

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Strength in numbers

Industry must be ready to innovate, adapt

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Students earn RFK award

Second such recognition for school in recent years

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SOUTHERN MISS

Ribbon cut on College Hall

Foundation contributes \$15K to building fund

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Change affects many papers

Orange County Register model holds promise

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The Power of Print in Action

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MPA has partnered with Jackson-based GodwinGroup to create a new marketing presentation for consumers and advertisers that bolsters the relevance and vitality of community newspapers. The effort will be unveiled to members at the Mid-Winter Conference Jan. 31.

New Albany Gazette sold to Journal, Inc.

NEW ALBANY – The *New Albany Gazette* has been sold to Tupelo-based Journal, Inc., parent company of the Daily Journal and 8 other state newspapers.

The transaction, along the unrelated sale of the *Belmont Tishomingo County Journal* to another owner, are the eighth and nine newspapers sold in the state in the past 12 months.

The New Albany sale by Landmark Community Newspapers closed Oct. 19. All of the Gazette's 14 employees

were carried over as staffers for Journal, Inc.

Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

The weekly Belmont paper was sold in August by longtime owners Wayne and Catherine Mitchell. The new owner is Alan Williams of Belmont.



Foster

Clay Foster, chief executive officer, president and publisher of Journal, Inc., said in a meeting with the *Gazette* staff that the newspaper would continue to be published twice a week, on Wednesday and Friday.

"We at Journal, Inc. are excited about the opportunity to be the new owner of the *Gazette*. Union County is an economically healthy community in the heart of our primary market area making the *Gazette* a great fit for our company," Foster said.



Fourth Estate

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Our industry is strong, but we must innovate and adapt

The following remarks were delivered by MPA-MPS President Jim Prince during the 147th Annual Convention June 21st in Biloxi.

JPMorgan Chase delivers a printed copy of its internal employee newspaper to the desks and personal mailboxes of its 260,000 employees every Monday, even though it's available digitally. Chase is one of the largest most highly regarded and technologically advanced banks in the world. Still, their own behavioral research shows their employees prefer print and absorb information better in print.

One of the largest and most technologically advanced banks in the world prints a newspaper. Sounds kind of quaint, doesn't it.

Well, I'm not really telling you a thing you don't already know. Our own recent research confirms what many of us have suspected or know in our own markets: Seven of 10 Mississippians read a printed newspaper or visit a newspaper's website regularly. That's more than 1.5 million consumers.

Nearly half of Mississippi consumers say the newspaper is their primary source for sales and shopping information, followed by their second choice, television, at 13%. There is, no doubt, power in print.

Newspaper readership in Mississippi is stronger among younger adults (18-34) than seen in most states. More than seven in 10 (72%) of younger adults access a printed newspaper or a newspaper website weekly.

So, reports of the death of newspapers are proving to be greatly exaggerated, but what does that mean for us? So what! It's been a grueling six years since the bottom



JIM PRINCE

fell out in November 2007. Things are gradually starting to tick up.

It means we must continue to innovate and adapt — or die.

In its April issue, Harvard Business Review reported that, frustrated by the lack of rigorous research, they undertook a statistical study of thousands of companies to find out what makes them truly great, and eventually identified several hundred among them that have done well enough for a long enough period of time to qualify as truly exceptional.

Then they discovered something startling: The many and diverse choices that made certain companies great were consistent with just three seemingly elementary rules:

1. Better before cheaper—in other words, compete on unique features and/or benefits other than price.

2. Revenue before cost—that is, prioritize increasing revenue over reducing costs.

3. There are no other rules—so change anything you must to follow Rules 1 and 2.

The rules don't dictate specific behaviors; nor are they even general strategies. They're foundational concepts on which companies have built greatness over many years.

For us, content matters. Good newspapers that serve their communities well will survive and thrive. Go out of your way to get more names and faces in print. Put

additional content on the web, but don't give it away for free.

We must market newspapers better. Focus on improving ad sales rather than cost reduction.

Cutting out days of publication doesn't fit the Harvard Business Review model for the most successful companies.

I applaud The Sun Herald here on the Coast because executives haven't bought in to the notion that print is dead and remain committed to delivering a printed newspaper every morning. Many of you, even in much smaller markets, remain committed.

Look at The Dallas Morning News and The Orange County Register. They've opened their news holes and focused on more content.

I believe theirs is the model that will win the day.

To be sure, it's tough in this 24/7 news cycle, especially for us smaller newspapers. We live in a world where everyone is a publisher and no one is an editor.

With the economy growing at a slow, tepid pace, we're all working hard but smarter.

And when contacting sources becomes criminal for journalists, I fear for our Liberty. "(O)ur liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost," Thomas Jefferson wrote.

Many of you toil away in relative anonymity, but what you do matters. If you didn't report it, nobody would. It may not matter to CBS News, but it matters to the people in our communities, like when the Chickenbone Fire Department responds to a rollover in Calhoun County.

I love the Delta, but it's a hard place to eek out a living sometimes. We have members who take on

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CALENDAR

11.7 Publishers Roundtable
Ameristar Casino, Vicksburg

11.7 ArkLaMiss Conference.
Ameristar Casino, Vicksburg

11.7 Webinar – Developing a Competitive Sales Advantage.

11.28 Thanksgiving holidays
MPA closed through 11-29

12.5 MPA-MPS Board Meeting
MPA office, Jackson

12.24 Christmas holidays
MPA closed through 12-25

1.1 New Year's Holiday
MPA closed

1.30 MPA Foundation Roast
Jackson Hilton

1.31 Mid-Winter Conference
Jackson Hilton



MPA hires agency for marketing initiative

The Mississippi Press Association has partnered with Jackson agency GodwinGroup to improve the marketing of state newspapers and position them as the media of first choice for advertisers.

The partnership is the outgrowth of an initiative created during a spring retreat of the Board of Directors. A chief goal is to better market the strength and continued vitality of print in Mississippi and improve consumer awareness of newspapers' role as the leading provider of news and advertising information in all 82 counties.

