

Here is the email Oregonian Editor Sandra Mims Rowe sent staff on Monday, March 5:

As most of you have heard, we took a series of disciplinary steps last week involving Tom Hallman. Tom had accepted an offer from Andy Wiederhorn last year to park in the lot at his Goose Hollow offices. Tom did so over a period of months. Tom has acknowledged that accepting this offer was a serious ethical breach, given Wiederhorn's controversial past, the fact he continues to be in the news and because Tom did a series on Wiederhorn eight years ago. At the time, it didn't occur to him this would be a problem, as he no longer reports on Wiederhorn or had any plans to do so in the future. Tom acknowledges his failure in judgment, is extremely contrite, has apologized repeatedly and deeply regrets any impact this may have on the paper.

Because of the seriousness of this matter, Tom will be off work for two weeks without pay. He will no longer have senior writer status. He will send Wiederhorn a check for \$500 to compensate for the parking even though Wiederhorn does not charge for any spaces in the lot. For the foreseeable future, Tom will withdraw from any outside teaching and speaking activities relating to the newspaper. When he returns to work, he will participate in a series of ethics discussions with Managing Editor Therese Bottomly.

Tom is a loyal and talented 26-year employee whose work at The Oregonian has established his place with readers as well among journalism's best narrative writers. This does not change. When he returns we will welcome him back and support him, just as this newsroom does when any of our colleagues face personal or professional difficulties.

We all know the credibility of our work depends on the highest levels of ethical behavior and decision making, even when an action doesn't relate to one's current assignment or affect a specific story published in the newspaper. We don't take gifts of value from sources. We'll be talking more about that and other matters relating to sound ethical decision making in the weeks ahead. In the meantime, if you have any questions please let me or Peter or one of the MEs know.