

## Former Fresno Bee publisher Ray Steele Jr. wins Leon S. Peters Award

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Ray Steele Jr.

JOHN WALKER — The Fresno Bee [Buy Photo](#)

- Leon S. Peters Award winners

Richard “Dick” Caglia, John E. Horstmann, Peter Mehas, Peter P. Peters, Joe Williams, Lou Herwaldt, Bill Jones, Sid Cox, Bud Richter, O. James Woodward III, Samuel Reeves, Octavia Diener, Robert Oliver, Frederick Ruiz, Anne Speake, Larry A. Shehadey, Claude Laval III, Robert Carter, Richard Johanson, James Hallowell, Lou Gentile, Earl Smittcamp, Helen Smades, William Lyles, Martin Nelson, Joe Levy, Frank Caglia, B. Franklin Knapp, James B. Mayer, Robert Duncan and Lewis B. Eaton.

Ray Steele Jr., a Fowler native who rose from young reporter to president and publisher of The Fresno Bee, was named the 2015 winner of the Leon S. Peters Award on Wednesday.

Per its tradition, the sponsoring [Fresno Chamber of Commerce](#) surprised the winner with the announcement at what Steele thought was a lunch with Fresno State President Joseph Castro on campus.

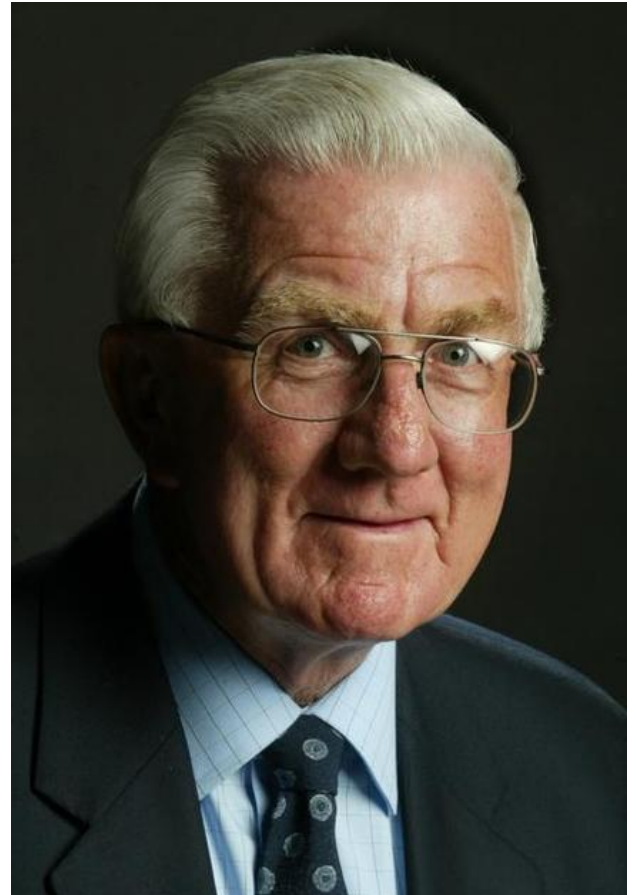
Steele is a 1968 Fresno State graduate and 2005 recipient of the university’s Top Dog award as outstanding alumnus from the College of Arts and Humanities.

Steele joined The Bee in 1967 as a reporter. He rose to metro editor, overseeing local news coverage, before leaving Fresno in 1982 to be administrative director of The Sacramento Bee, a sister McClatchy Co. paper. He returned to Fresno in 1986 as The Bee’s general manager, then went back to Sacramento as a McClatchy corporate executive in 1993. He finished his McClatchy career as The Fresno Bee publisher from July 2001–October 2008.

The Peters Award, established in 1984, is named for the former owner of Valley Foundry & Machine Works. Peters also was a noted philanthropist in Fresno and the central San Joaquin Valley. The award recognizes business success and leadership as well as public service, contributions and investments in the Fresno area.

The award will be presented formally at the 36th annual Valley Business Awards Luncheon on Thursday, March 11 at New Exhibit Hall in downtown Fresno.

Check back later for more on Wednesday’s surprise announcement.



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