvey Jr., head of the Salem Associated Press Bureau and a Statehouse veteran of 24 years. No relation to the radio commentator of the same name, Harvey is the son of a Tacoma newsman and father of three sons, two of them newspapermen, too. Educated at Columbia, he is 48, and active in church and community affairs. His assistant is Fred Martin, 28, (University of Denver, Portland State College), eight years reporting experience, married, two children, reads, gardens. UPI Bureau Head Doug Gripp, 26, (Portland State College) is head of the UPI Salem Bureau after only four years reporting, less than two years at the Statehouse; married, one child; collects records, writes fiction in spare time. His assistant is A. (for Ann) H. Pearson, 25, (Smith College) two years experience including reporting the Alaska Legislature, newswriting in Tangiers, traveling in Europe. Merv Shoemaker is the Oregonian's veteran political reporter and has the distinction of being the only grandfather in the press corps. His assistant is Harold Hughes, 44 (University of Kentucky, Harvard, U. of O.), 21 years experience; married, two children; enjoys working in his rose garden, collects Japanese prints, records. Doug McKean, 49, (College of Idaho, Reed College, Northwest College of Law), 24 years experience, long-time editorial writer for the Oregon Journal, now political editor; married, four children; serves on State Board of Education (appointed by Gov. Robert D. Holmes) and is a regular panelist on Holmes' KOIN television news program. His assistant is Clarence Zaitz, 30, 11 years experience; married, four sons; spends his spare time building a do-it-yourself home in Portland. Robert McBride, 29, (University of Washington), is covering his first legislative session for the Portland Reporter; married, three children; does free-lance writing, plays tennis. Only Bachelor Doug Seymour, 38, (University of Oregon), 14 years experience, covering his third session for the Capital Journal; only bachelor in the press corps, collects books and records, takes part in Pentacle amateur theatrical productions. Tom Wright, 40, (University of Oregon) 14 years experience, covering his second session for the Oregon Statesman; married, four daughters; only press corps member with experience "on the other side of the fence" (press secretary for Governor Holmes); photography and Army Reserve duty as major in Civil Affairs

They'll Do It Every Time By Jimmy Hatlo



DIDJA EVER READ THE LABEL ON A PRODUCT LIKE THIS AND JUST PICTURE YOUR OWN GRANDMA IN HER LITTLE FARM KITCHEN STIRRING UP A BATCH OF JAM...?



and Military Government unit are spare-time pursuits.

Only full-time radio-TV man covering the Statehouse is Robert Richter of KOAC radio and TV, 31 years old, (University of Iowa, Reed College) married, two children; enjoys books, music, Richter works much as do the other 11 press corpsmen, but specializes in broadcast interviews with each legislator (which have proven newsworthy in themselves) and has a weekly news round-up plus daily programs.

Noteworthy for their contribution to their listeners' understanding of issues are Tom Lawson McCall of KGW radio and TV, and ex-Governor Holmes of KOIN-TV. Both make Statehouse trips and draw upon their governmental experience for their programs, each unique in his media.

The other two part-time members of the press corps are Dan Sellard of the Eugene Register-Guard, and me, the only independent Statehouse columnist.

What kind of a job is the press corps doing? Dr. Frank Roberts, political science professor at Portland State College and chief clerk of the House, summed up the adverse criticism when he pointed out the major fault with legislative press coverage is the need for more comprehensive stories, lack of continuity, not enough backgrounding in continuing stories. Sometimes reports do not accurately reflect parliamentary situations or inter-relationships of events, and when an event is not described in proper context distortion may occur, Roberts said.

Inaccuracies Cited One senator said newsmen should do a better job of reporting votes in committees and roll call votes on the floor. Some specific inaccuracies were cited. Travis Cross, the governor's press secretary, praised the press corps' "reputation for objectivity" and said it is "a credit to them that their personal political registration is not a matter of concern."

Another criticism is that, although reporters are doing more interpretive writing than in "the old days" when wire services demanded only straight reporting, there remains a need for more "reporting in depth" - analyzing people and issues. Ironically, the same persons who deplore lack of interpretation also deplore attempts by reporters to probe motives and make judgments. All in all, there is general agreement that this session - considered one of the dullist in history by reporters - is getting the best coverage of any session in Oregon history. Reporters have to work harder to find headline news that can compete for space with the much bigger headlines from Tom, Laos, Moscow, and Africa. The New Frontiers in Washington. But, if they are interested at all, Oregon readers will be better informed about this Legislature than ever before.

