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ONPA presents special awards

WELCHES, Ore. – The Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association awarded several special honors during its Summer Publishers Convention held July 19-21 at The Resort at The Mountain in Welches.

ONPA's Oregon Newspaper Hall of Fame Award was bestowed upon Philip N. Bladine. This award honors individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to Oregon newspaper journalism or who have made an extraordinary contribution to their communities, region or state through newspaper journalism.

At age 82, Bladine still spends a portion of every day in his McMinnville newspaper office, where he has worked for 60 years. He remains chairman of the board for the company his father, Lars E. Bladine, purchased in 1928, and remains active on a number of civic and private sector boards.

Bladine's induction into the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association's Hall of Fame marks a long career of service to Oregon journalism. For more than two decades, Bladine led ONPA's lobbying efforts before the Oregon State Legislature. He chaired ONPA's Legislative Committee from 1956 to 1978, and served as president of ONPA in 1959-1960.

Bladine missed only one or two ONPA annual conventions during a 50-year period beginning when he first came to Oregon as a teen-ager in 1932.

Following the death of their father in 1941, older brother Jack Bladine became publisher and Phil became editor of the *Telephone-Register*, as the newspaper was then called. Phil became the paper's publisher in 1957 after Jack's death. Bladine served as the newspaper's editor until 1974 and publisher until 1991, turning both positions over to his son, Jeb Bladine.

Phil and Jack built KMCM, a radio station in McMinnville; purchased the *News-Reporter* and merged it with the *Telephone-Register*, creating the *News-Register*; and took the newspaper to a six-day daily from 1953 to 1958. During the 1950s, Bladine owned the *Headlight-Herald* in Tillamook and *The News-Guard* in Lincoln City. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, he owned the *Milwaukee Review* and the *Sellwood Bee*. In 1960, he joined with the *Hillsboro Argus* and Forest Grove Times Publications to build Tualatin-Yamhill Press, one of the earliest web printing plants.

Through the years, Bladine has received many professional honors, including:
*Being named Outstanding Graduate of the University of Oregon's School of Journalism in Eugene, 1940

*Oregon Farm Bureau Editorial Award, 1963

*ONPA President's Award for service to journalism, 1971 and 1973

*ONPA's Amos E. Voorhies Award, 1974

*Small Business Administration Media Advocate of the Year, 1982

*ONPA's Roger W. Williams Freedom of Information Award, 1987

Under his direction as editor and publisher, and in the years since, his newspaper has won a great many state and national journalism awards.

ONPA also conferred honorary lifetime membership in the association to Richard A. Nafsinger. ONPA has awarded this honor only eight times in its history – the last time being three years ago.

Nafsinger served as editor and publisher of the *Hood River News* from 1962 to 1991, when he turned over the reins to devote all of his time to his corporate activities as president and chief operating officer of Eagle Newspapers, a position he has held since 1978.

The *Hood River News*, one of the three original Eagle newspapers, grew under his leadership from a hot type operation averaging 12 to 14 pages a week to a twice-weekly averaging 50 pages per week with a full service commercial printing plant. It has been named the top newspaper of both Oregon and the United States on several occasions, and is the recipient of the coveted National Newspaper Association's General Excellence award.

Nafsinger is a past president of the 5,000-newspaper National Newspaper Association and was chair of the American Newspaper Representatives. He is also a past president of ONPA and a recipient of two of ONPA's top awards to individuals – the Amos E. Voorhies Award in 1986 and the President's Award in 1996. In addition, he was a Ruhl Fellow at a lecture series presented by the University of Oregon in Eugene.

On the community level, Nafsinger helped found the Hood River Improvement Company and the Hood River County Bank; served on the school board and the local hospital board, serving also as board chair of the hospital's foundation. He is a past president of the Rotary Club, recipient of the Paul Harris Fellowship for club work, and serves on the Rotary Foundation board.

Through the years, he has helped head up numerous community projects and on a statewide level has served as a director of Associated Oregon Industries and Oregon Tax Research.

Another award bestowed was the President's Award, which was given to Alex Paul, publisher of *The New Era* in Sweet Home and ONPA's immediate past president, and Rick Swart, publisher of *the Wallowa County Chieftain* in Enterprise. The final award presented was the Outstanding Committee Award, which was given to ONPA's Advertising/Marketing Committee.

ONPA, founded in 1887, is a professional association of the state's 89 daily and nondaily paid circulation newspapers.