Additionally, the effort is aimed to improve the overall performance of Mississippi Press Services in its work as the advertising and media representative for MPA member papers.

Requests for proposals for the project were sent to Jackson area agencies in late spring. Godwin was selected in August from a pool of groups that responded to the RFP.

Board members participated in a



A series of promotional ads was created in-house by MPS after the results of the Advertising and Media Use Survey were announced. The new marketing initiative between MPS and GodwinGroup will be based on findings of the survey.

branding exercise and a "positioning" process in August and September.

Godwin and MPS are appropriating information from the Advertising and Media Use Survey for inclusion in an overall marketing strategy and presentation being developed for the general public and prospective advertisers. The finished product is expected to be unveiled to member newspapers at the annual Mid-Winter Conference this January.

The Advertising and Media Use Survey, conducted this past spring by American Opinion Research on behalf of MPA, found that 7-in-10 Mississippians are regular newspaper readers and that print is the leading

source of community news and information for consumers statewide.

"This is a groundbreaking project for us," said MPA-MPS Executive Director Layne Bruce. "This investment in marketing will be a multi-tiered, years-long effort that promotes print's rightful position as the leading news and information medium in every community served by MPA member papers."

A steering committee comprised of MPA-MPS President Jim Prince, Advertising Committee Chairman Pat Brown, Vice President Joel McNeece, Bruce and MPS staff is shepherding the effort through the creative process and implementation.

EDUCATION

Meek students honored with RFK recognition

OXFORD – A Meek School of Journalism and New Media multimedia project has been honored with the 2013 college journalism award by The Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights.

Five students and three faculty produced the project, titled "M-Powered: University of Mississippi students learn through service in Belize." It included a print depth report, television series and videos documenting the interdisciplinary work of dozens of University of Mississippi students and faculty in Belize over the past few years.

The five students – Aubry Killion, Cain Madden, Jajuan McNeil, Margaret Ann Morgan and Katie Williamson – traveled to Belize during Winter Intersession January 2012 for their reporting. They were accompanied by Student Media Director/Assistant Professor Patricia Thompson, editor and faculty leader for the project, and Assistant Professor Mikki Harris, photography/video Editor. They spent part of spring semester finishing their work. Assistant Professor Darren Sanefski was design editor for the print depth report. Students wrote articles, took photographs, wrote scripts for the television series, produced videos and other online content, and did all the production and on-air work for the television series.

The multimedia course was a partnership with the Division of Outreach and Continuing Education. Students received scholarship support.

This is the second RFK national award for the Meek School in recent years.

Four of the five students on the Belize project have graduated. Killion and Morgan are working as television journalists, and Madden is a newspaper editor; all three were actively involved at the Student Media Center during their Ole Miss years. McNeil, who has a bachelor's degree from the Meek School and graduated in May with a master's from the IMC program, is a marketing professional. Williamson, a journalism and art double major working this summer as Daily Mississippian photography editor, graduates in December.

BYLINES

Columbus

William Browning has returned to Mississippi as a correspondent for *The Commercial Dispatch* in Columbus. A graduate of Ole Miss, Browning formerly worked for *The Greenwood Commonwealth* and was a reporter for the *Florida Times-Union* in Jacksonville at the time he joined the *Dispatch*.

Greenville

Tom Bassing has been named managing editor of the *Delta Democrat-Times*. He is a former copy desk editor for *The Birmingham News* and correspondent for the *Birmingham Business Journal*.

Kosciusko

Former *Jasper (AL) Daily Mountain Eagle* managing editor **James Phillips** has been named

editor and publisher of *The Star-Herald* in Kosciusko.

Laurel Chronicle

Kevin Williamson was recently named publisher of *The Chronicle* in Laurel. A Jones County native, he most recently worked for Impact in Laurel.

Laurel Leader-Call

Sean Murphy, formerly an editor for *The Vicksburg Post*, has joined the *Laurel Leader-Call* as managing editor.

Vicksburg

Managing Editor **Karen Gamble** recently departed *The Vicksburg Post* after 23 years at the daily paper and 40 years in the newspaper business. She is now teaching at Hinds Community College.

Paul Barry has been named managing editor of *The Post*. He was serving as production manager and previously worked for *The Columbian-Progress* in Marion County.

West Point

Former *Starkville Daily News* news editor **Mary Garrison** is the new managing editor of the *Daily Times Leader* in West Point. She succeeds **Bryan Davis**. **Justin Minyard** recently joined the West Point paper as a general assignment reporter.

Natchez

Stephen Hemelt, former managing editor of *The Daily Herald, in Roanoke Rapids, NC*, has been named editor of *The Natchez Democrat*. Hemelt succeeds **Julie Cooper**, who recently stepped down but continues to serve as editor of Natchez the Magazine.

MARCH OF EVENTS

More papers in Mississippi than five years ago



**LAYNE
BRUCE**

NEWS THAT *The Southern Reporter* would end publication at the in September was disheartening.

We don't like to see a newspaper ever write its own obituary. But the realities of publishing a paper in a small town – particularly one that faces the economic challenges a rural town on the cusp of the Delta – cannot be denied.

However, one of the most surprising facts I share with the public whenever I have an opportunity to speak to civic and professional groups is Mississippi has more newspapers publishing today than it did just five years ago.

Admittedly, it is a small net gain. With the closing of Sardis we now have two more papers in the state today versus 2008. But, as I'll tell anyone who listens, modest growth is better than decline.

That *The Panolian* in Batesville is “doing the right thing” and absorbing the subscriber list of *The Southern Reporter* is also reassuring. It means loyal readers in Sardis won't be left without a newspaper to call theirs.

Both the Sardis and Batesville papers are located in Panola County and are owned by the Howell family. David Howell, publisher of *The Southern Reporter* since the late 90s, continues running the neighboring newspaper in Yalobusha County, the *North Mississippi Herald* in Water Valley.

