



William C. Epler

1992 Medal of Merit Recipient

William Epler, a native of Hanford, California, obtained his degree in journalism from San Jose State College. During World War II, he served 3½ years with the Air Force both stateside and in Italy. Epler's early journalism career included reporting assignments with the Wyoming State Journal and the Arizona Daily Sun in Flagstaff. He moved to Bisbee in 1958 to work at the Bisbee Gazette and bought the paper in 1959. In 1968, he was approached by members of the Arizona Small Mine Operators Association (ASMOA) to see if he might be interested in acquiring and resuming publication of Pay Dirt magazine, the official publication of the organization. Epler took up the challenge and greatly expanded the coverage of the periodical. He eventually terminated the official connection with ASMOA, but continued and expanded the periodical's news coverage and political commentary on matters relevant to the mining industry. Pay Dirt today continues to have one of the best in-depth coverage of the mining industry in the western United States. While the bulk of Pay Dirt's circulation of 10,000 stays within the western United States, a significant number of subscribers are located in other parts of the United States and overseas.

In addition to sustaining a policy of providing comprehensive news coverage of mining issues, Epler's editorials in Pay Dirt supporting the mining industry have been and are a reliable and eloquent source of strength for the mining industry during a time of significant change. In 1990, Epler was awarded the "Ben F. Dickerson Award" by the Mining and Exploration Division of the Society for Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration.