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Jeff Shultz new OPA president

Jeff Shultz, owner and publisher of The Garvin County News Star, took office as president of the Oklahoma Press Association July 1, 2012.

OPA members elected Shultz as president at the OPA Convention on June 7, 2012, at the Reed Center in Midwest City, Okla. Shultz, who succeeds Rusty Ferguson as president, will serve a one-year term.

Jeff Mayo, associate publisher and general manager of the Sequoyah County Times, was elected to a one-year term as vice president. Gracie Montgomery, co-publisher of The Purcell Register, was re-elected to a second one-year term as treasurer.

Ted Streuli, managing editor of The Journal Record, was elected to a three-year term as a board director. Others directors are Jeff Funk, Enid News & Eagle; Robby Trammell, The Oklahoman; Dayva Spitzer, Sayre Record & Beckham County Democrat; Brian Blansett, Shawnee News-Star, and Mike Brown, Neighbor News. Ferguson, publisher of The Cleveland American, will serve a one-year term as past president. Mark Thomas is executive vice president of the association.

"This is a very challenging time for Oklahoma newspapers," said Shultz.

"We are annually being threatened with changes in postal service, elimination of legal notices and advances in technology.

"It takes heroic efforts by newspapers to protect the public's right to public notices as well as covering the local news that's so important to our readers."

Shultz grew up in the newspaper business. His parents, Charles and Helen Shultz, owned the Beckham County Democrat in Erick, Okla.

"My first newspaper job was killing out galleys and pouring pigs for the Linotype machine. I burned my hair several times in that melting room."

His journalism experience includes stints as managing editor for the Perkins Journal and the Woods County Enterprise in Waynoka; assistant managing editor for the Midwest City Sun; publisher of the



OPA PRESIDENT JEFF SHULTZ

Guymon Daily Herald and publisher of the Pauls Valley Daily Democrat.

On Aug. 1, 2008, Shultz and his wife, Nanette, purchased the Maysville News and Stratford Star from Kenneth and Lottie Wood and merged both papers into one publication – The Garvin County News Star.

Jeff Shultz is a past president of the Pauls Valley Chamber of Commerce; was the 2007 Pauls Valley Citizen of the Year and the 2012 Pauls Valley Corporate Citizen of the Year; is a charter member of the Pauls Valley Arts Council and served as PVAC President for two years.

He is a current member of the Pauls Valley Recreation Committee and has served on the Pauls Valley Foundation for Academic Excellence, the Kiwanis Board of Directors and the Pauls Valley United Fund Board of Directors.

"Coming from a town that has the only toy museum in the world solely dedicated to hero action figures, I thought it would only be fitting to make the theme of my presidency 'Newspaper Heroes,'" said Shultz.

Summer issues of Oklahoma Daily resume printing

A decision to suspend the summer print edition of The Oklahoma Daily has been reversed.

The University of Oklahoma's student publication previously announced that it would scale back the print product this summer to experiment with online advertising and readership. The plan was to suspend the weekly print newspaper for four issues in July and resume printing in August.

OU Student Media Department officials reversed the decision after the OU Student Affairs Division offered to donate \$4,000 to the department to be used in a yearlong study to imagine the future of student media on campus.

Student Media Director Brian Ringer said the department plans to launch the yearlong study in August.

University officials heard from "a small but vocal number of Daily supporters" who were concerned about The Daily's decision to drop the last four print editions of the summer, said Judy Gibbs Robinson, secretary for the Student Media Publications Board.

Student Media should wait until its study is completed before recommending any changes, said Susan Sasso, associate vice president of Student Affairs and associate dean of students.

Joe Foote, dean of the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communications, said that it's not surprising that people care and value The Daily.

"There is a variety of perspectives with any policy change. Strong feedback is validation of its importance as a communication vehicle and as a training ground for journalists," Foote said.



UP, UP AND AWAY!

OPA PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Celebrating Newspaper Heroes, Past & Present
By Jeff Shultz, Garvin County News Star

Hello fellow newspaper heroes.

Since I live in Pauls Valley, which is the home of the world's only toy museum dedicated to action figures, I thought the theme of my presidential year would be "Newspaper Heroes."

Each month in this column I'll be discussing the various issues concerning the Oklahoma Press Association as well as introducing you to some of the real life newspaper heroes that have inspired others and me.