THE SARDIS paper had been publishing since 1885 when James Frederick Simmons, a former district judge, moved home and relocated the newspaper operation from Henderson, KY.

About 70 years worth of ownership by the Fletcher family began in 1930. Albert E. Fletcher bought the paper that year from Percifer Simmons and

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KELLY DUNN/USM

Those involved in the ribbon cutting for renovated College Hall at The University of Southern Mississippi included, from left to right: Dr. Chris Campbell, director of the School of Mass Communication and Journalism; Dr. Steven Moser, dean of the College of Arts & Letters; President Rodney D. Bennett; senior broadcast journalism major Emily DeVoe and alumnus Rebecca Baldwin, vice president and general manager of zap2it.com.

MPA Foundation gives \$15K to USM College Hall fund

University holds ribbon cutting for College Hall

HATTIESBURG – The School of Mass Communication and Journalism at The University of Southern Mississippi was officially welcomed into its new home during a ribbon-cutting ceremony held Friday, Oct. 25 at renovated College Hall on the Hattiesburg campus.

School of Mass Communication and Journalism, campus radio station WUSM-FM and *The Student Printz* student newspaper will also call College Hall home after being housed in Southern Hall for several decades.

The MPA Education Foundation was a major contributor to the building fund, giving \$15,000 for renovations to the century-old building. The Foundation board approved the gift during its summer meeting at the 147th Annual Convention. A pillar on the front of the building bears a plaque in appreciation for the Foundation gift.

“Today marks a new era in the history of this special building,” said

Dr. Chris Campbell, director of the School of Mass Communication and Journalism. “And the College Hall you see today is almost identical to the building that first opened in 1912. We believe that this impressive restoration will help us reach our goal of becoming one of the finest mass communication and journalism programs in the country.”

Over the last 100 years, College Hall has hosted classes, department offices and even the University's first library and auditorium. Renovation of the building blends modern technology, such as LED lighting and other energy-efficient infrastructure, along with revival of the building's 20th century architectural style, said project manager Joel Lucero.

The south entrance, previously blocked by a mechanical room, will be accessible and several windows bricked in decades ago are back, along with arch-shaped windows above the

entrances on the east and west sides of the building.

W.G. Yates & Sons Construction Company served as the contractor for the project, with architectural services provided by Dale Partners Architects P.A. The overall projected cost of the renovation is \$6.3 million.

Campbell, along with the USM Foundation and Southern Miss Vice President for Advancement Bob Pierce, have been reaching out to Southern Miss supporters, including alumni of the school, to back fundraising efforts for new furniture and equipment for the building as well as scholarships for the school's students.

For more information about the Campaign for Mass Com, call 601.266.5210 or visit www.usmfoundation.com/masscomm. For more information on how to support the School of Mass Communication and Journalism, contact the school at 601.266.4258 or visit www.usm.edu/mcj.

TRANSITION

Raybon appointed Brookhaven publisher

BROOKHAVEN – Veteran newspaper man Otis Raybon has been named president and publisher of Brookhaven Newsmedia LLC, the Boone Newspapers Inc. affiliate in Brookhaven, and vice president of BNI.

A native of Griffin, Ga., Raybon most recently served as publisher of the Rome News-Tribune in Rome, Ga.

Outside of bagging groceries when he was growing up, Raybon's entire career has been in the newspaper business, starting as a delivery boy for his hometown newspaper, *The Griffin Daily News*.

"Newspapers are the fabric of a community,"

said Raybon. "I appreciate the rich heritage of *The Daily Leader* in the Brookhaven community and its role of helping make the quality of life here what it is."

"I look forward to working with the staff here to continue that tradition and to improve the newspaper and its website and add value to everything we do."

"We are pleased Otis and Barbara are joining us in Brookhaven. We have known Otis for some time and respected him and his work as a newspaper publisher," said Todd Carpenter, president of Boone Newspapers Inc. "He and (his wife) Barbara will be excellent additions to The Daily Leader family and to the Brookhaven community."

Raybon's career took him to *The Valdosta Daily Times* and then to the *Americus Times Recorder*, where he became the publisher.

He later returned home as publisher of *The Griffin Daily News*. In 1997, he moved to Dalton, Ga., to serve as president of the Northwest Georgia Strategic Marketing Group



Raybon



Reflector editors visit with MPA Board

Zack Orsborn (standing), multimedia editor for The Reflector at Mississippi State University, and editor Kaitlyn Byrne visit with MPA-MPS Board members during a luncheon at MSU's Mitchell Memorial Library. Orsborn is an MPA Foundation Scholarship recipient, while Byrne is a former Foundation summer intern.

Dept. of Archives undertakes effort to digitize old newspaper archives

From The Associated Press

JACKSON — The Mississippi Department of Archives and History has received a \$274,000 grant to digitize 100,000 pages of state newspapers published between 1836 and 1922.

Julia Marks Young, director of the MDAH Archives and Records Services Division, says MDAH will partner with Louisiana State University Libraries Special Collections on the project. MPA Executive Director Layne Bruce has been invited to serve on the project's advisory committee.

"LSU has extensive experience with digital content and technology projects as an established NDNP (National

Digital Newspaper Program) grant recipient," said Young.

With newspaper holdings from 1801 to the present comprising more than 13,000 rolls, the microfilmed newspapers are some of the most frequently used holdings at MDAH, Young said.

She said genealogists, local officials, journalists, documentary producers, attorneys, students, and other researchers rely on Mississippi's newspapers for information on local and national events; birth, death, and marriage notices; and city and county information.

MDAH has about 2,700 rolls of microfilmed newspapers containing 782 newspaper titles that span the

1836-1922 project dates. Twenty-five are antebellum newspapers from 11 counties, including ones from the older counties in the southwest such as Adams, Amite, and Wilkinson, and the newer counties that were being settled in the north, such as Panola, Tippah, and Yalobusha. Civil War newspapers from southwest, central, and northern counties are also included.

