

**American Society of News Editors  
ASNE Award for News Leadership**

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**F.A. Blethen Acceptance Speech  
April 2011**

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Eleven years ago in Washington, D.C. I had the privilege to be guest speaker at your ASNE pre-convention board dinner.

In my comments I noted that as a 30-year-old publisher in Walla Walla, Washington, it became clear to me that my paramount career goal was, and I quote, “to be known as a publisher whom really good newspaper journalists want to work for.”

That you would recognize my work with your Editorial Leadership Award is, for me, an inspirational affirmation of my life’s work.

You inspire me to stay the course and ensure The Seattle Times remains a place of independent journalism and community service for many more decades.

To be sure, I would not be standing here today if not for the Blethen family’s passionate belief in independent, local stewardship, and, aggressive journalism.

These are troubled times in America and throughout our local communities.

Our economy and way of life are at risk.

Steadily through the last 20 years we have lost our way.

We turned Main Street over to Wall Street and to the financial manipulators.

We even gave them dominant control of our newspaper, broadcast houses and our internet.

It is late, but America still has a chance to survive and to once again become a land of people rather than corporations and moneychangers.

You, America’s editors give us hope.

You are America’s modern-day patriots. What you do matters more than ever before. The light you cast, the information and insights you provide still have the power to nurture local communities and sustain the foundation for an enlightened national dialogue. A dialogue which can save America from the financial mercenaries and the consolidators of our nation’s economic power.

Today, you are our “last great hope.”

I am proud of this award because it comes from you.

Starting with Dave Boardman and Marty Kaiser – you are my heroes. You are the hope we will pull America back from the brink and return to our basic values of people, democracy and independent journalism.

From the bottom of my heart – thank you for this honor.

Frank