Now before I start with this first column, I'd like to explain the column head a little to you.

Kevin Stark, creator and author of the GEEZER comic strip that appears in the Garvin County News Star each week, drew the image of the superhero in the header.

Geezer, you see, is the world's oldest geriatric superhero, who got his powers when a group of aliens sent rockets to Earth that gave normal human beings superpowers.

Kevin was kind enough one time to include me in his comic strip as "The Editor." My superpower is the ability to grow to a giant size and impose the "power of the press" on evildoers.

So, my thanks to Kevin for allowing me to use his "Editor" creation in my column.

I'd like to begin this first column by introducing you to two newspaper heroes of my own, my parents, Charles and Helen Shultz.

Mom and Dad were owners and publishers of the Erick Beckham County Democrat from 1965 to 1994. When Dad died in 1994, Mom ran the paper for three more years until selling it to Brad and Davya Spitzer of Sayre.

The lessons my parents taught me while growing up in the newspaper business have impacted my life and career.

They were extremely active in their community, volunteering for many projects and events in Erick.

Both of them helped create a new festival in Erick – the Honey Festival – and they served on the Erick Chamber of Commerce, the Erick Lions Club and many other organizations because they believed in making their community a better place.

When I told Dad I wanted to have a career in the newspaper industry, he gave me two valuable pieces of advice.

"First," he said, "you put out the best paper you know how to. And if you're happy with it, then to hell with everyone else. You'll learn quickly you can't please everyone."

But it was the second bit of wisdom that has impacted my life the most.

"A newspaper," he said, "is like a mirror. When you look in the mirror you not only see what's good about your appearance, but you also see what changes need to be made."

"The same goes for a community newspaper. A newspaper should show both the good about a community but also should reveal what changes need to be made to make the community better."

I'm sure all of us in the newspaper business, no matter how large or small our papers may be, can look back on someone who was our hero and recall with delight the valuable lessons they taught us.

COMING SOON to your mailbox. Be looking for information on how you can purchase a print of the famous painting of Will Rogers (another newspaper hero) reading a newspaper.

Titled "All I know is what I read in the papers," this masterpiece was painted by Charles Banks Wilson and

the original currently is displayed in our lobby at the OPA.

The Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation will be selling prints of this painting to raise funds for the foundation. So be watching for information on how you can purchase one of the prints to hang proudly in your office.

CONGRATULATIONS to OPA staff member Jennifer Gilliland. Jennifer is the recipient of the Excellence in Communications and Publications Award from the Oklahoma Society of Association Executives (OSAE).

OPA Executive Vice President Mark Thomas and Member Services Director Lisa Potts nominated Jennifer for the prestigious award.

In his nomination letter, Mark wrote, "Jennifer Gilliland is a consummate association professional dedicated to our members, her co-workers and the betterment of the industry we love."

A hearty AMEN to Mark's words.

Jennifer received her award on July 9 during the OSAE's Annual Meeting in Clinton.

When you get a chance, drop her an email and congratulate her on a job well done.

I HOPE EVERYONE HAS RUN, or will be running, the series of ads on the importance of printed public notices.

Mark has fought the battle over public notices at the Capitol for years and hopefully these PSA ads will raise enough civic awareness on how important printed public notices are.

Thanks to the OPA Creative Staff for their hard work in producing such high quality, professional ads for us to publish.

MARK AND I WILL BE TRAVELING to visit some of our state's newspapers in the months ahead.

Past President Rusty Ferguson would write about his visits in each month's Publisher and I intend to continue the tradition.

That's it for this month. Now go out there and be a newspaper hero for your community!

OPA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Complete Listing of Events at
www.OkPress.com

THU., JULY 26, OKC SPORTS REPORTING AND PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

Oklahoman sports editor Mike Sherman, Norman Transcript sports editor Clay Horning and Oklahoman photographer Sarah Phipps will help new sports reporters learn the basics of covering sports at every level, from pro to pee-wee. Registration \$35.

FRI., JULY 27, OKC COLLEGE PUBLICATION ADVISERS AND EDITORS MEETING

Advisers and editors of college publications are invited to this free event sponsored by Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation and the Oklahoma Collegiate Media Association.