Eleven newspapers are in the MDAH's collections dating 1866-1922 – Natchez, Liberty, Jackson, Raymond, Lexington, Macon, Sardis, Vicksburg, and Woodville appear to be complete.

The NDNP is a joint project of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress.

Wright named publisher of Clarksdale Press-Register

Jesse Wright, the news editor at the *Clarksdale Press Register* since January 2012, has been named the newspaper's publisher.

Wright succeeds Matt Killebrew, who has been publisher for the past three years and has taken a job at Coahoma Community College.

A Texas native, Wright graduated from Stephen F.

Austin University with a journalism degree. He earned a master's degree in Southern Studies from the University of Mississippi. Wright worked for the Peace Corps in Haiti and East Timor.

He previously worked for a newspaper in Brenham, Texas, and free-lanced for other news organizations.

DEATHS

Kenneth Andrews

PENSACOLA, Fla. – Kenneth W. Andrews, former publisher of *The Clarion-Ledger*, died June 21 from pancreatic cancer. He was 83.

Andrews was a Pensacola native, served in the U.S. Navy and spent 29 years in the newspaper industry.

His team at the Jackson newspaper won a Pulitzer Prize in 1983 for its coverage of problems and reform in the Mississippi education system.

Andrews began and ended his news career at the Pensacola *News Journal*, starting as a credit manager in 1963 before traveling Louisiana and Mississippi and returning to the PNJ as president and publisher in 1988.

He retired from the *News Journal* in 1992, but continued to serve the community as chairman of the Salvation Army.

He is survived by his wife, Jackie, and two sons Mike and David.

His memorial service was held June 24 at St. Christopher's Episcopal

Church. The family requests donations be made to Interfaith Ministries, a clothing and food bank, at 4435 Gulf Breeze Parkway, Gulf Breeze, FL 32563.

Phyllis Mosby

ROLLING FORK – Phyllis Ann Trelling Mosby died Aug. 31, 2013 at Heritage Manor Nursing Home in Rolling Fork following a lengthy illness.

Mrs. Mosby was a graduate of Clarksdale High School and received her bachelor's degree in art from Delta State University, where she was also a runner-up in the university's Miss Delta State pageant.

She served as a social worker for several years at the S.L.A. Jones Activity Center for the Elderly in Clarksdale before she began a newspaper career that included respective positions at the *Delta Farm Press*, the *Clarksdale Press Register* and the *Deer Creek Pilot*, working

alongside her husband, Ray Mosby, first in Clarksdale, then here, after they purchased the weekly paper in 1993.

That career was cut short when she was stricken with early-onset Alzheimer's Disease, a scourge from which she suffered, but battled with courage, grace and dignity for the last dozen years of her life.

A warm and gentle soul, she is survived by her husband, Ray Mosby of Rolling Fork; daughters Logan Mosby of Lady Lake, Fla. and Devin Hardin-Warfield of Atlanta, Ga; a son, Robert H. Hardin III of Madison; and four grandchildren, including Levin Alexander Hardin of Lady Lake, Fla., whom she reared.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Sharkey-Issaquena County Library, 116 E. China St., Rolling Fork, MS 39159

Graveside services were held Sept. 5 at the Montroy Family Cemetery north of Coahoma.

New weekly newspaper launches in Hattiesburg

HATTIESBURG – Emmerich Newspapers launched a new weekly in the Hattiesburg market Oct. 3.

The Hattiesburg Post, a sister publication to *The Lamar Times*, *The Petal News* and *Signature Magazine* is delivered on Thursdays and focuses on Hattiesburg proper.

Publisher David Gustafson said the launch of *The Post* is the result of several years of planning and numerous discussions with community leaders about the need for a traditional community newspaper.

"Newspapers have long played an important role in communities like Hattiesburg. Our readers in Lamar County and Petal will attest to our commitment to providing fair coverage of events that matter to them the most. We take our jobs very seriously and readers will be able to see that each week in our finished product."

David Breland, former government reporter for *The Hattiesburg American*, will serve as news editor of *The Post* as well as its sister publications, *The Lamar Times* and *The Petal News*.

Gustafson said an aggressive sampling plan has been put in place in which more than 100,000 free copies of the newspaper will be mailed to Hattiesburg residents in the weeks and months ahead.

"There are plenty of exciting things happening in the Hub City these days and we want to use *The Post* as a vehicle to promote this great community. I'm confident people will like what they see," Gustafson said.

With century-old roots in the communities they serve, the Hattiesburg-based newspapers have been owned by Mississippi-owned Emmerich Newspapers since 2003. The company is led by Wyatt Emmerich, whose family-owned newspaper group has roots in 26 Mississippi communities.



Gustafson

Gazette

From page 1

"The team at the *Gazette* is experienced and passionate about providing quality products and services to the citizens of Union County that are relevant and affect Union Countians lives personally," he added.

Foster said, "We continue to invest in papers like the *Gazette* because we believe there is continuing value in the local publishing model, and with our existing operations throughout Northeast Mississippi, we're convinced we can bring economies of scale and enhanced management to both print and digital publishing operations of the *Gazette*."

Foster stressed that "returning the *Gazette* to local ownership is important because we believe that locally owned newspapers can best reflect the values and serve the interests of the people of any community.

"A distinguishing characteristic of our newspapers is the commitment to serve the information needs of the community, and we look forward to working with the team at the *Gazette* as we seek new ways to serve our readers and advertisers and strengthen the local community," Foster said.

Foster said the company believes so strongly that the future is bright for newspapers that it has invested in a new high-technology press to print its products.

All of the stock of Journal Inc. is owned by the CREATE Foundation, a public charitable corporation based in Tupelo, but with affiliates in other counties, including UNITE in Union County.

Landmark, based in Shelbyville, Ky., which operates more than 50 newspapers, owned the *Gazette* 34 years. The company bought the paper in October 1979 from Bill Rutledge, a New Albany lawyer. The Rutledge family had been associated with the *Gazette* since the 1930s.

Present at the *Gazette* for the sale announcement were Michael G. Abernathy, Landmark Community Newspapers president, and Dan Sykes, executive vice president.