ON FBI LIST-George Martin Bradley Jr., above, a convicted robber, forger and counterfeiter, has been added to the FBI's list of "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives." Bradley, 29, is charged with the solo robbery of a bank in Stuart, Fla., in January, 1961. (UPI Telephoto)



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Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn M. Watkins (Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1961)

In Battle of Bugs Man On Short End The battle between man and bug is a continuing struggle; once in a while we think we are ahead, then later we begin to doubt it and reluctantly mark up a high score for the other side.

The trouble is we are the ones keeping the score and oftentimes we get carried away with "wishful thinking." But the other team is still on the field and occasionally actually carrying the ball. Because bugs are easy to come by and because any experiment with them, no matter how cruel it might seem, is condoned, the serious student wonders just how much punishment a bug stands under controlled conditions. Some scientists have wondered whether or not the same female superiority exists in the insect world as it apparently does in other animal orders.

Identical Feeding In one experiment the insect known commonly as the earwig was selected. It's easy to tell the boys from the girls in this species. All the males were placed in one little cage; all the females in another. Both groups were carefully fed the same amount of the same food at the same time. By the end of the first 10 days they were all fat and somewhat listless; they needed more exercise. So the feeding was slacked off a little. Soon they became active and alert. Perhaps there is a real lesson here in over-indulgence. They were to be subjected to various poisons to see, if possible, if there was a noticeable difference in the amount of the poison that could be tolerated by the males or females.

Isolated Cages Three males and three females were placed in isolated cages, each sex separate. The poison was carefully measured and sprayed on each group. Careful records were kept of the time lapse - that interval between the application of the poison and the time when they keeled over. Different varieties of poisons were used on each succeeding group and the results were the same.

Actually, the results were what was expected-the most survivors each time were females. And what was even more surprising, many of them laid eggs, even while in the "gas chamber," and later died. Some survived, even in the face of what appeared to be certain death. It is impossible to say for sure that this percentage of survivors would be constant throughout the insect world, but it is reasonable to assume it would. Generations of flies have been subjected to similar ordeals, and some have reached a stage of immunity where they become almost indestructible.

Peculiar, that so long ago, when these lowly creatures were undergoing development as a species, some far-sighted providence could have foreseen the time when their systems would be subjected to modern day methods of de-

struction and built-in counter-checks were installed to preserve the species. Peculiar, too, that Nature instilled in the female, the ability to resist and overcome the ravages of time and poisons and still carry on the work of creation.

Grange News

Central Point Grange Colored slides were shown by Phillip Krouse of Applegate for the regular meeting of Central Point Grange Friday.

Mrs. Morris Frink, chairman of the youth committee of the Grange, made the arrangements for Krouse to show and explain the slides he took en route and while in Washington, D. C., where he attended the National 4-H conference last year. He was also sent to the 4-H Congress in Chicago last December.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Kilbourn and Mrs. Stella Purker were elected to be candidates for initiation. Standing committees made their reports. HEC Chairman Mrs. Frink announced the next club meeting will be with Mrs. Cecil Keenan on April 28. The members decided to have a farewell party for Mr. and Mrs. Walter Mang Thursday, April 13, to start with a potluck supper at 7 p.m. Each family is to take a well filled basket of food and their own table service. For entertainment there will be square dancing and card playing. The Mangs are moving to Santa Cruz, Calif.

Mr. and Mrs. Chester Wendt were installed as assistant steward and lady assistant steward by Dee Hendrickson, installing officer, and Mrs. Arnold Bohnert, marshal. Central Point Grange will have other Granges of the county as guests on visitation night April 21. All visiting women are to take cookies. The members of Central Point Grange will furnish sandwiches. Serving committee for the evening were Mr. and Mrs. Walter Jensen, Mr. and Mrs. Scott Hamilton, and Benton Boyce.

NO PUBLICITY London - (UPI) - The Daily Sketch today said a reporter "met an actress yesterday who said she wasn't interested in publicity-so we're not giving her any."

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"Savings Bonds and a home belong in everyone's future." says O. G. Powell, President, National Association of Real Estate Boards "U.S. Savings Bonds and home ownership are two ways of providing security for the future—a worthy goal for every family and for the nation. A sound economy depends upon thrift. A strong country is a land where men are free in mind, in spirit, and in the right to own property. The nation's nearly 70,000 Realtors urge America's young families to invest in U.S. Savings Bonds as a beginning toward achievement of these goals." O.G. Powell

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