THU. & Fri., AUG. 9 & 10 UNIV. OF OKLAHOMA, NORMAN GET CREATIVE WITH ADOBE CREATIVE SUITE

OPA Computer Consultant Wilma Melot returns to answer questions and offer ideas as she covers workflow procedures in InDesign, Photoshop and Acrobat. Attend one day of training or both and learn on the newest version of Adobe Creative Suite available. Space is limited, so sign up today! Registration \$20 per day.

OPEN MEETING/OPEN RECORDS ACTS SEMINARS

Attorney General Scott Pruitt, the Oklahoma Press Association and Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation invite you to attend a seminar designed to deal directly with your questions and concerns about Oklahoma's Open Meeting and Records Acts. Oklahoma First Assistant Attorney General Rob Hudson and Communications Director Diane Clay will present these free seminars. Sponsored by ONF.

THU., SEPT. 13, McAlester, OK

THU., SEPT. 27, Lawton, OK

THU., OCT. 18, Weatherford, OK

THU., OCT. 25, Oklahoma City, OK

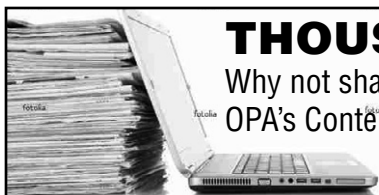
THU., DEC. 6, Tulsa, OK

THU., DEC. 13, Enid, OK

For more information on upcoming events, visit the OPA website at www.OkPress.com or contact Member Services Director Lisa Potts at (405) 499-0026, 1-888-815-2672 or e-mail LPotts@okpress.com.

THOUSANDS OF PAGES, MILLIONS OF WORDS...

Why not share some of those words with other OPA member newspapers? Sign up for the OPA's Content Exchange for the opportunity to share your stories and use other members' stories. Download the registration form at www.okpress.com/content-exchange.



Enid News & Eagle files suit to unseal records

The Enid News & Eagle filed a motion on June 26 in Major County District Court to unseal the records of a felony perjury charge filed on May 17 against Enid Attorney Eric Edwards.

Within hours of the felony being filed, presiding District Judge Ray Dean Linder sealed all records in the case, removing the proceedings from public view.

The case was posted to On Demand Court Records (ODCR), an online state court records database, but was removed within hours, including the case number.

The News & Eagle then requested an affidavit in the case from the office of Major County Court Clerk Shauna Hoffman, but that request was denied on the grounds that the case had been sealed.

Linder confirmed he sealed the records on May 17.

"That is correct, and it will remain sealed until I say it shouldn't be sealed," Linder said.

On June 26, OPA Attorney Michael Minnis filed two motions with the Major County District Court on behalf of the News & Eagle.

The first motion seeks to give the paper standing to intervene in the

felony perjury case for the purpose of filing a motion to unseal the case records. The second motion seeks to lift Linder's order sealing the case.

In his filing, Minnis stated the sealing of the court records violated the News & Eagle's rights under the Oklahoma Constitution, the Oklahoma Open Records Act and the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Minnis also took issue with how the records were sealed.

"The sealing should only occur when proceeded by appropriate notice, an opportunity to object and for good and sufficient reasons," Minnis wrote.

Minnis conceded in his motion that certain expungement statutes do allow for closing a case file but added any records sealed due to expungement would have occurred months or years after the public litigation. The records would not suddenly disappear.

Minnis also noted that all parties in the case are attorneys, adding, "If nothing else, the sealing order gives an appearance of special treatment for lawyers even if the closure was done with valid authority based on following proper procedural rules."

Enid News & Eagle publisher Jeff Funk said the paper felt compelled

to file its motions because the courts were created to be a public and open branch of the state government that is ultimately accountable to voters. "If Oklahoma's courts are able to charge, convict, sentence and punish people – all in secret – we should all be afraid," Funk said.

Funk also said the sealing raised questions as to why Linder became involved and sealed the records within hours of the charge being filed against Edwards.

"It appeared the charge against Eric Edwards was assigned to a Major County judge to hear, but a judge came in from another county, took over this case immediately and sealed it," Funk said. "Why such extraordinary behavior?"

The original felony perjury charge against Edwards allegedly stems from Edwards threatening another attorney during a divorce hearing in February and later lying about what he said.