Abernathy told employees that because the *Daily Journal* operates in the market next to New Albany, the company had been trying to buy the *Gazette* for many years.

"The paper is a very good fit for Tupelo," he said, adding that because the *Gazette* was the only paper Landmark owned in Mississippi, it was difficult to have synergy with the company's other papers.

"The *Gazette* plays an important role serving the community of Union County," Abernathy said. "We wish

the fine employees associated with the *Gazette* much success in the future."

In addition to the newspaper, which will observe its 125th anniversary next May, and its online edition, the *Gazette* publishes the *Gazette Guide*, *The Advertiser*, *Mississippi Homes*, and two glossy magazines, *Explore*, an annual tourism and marketing magazine, and *New Albany*, a twice-a-year city magazine.

Raybon

From page 5

with Thomson Newspapers.

Raybon became the vice president and chief operating officer of News Publishing Co. in 1998, and was named publisher of the *Rome News-Tribune* in May 2008.

He served as chairman of the board of directors of the Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce, as chairman of the Rome-Floyd Development Authority, and as a member of the board of directors at Georgia Northwestern Technical College.

"Publishing a newspaper gives us the opportunity to better serve our communities," Raybon said. "A newspaper is a partnership with the community, and I look forward to the opportunity to build that partnership."

Layne

From page 4

James S. Nichols.

The Fletcher family owned the paper through the remainder of the 20th Century before selling to the Howells in 1998.

We visited David Howell just a couple of months ago and he told us of the difficulties of running a small weekly in an economically depressed community. To make matters worse, the tiny but attractive newspaper office had been burglarized three times in the past year.

The situation is quite different for David in Water Valley. That community has been growing for a number of years and benefits from being a nearby neighbor to Oxford.

Amazing what a difference the 30 miles or so makes between communities like Water Valley and Sardis.

AND GOOD things continue to take place in small towns where they value the sense of community fostered by a local newspaper.

Jace Ponder, a journalism graduate of Ole Miss and the son of *Sea Coast Echo* publisher Randy Ponder, recently took ownership of the *Gazebo Gazette*, a paper that opened in Pass Christian as the coast struggled to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina.

Founded by Evalina Burnett in January 2006 as a bi-weekly, she sold the paper in May of this year. Jace, meanwhile, has changed the publication frequency to weekly and has been learning the fine art of ad scheduling, covering cops and city councils and the nuances of public notice advertising.

It's gratifying to see a young man with a bright future tackle newspaper publishing in a small community. By all accounts, Pass Christian has embraced the paper and the newspaperman behind it.

It may seem cliché since we say it so often, but there truly is power in print.

Layne Bruce is executive director of MPA-MPS. His email address is lbuce@msspress.org.

**JOB SEEKERS FIND THE
LATEST ON NEWSPAPER
POSITION OPENINGS AT
THE MPA JOB BANK.
GO TO MSPRESS.ORG**



Talking it over

Dean Will Norton of the Meek School of Journalism (left) talks business with Charlie Langford, general manager of the Monroe Journal. Norton and MPA Executive Director Layne Bruce have made several visits this summer to discuss ways the Association and the school can be of greater service to state newspapers. Norton and Bruce have made over 50 joint visits to state newspapers in the last two years.

Georgia publisher elected to lead NNA; Schieffer to keynote DC event

Robert M. Williams Jr., chair and publisher of SouthFire Newspaper Group in Blackshear, GA, was elected as president of the National Newspaper Association, during the association's 127th annual convention and trade show Sept. 14, 2012. He had been vice president.

Williams succeeded Merle Baranczyk, publisher of the *Salida* (CO) *Mountain Mail*, who became immediate past president.

Elected vice president was John Edgcombe Jr., publisher of the *Nebraska Signal* in Geneva, NE. He had been treasurer.

Elected treasurer was Chip Hutcheson, publisher of the Princeton (KY) *Times Leader*. He had been Region 3 director (Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia).

During his acceptance speech at the association's business meeting, Williams thanked not only those in

attendance for being community newspaper publishers, but all those who own and work at community papers.

Elected to his first three-year term is Philip Vega, publisher of the *Siera Vista* (AZ) *Herald* as Region 11 director (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guam). He succeeds Sharon DiMauro, publisher of the Fort Bragg (CA) *Advocate-News* and the *Mendocino* (CA) *Beacon*, who completed her second three-year term on the board.

Elected to their second three-year terms were Pat Desmond, publisher the *Milton* (MA) *Times*, as Region 1 director (Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont); and David Puddu as Region 10 director (Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming).

Appointed to the board was Jerry Tidwell, publisher of the *Hood County*

News in Granbury, TX, as an at-large director.

Leadership summit

One of the most recognized faces in American journalism will keynote NNA's "We Believe in Newspapers" Leadership Summit set in Washington March 13-14. Bob Schieffer, Chief Washington Correspondent for CBS News and a former newspaper reporter in Texas, will speak to the group at the National Press Club that Thursday evening.

"We are pleased Bob will be with us," said Williams. "Bob's reputation as a journalist with high standards, no doubt, goes back to his roots in newspapers, where, as a new reporter he was "accidentally" drawn into covering the Kennedy Assassination in Dallas. That's just one of countless fascinating stories about Bob that come from his decades on the front line of journalism."

Why the newspaper industry still matters

Once upon a time, the very first newspaper was painstakingly carved on stone or metal and posted daily in Rome's public spaces. *The Acta Diurna* carried news of legal proceedings, public notices and prominent births, marriages and deaths, but its readership was limited to the country's few literate.

Today, the *New York Times* tweets its headlines to more than 9.5 million followers – and then they are retweeted, shared, and commented on to millions more people online.

We've come a long way from the carved and handwritten dailies that were distributed just a few hundred years ago.

Today, those of us who are literate are thankfully not just a small sliver of the elite population. Print and digital innovations have made news available to everyone, and the newspaper industry is on the front lines of improved literacy and education efforts.