On June 28, the Oklahoma Supreme Court assigned a new judge to hear the original felony perjury case. Grady County District Judge Richard Van Dyke will hear the case. A new district attorney also has been assigned to the case.

Garvin County News Star receives chamber award

Jeff Shultz and the Garvin County News Star received the honor of being named Corporate Citizen of the Year during the annual Pauls Valley Chamber of Commerce Banquet on June 14.

Publisher Jeff Shultz, who was named the chamber's Citizen of the

Year in 2007, said this was different because it recognized the effort of the newspaper.

"We donate ad space to chambers of commerce and others. We do a lot for the little communities in this county," Shultz said.

Piedmont names Montgomery as news editor

Matt Montgomery is the new news editor at The Piedmont-Surrey Gazette and the Okarche Chieftain.

Montgomery previously was editor at The Friday Gazette in McLoud.

He began his newspaper career while a student at Oklahoma City Community College.

Montgomery then went to the University of Oklahoma to pursue a professional writing degree.

He worked as an intern for The Oklahoman and also spent time working at The Edmond Sun, Edmond Outlook and The Shawnee News-Star. Montgomery spent the last year as editor of The Friday Gazette.

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PUBLISHER

Mark Thomas
mthomas@okpress.com

EDITOR

Jennifer Gilliland
jgilliland@okpress.com

OPA OFFICERS

Jeff Shultz, President
The Garvin County News Star

Jeff Mayo, Vice President
Sequoyah County Times

Gracie Montgomery, Treasurer
The Purcell Register

Mark Thomas,
Executive Vice President,
Oklahoma City

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3601 N. Lincoln Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-5499
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news@OkPress.com
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Elk Citian readers now finding news in their morning mail

The Daily Elk Citian is now a morning publication featuring same-day delivery.

The new morning schedule also includes a change in print days, said Daily Elk Citian publisher Derek Manning.

The newspaper is now being published Tuesday through Saturday, with all in-town and in-county subscribers receiving the newspaper on the day of publication.

"We're still keeping the same number of publications – five days per week," Manning said, "we're simply rolling those days forward to Tuesday through Saturday, which will benefit

our readers and advertisers with a true weekend newspaper."

Manning said a morning newspaper allows readers to choose when and where they sit down to read it.

"This approach, combined with our already strong Internet presence on TheDailyElkcitian.com, our e-edition, our Facebook page and our Twitter feeds, will ensure that our readers have whatever local news experience they need whenever they want it," said Manning.

"We're always looking for innovative ways to improve our service. We believe our readers and advertisers will benefit from these changes."

Cleveland County mug shots being released to Transcript

For the first time since May, the Cleveland County Sheriff's Office is providing The Norman Transcript with inmate mug shots.

The change was made after Sheriff Joe Lester requested that District Attorney Greg Mashburn reevaluate the county's legal opinion on the release of the photos.

"The law in the state of Oklahoma, there's nothing that precludes the release of the information," Mashburn said. "There's nothing that says you have to give it over. There's nothing that says you don't."

The Oklahoma Open Records Act states that law enforcement agencies must release certain records, including jail registers.

The act defines jail registers as information inclusive of an inmate's date of and reason for incarceration, the name of the booking authority, a description of the inmate and the date and reason for release.

The act does not specifically discuss mug shots.

Law enforcement agencies can deny access to records that are not listed in the act unless a court deems they are in the public interest.

According to Mashburn, the release of mug shots comes down to a "discretion call" for Lester.

Mashburn's opinion overrides the earlier opinion of former Assistant District Attorney David Batton, who was fired on June 22 for undisclosed reasons.

Mashburn said that opinion was based on a 10th Circuit federal opinion interpreting the Freedom of Information Act.

In that February decision the 10th Circuit ruled that the U.S. Marshals Service had the right to deny mug shots of pretrial inmates to the Tulsa World.

Mashburn said since that ruling focused on a federal law enforcement agency, the decision should not impact operations of state agencies.

Oklahoma Supreme Court denies stay

A motion for a stay seeking to reverse an 11th Judicial District Court's ruling that allowed the release of a surveillance video revealing alleged police brutality has been denied by the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

All justices concurred with the ruling.