Our news is also immediate, which is a critical factor in allowing businesses and leaders to react in real-time to the world's events. Rather than opening the paper to last week's news, stories are constantly breaking and updated in print and on a variety of digital and mobile platforms.

The newspaper has transformed itself many times throughout history.



CAROLINE LITTLE

Yet while the look, content and business model regularly evolve with society, one thing has stayed constant: Our hunger for immediate, accurate news and information and newspapers' ability to deliver just that. Newspapers are more relevant than ever before, for in the midst of the internet's information age, we instinctively turn to newspaper content to provide trustworthy information and context. And that news frames our conversations and even actions throughout the day.

In other words, the impact of newspapers on a community, on our nation, just continues to multiply.

It starts with a reputation for great content. Newspapers are in the unique position to provide both the local stories that connect us as a community and the international news that creates an educated, responsible citizenry.

It's no surprise, then, that readers both seek out this content and look

to discuss and share it. The average newspaper's pass-along rate is 2.12, which accounts for the copies spread out among office coworkers, read and re-read on public transportation and those picked up by other family members.

Today's technology has only amplified this effect, providing a myriad of social media and digital platforms to widen the newspaper audience of all ages. Stories are now repeated, shared, discussed, emailed and texted countless times a day – with the opportunity to reach millions more readers than before.

This high-quality content, combined with an engaged readership of all ages, is exactly what continues to attract advertisers and lend credibility to their messages. We're seeing gains in digital and bundled advertising as advertisers

continue to seek out our readers' interest and high engagement many different ways.

The newspaper industry is one that is constantly transforming. What was once a stone notice has become a ubiquitous paper product and an instantly accessible website or app. We're still innovating and evolving with the times and technology today, and our content is more relevant and more needed than ever.

We recently observed National Newspaper Week. As we celebrate the impact this business has on our communities and our country, I could not be more proud to be a part of this industry. Our future is bright, and I cannot wait to see what is ahead for the newspaper business.

Caroline Little is President and CEO of the Newspaper Association of America.

Pew: Newspaper brands don't matter much to Facebook news consumers

From Poynter.org

A third of Americans get news from Facebook, a new study from Pew Research Center says. But 80 percent of the people who get news on Facebook get it when they're on Facebook for other reasons.

Only 20 percent of people who told Pew they click on links inside Facebook posts said they did so because they prefer the news organization that produced the story. Nearly twice as many said a friend's recommendation was important, and half said they clicked because a story looked surprising, funny or entertaining.

Entertainment news and local news are the biggest draws for Facebook news consumers, Pew found. Less than a third of people who read news on Facebook said they go there for breaking news.

Only 16 percent of the people surveyed said they were bothered by people posting their opinions to news stories. Forty-seven percent said they were bothered by people bragging or complaining about their lives.

Still, news remains a "common but incidental experience" on Facebook, Pew found. One respondent told the researchers: "News on Facebook is just something that happens."

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You're replacing someone; now what?

I was talking to Angela about her early days at her newspaper. "When I moved into this sales job, a lot of clients asked about the person I replaced. Most of them asked innocent questions about how that person was doing. But some of them were nosy and persistent. I figured the best strategy was to stay upbeat."

It's a big challenge to step into a new position, whether it's a result of account reassignments or a matter of replacing someone who has left the newspaper. By being upbeat, Angela was on the right track. People transition in and out of jobs and sales territories all the time – and the new person has some control of how those changes are perceived. Here are three points to keep in mind:

1. Be positive. Never say anything negative about the person you're replacing. "Early on, I decided to avoid saying things that I wouldn't say if my predecessor were in the room,"



**JOHN
FOUST**

Angela said. "There's nothing to be gained by criticism, even if that person left under negative circumstances.

"It's smart to prepare some positive comments – things that are true, things you can say with sincerity. For example, you can say something like, 'I appreciate your concern. Joe developed some ad strategies which got great results for his accounts.' Or 'Joe told me how much he enjoyed working with you. I'm sure his old accounts will miss him.'"

2. Don't gossip. It's human nature for clients to want to hear the

details – good or bad – of how and why their former representative is no longer handling their advertising. And it's natural to want to please their curiosity. That's why even the most innocent question calls for self-discipline.

"Just because people are curious doesn't mean I have to answer inappropriate questions," Angela explained. "I found it helpful to say, 'I appreciate your interest in Joe, but I wasn't here at the time, so I really can't answer your question.' I kept my comments as neutral as possible."

Eleanor Roosevelt famously said, "Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people."

Which leads us to the next point.

3. Help your clients look forward, not backward. Advertisers – like consumers – are motivated by self-interest. Change represents a possible threat to what was a

predictable relationship with your paper.

Here's a new beginning. A clean slate. An invitation to discuss ideas.

The first order of business is to reassure your accounts that you have their best interests at heart – and that their marketing is in good hands with your newspaper. "In the beginning it's all about establishing rapport," Angela said. "When I had initial conversations with existing accounts, I just tried to get to know them and let them see that I cared about their businesses. And like always, I was on the lookout for potential ideas and promotions."

"Funny thing about ideas," she continued. "When you get good ones – ideas that generate business for your advertiser – they'll stop talking about the good old days."

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Two years later, readers paying bigger share of NYT revenue

From INMA

Yasmin Namini, International News Media Association president and senior vice president/chief consumer officer of *The New York Times*, has been a witness and participant of many events that directly address the changing media landscape: the introduction of color, the transition to a national newspaper, and, most recently, the launch of a pay model.

In all cases, the decisions were controversial at the times they were introduced, she told delegates at the 2013 INMA European Conference in Berlin. And only time could help prove they were wise decisions.

"Decisions we make today will carry us to the next era," Namini said.

Some elements of the media business remain unchanged. Namini believes in great journalism, the kind published in *The New York Times* and by all publishers in attendance. She is sure that quality journalism is worth paying for, and feels the fundamentals of great journalism must remain intact.

Revenue diversification is the

biggest challenge of them all, Namini said. This is why *The Times* introduced its paywall in March of 2011.

There had been a rapid decline in advertising since 2008, yet circulation revenue was growing. *The Times* started to rely more and more on the readers to close the digital advertising gap.

Circulation revenue became the biggest revenue source for the news media company, with more than half of company revenues now coming from readers, thanks primarily to the decision to launch the paywall.

Namini reported US\$75.1 million of new revenue came from digital subscriptions in the first half of this year.

Depending on the bundle, *The Times* charges US\$15, US\$20, or US\$25 for a monthly subscription, arriving at this pricing by:

- Conducting research to assess the current demand curve.
- Considering print and digital businesses together.
- Considering advertising and consumer businesses together.



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Timelines help make sense of fragmented coverage

A city council approves tax incentives for a shopping center after a months-long process that provoked emotions from proponents and opponents alike.

A basketball team completes a perfect season, capping it with a state championship.

A jury convicts a local resident of a triple murder after rumors and legal maneuvers captivate the community for two years.

High-profile stories such as these are commonplace in our communities, punctuated by banner headlines and photos. The stories prompted prominent coverage when they first broke, and newsrooms likely delivered play-by-play coverage at the various steps.

But how many newspapers provide a comprehensive wrap for those individuals who have not followed the stories from beginning to end? That probably applies to a good share of your readers. Chronologies are effective in providing a living history of key events in our communities.

Compiling chronologies also are a valuable tool for newsrooms to ensure meaningful and comprehensive reports. It's a



JIM PUMARLO

good bet that these stories are touched by several reporters. Staff take vacations, have conflicting assignments or switch jobs. Internal logs enable any reporter to pick up a story midstream.

Crime coverage provides an excellent example as big cases typically last months or years before they are resolved. From day one of the arrest, it's a good idea to generate files and update them regularly. Keep a log of key dates and actions. Court appearances are standard information to collect, but there is much more. Track when motions are filed and ruled on; benchmark such things as changes of venue, new legal representation or judge replacements. Not all of these items will necessarily be reported when they occur – maybe not ever.

But a complete record will help

you present a complete story at its conclusion. Select the important items, and the chronology is ready-made. Sidebars offer opportunity for graphics and photos, too, to present a reader-friendly package.

These internal files also should include pertinent information on the key players. For criminal cases, record basic information including names, addresses and birthdates for defendants and victims. List attorneys and their contact information. Collect appropriate photos. This provides an easy reference for continuing coverage for the lead reporter as well as other staff.

The many starts, stops and detours before committees provide ample opportunity to benchmark the shopping center project. An undefeated basketball season includes plenty of highlights to chronicle – the common-from-behind victory, a player's record-setting performance, the showdown between two unbeaten teams. The legal strategies in court cases, not always readily apparent, can be identified and clarified in a step-by-step account.

And there are many more examples where chronologies help

tell a story.

A woman receives the lifetime achievement from a civic club. Profile the individual in the main story, then scan the nomination letters to produce a timetable on her accomplishments.

A former mayor is elected to statewide political office. Her advancement up the political ladder – complete with ups and downs – is noted in the accompanying chronology.

A building is named to the National Register of Historic Places after facing demolition. Its history – including the architect, changes of ownership and court challenges – is outlined in a chronology.

Today's fractured media landscape demands that editors and reporters explore ways to make news relevant and easy to digest for readers. Chronologies are an important tool in both regards. Take time to brainstorm the opportunities, and everyone will reap the rewards.

Jim Pumarlo writes, speaks and provides training on community newsroom success strategies. He can be reached at www.pumarlo.com and welcomes comments and questions at jim@pumarlo.com.

Prince

From page 2

papers just to keep them going. When a community loses its newspaper, it loses its soul. We've all grieved over New Orleans and wondered. But sometimes big corporations get it wrong. They lack that fire in the belly that since the 18th Century in America has driven newspapering instead of margins.

Everyone is a publisher in this age but few are competent editors.

We may have to rethink our business model in places where the local economy is drying up and move toward subscription-based revenue. There are challenges, but I have confidence we will overcome and prevail. Our own survey says so. Read it. Digest it. Print it out and use it to shout from the rooftops the value of newspapers.

President George W. Bush said

at the dedication of his Presidential library recently, "Life is service til the end."

The late British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said, "I am in politics because of the conflict between good and evil, and I believe that in the end good will triumph."

Thatcher also said: "If you just set out to be liked, you would be prepared to compromise on anything at any time and you would achieve nothing."

Few have the courage to speak the truth. Telling the truth does not make you popular or wealthy, necessarily, but it's the right thing. May God bless future generations and may He continue to call brave souls to serve in our profession so that the light of Liberty continues to shine, even in the remotest outposts of this great land.

MPA-MPS President **James E. Prince III** is president of Prince Newspaper Holdings and publisher of The Neshoba Democrat and Madison County Journal.

NEWS LEADS

Poynter launches effort to aid coverage of Affordable Care Act

The Poynter Institute has launched an initiative to provide teaching and resources to help journalists cover the federal Affordable Care Act – and what it means to the public. The multifaceted project aims to help simplify a complicated topic for journalists and their audiences.

"The implementation of the ACA is one of the most important stories of our time, and it's also one of the most complex," said Poynter's dean of faculty Stephen Buckley. "Poynter's goal is to be a place for journalists of all kinds to get the resources they need to cover this story in a way that's smart and nuanced and factual."

Health care experts from top media organizations across the country will write a series of articles for Poynter's website, www.poynter.org.

org, while Poynter's e-learning site, News University, www.newsu.org, will produce accompanying online interviews between Poynter faculty and the health reporters, allowing viewers to ask questions and participate in the discussions.

"The Poynter.org stories will offer valuable insights, story ideas and tips that can help journalists improve their coverage of the ACA," said Poynter.org managing editor Mallary Tenore. "We hope to help both health care reporters and general assignment reporters who are tasked with covering this difficult topic."

Replays of Poynter's online discussions will be archived. Visit www.newsu.org/courses/covering-affordable-care-act.

Changes affect community newspapers

Over the past 15 years or so, I've worked with newspapers of all sizes. My clients have included some of the biggest newspapers, as well as a few of the smallest papers in North America. I would like to dedicate this column to my friends in the community newspaper world.

So much is going on in our business - and I receive so many messages asking me to write about my thoughts on these events - that I wanted to take one column to explain how I think some of the big "stories" about the newspaper industry particularly affect those of us at smaller papers.

The Newhouse folks, aka Advance Publications, continue to convert their daily newspapers to non-daily distribution. I've lost count of the number of Advance papers that have made the move, starting with nine properties in Michigan, then moving through New Orleans, Alabama, Pennsylvania, New York and now, Cleveland.

In July, I took a trip - on my own dime - to meet with media, business and civic leaders in Kalamazoo, Michigan, to hear how the loss of a daily paper had effected their community. In a community meeting hosted by the Home Builders of Southwest Michigan, I listened as one attendee after another spoke up about the negative impact felt after The Kalamazoo Gazette made the now familiar move from daily to non-daily delivery.

On my way to the meeting, I stopped at a supermarket and purchased a copy of the Wednesday edition of the paper. The 20-page edition was filled with one ad, 1/4 page in size. That's not a misprint. Other than a few classifieds and public notices, there was one ad in the entire newspaper, not including house ads.

There were at least two persons in attendance who owned community newspapers in the area. One of these owned a very healthy free newspaper, while the other owned a successful paid weekly paper. Of particular interest to me was that both were very disappointed with the changes at the Kalamazoo newspaper, but were taking advantage of increased advertising revenues as a result of



**KEVIN
SLIMP**

the changes. Let's face it. Advertisers still need to advertise, even if they've lost their daily paper.

Also in attendance were broadcast media representatives. It was interesting to learn that their revenue had also increased significantly as a direct result, they felt, of the changes at the daily newspaper.

In addition, local civic and business leaders, as well as others, shared their concern for a community without a "serious" newspaper.

I DIDN'T PLAN to write about this. But I've received a bunch of emails and other messages asking me to share what I think about the purchase of The Washington Post by Jeff Bezos.

In a nutshell, I'm optimistic and worried. Like Warren Buffett, Jeff Bezos is a huge name that brings instant attention to an industry that can use some positive public relations. It's concerning that someone with no significant background in newspapers will take control of one of the most recognized newspapers in the world. At the same time, Aaron Kushner and Eric Spitz had no previous newspaper experience, yet they've made huge advances at The Orange County Register.

So my hope is that Bezos will follow the examples of Buffett, Kushner and Spitz and invest in ways to improve the newspaper in the long run, rather than seeing it as a cash cow to be dismantled for a quick return. I'm optimistic that could happen.

At the same time, I've been around this business long enough to recognize that the most successful papers are those that are run by people in their communities. The further the leadership is from the community, the less successful the

papers tend to be.

When newspapers get bought up by large corporations with no historical tie to the industry, it's obviously a concern that they are being purchased simply as a commodity, with no thought to the responsibilities that come with newspaper ownership.

THERE ARE SEVERAL ways smaller papers can take advantage of the atmosphere created by unrest in larger papers. First, I'm a firm believer that what hurts our metro papers hurts all of us. We're all better off if our large, visible newspapers, are healthy and growing. It presents advertisers with a negative view of print advertising in general when our large brethren are making moves that cause the world to see newspapers as a "dying industry."

But like the publishers I met in Michigan, community papers can benefit by aggressively seeking advertisers in these same areas. Let's face it, the home builders group in Michigan hosted the meeting in Kalamazoo because they feel like they've lost their most precious method of advertising, daily newspapers. While the drop in home delivery can be catastrophic in a metro paper, area community papers can pick up the slack.

It's also the case that, in communities served by metro papers who have decreased home distribution, readers are looking for solid local news. One of the themes I heard time and again in Kalamazoo was that the reinvented newspaper had cut their news staff to the point that there wasn't much real news in it. Community papers can provide the news that readers are looking for.

I had a phone conversation with my friend, Ed Henninger this morning. Ed has long been a very respected name in the newspaper world. He mentioned to me that he thought the changes in the Newhouse properties would ultimately be a big boost to community papers, who could pick up the slack in news and advertising.

If I were to wish, I'd wish that other metro papers would invest and improve in ways that the folks in Orange County are finding profitable. But in places where that is not the case, I would suggest that community newspapers can fill the advertising vacuum by using this opportunity to improve their presence and offer advertisers the resources they are searching for.

Kevin Slimp is the director of the Institute of Newspaper Technology. Email him, kevin@kevinslimp.com



Free Flow of Information Act gains momentum

WASHINGTON—The Free Flow of Information Act moved successfully through the Senate Committee on the Judiciary with a 13-5 vote in September.

All members of the committee voted in favor of the bill except for Sens. Jeff Sessions, R-AL, Jeff Flake, R-AZ, John Cornyn, R-TX, Michael S. Lee, R-UT, and Ted Cruz, R-TX. The bill brings with it the hope that Congress will provide federal statutory protection for journalists.

The Free Flow of Information Act of 2013 is not the first bill of its kind to find itself in the Senate pipeline. Similar bills have been introduced but none have become law. This particular bill, S. 987, was amended by Sens. Dianne Feinstein, D-CA, and Richard Durbin, D-IL. The amendment narrows the definition of those people protected by the bill in deference to national security concerns.

The next step is for the Senate Committee on the Judiciary to report the legislation to the full Senate, possibly next spring.



Board visits Mississippi State

Dr. John Forde, head of the Department of Communications at Mississippi State University, updates MPA-MPS Board President Jim Prince (from left) and Treasurer Don Norman on department curriculum and activities. The Board visited Mitchell Memorial Library and offices of The Reflector student newspaper during its Oct. 17 meeting in Starkville. Several Board members also served as guest speakers for journalism reporting classes.

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