District Attorney Kevin Buchanan sought relief from the state's highest court after District Court Judge Curtis DeLapp issued an order in March to

the Bartlesville Police Department to release the videotape to the newspaper.

The surveillance footage was sought by the Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise in their investigation into an incident involving four police officers and a combative patient at a Bartlesville hospital. The Examiner-Enterprise ultimately sued the City of Bartlesville, the Bartlesville Police Department and the district attorney for the footage.

The newspaper released the video online on March 18.

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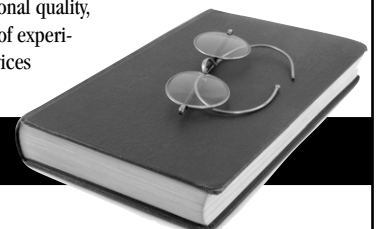
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OPA Board of Directors meet during convention

The Oklahoma Press Association Board of Directors met June 7, 2012, at the Reed Center in Midwest City, Okla.

Attending were President Rusty Ferguson, The Cleveland American; Vice President Jeff Shultz, The Garvin County News Star, and Treasurer Gracie Montgomery, The Purcell Register. Directors attending were Past President Rod Serfoss, Clinton Daily News; Jeff Mayo, Sequoyah County Times; Jeff Funk, Enid News & Eagle; Robby Trammell, The Oklahoman; Dayva Spitzer, Sayre Record & Beckham County Democrat; Brian Blansett, Shawnee News-Star, and Mike Brown, Neighbor News. Attending as a guest was director-nominee Ted Strueli, The Journal Record. Staff was Mark Thomas, Executive Vice President/Secretary; Lisa Potts, Member Services Director, and Michael Minnis, OPA Attorney.

After calling the meeting to order, Ferguson asked the board to review the minutes of the March 29, 2012, meeting. The minutes were approved as presented.

The board acknowledged OPA and LSP financial statements, a consolidated summary and investment reports for the period ending April 30, 2012. Year-end projections for OPA and LSP in 2011-2012 also were reviewed.

The board reviewed the current list of 45 sustaining members and 12 associate members. Thomas said for-profit sustaining members pay annual dues of \$400; non-profit sustaining members pay \$200 and associate members pay \$65.

In preparation for mailing dues invoices for the 2012-13 fiscal year, Thomas said staff is confirming full-page ad prices. Invoices will reflect the board's decision to bill one-third of the dues increase this year.

ACTIVITY REPORTS

In activity reports, Potts reviewed the pre-convention report and registration numbers. Attendance was slightly down, in part due to college students being unable to attend during summer months and summer vacations at newspapers.

Thomas reviewed the status of 26 bills at the conclusion of the legislation session, which he said was successful.

In the LSP Committee review, Brown said there is only one active legal defense and that the committee will review language about defense of invasion privacy. Minnis said approximately 30 LSP inquiries are received per month with responses delivered via phone, mail or email.

OTHER BUSINESS

In other business, Thomas said OPA-MEBT Trustees are working on final arrangements for dissolution of the trust and will inform the OPA Board when any outstanding issues have been resolved.

Shultz referred the board to a list of committee assignments and a calendar of board meetings and events for 2012-13. Shultz said the theme for his presidential year is newspaper heroes, which reflects the Toy and Action Figure Museum in his hometown of Pauls Valley.

Before adjourning, Ferguson thanked Serfoss for his many years of service to OPA and OPS.

OPS BOARD MEETING

At the Oklahoma Press Service board meeting, minutes of the March 29, 2012, meeting were approved as presented.

OPS financial statements for the period ending April 30, 2012, were reviewed and Thomas said he expects OPS to end the year with a profit.

Staff reports included:

- Discussion of upgrading the OPS ad software to include online ad placement and tearsheet coordination.

- Review of the did-not-run advertising report for January to May 2012, which showed 54 newspapers missed 102 ads for a total of \$39,940.

- Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department's suspension of its trade agreement for at least one year. Thomas said 32 members participated in this year's trade agreement and that the state department is planning a strategic campaign for newspaper advertising.

OPA staffer Jennifer Gilliland receives award from OSAE



OPA Creative Services Director Jennifer Gilliland, center, receives the 2012 Oklahoma Society of Association Executives (OSAE) Excellence in Communication & Publication award. Attending the luncheon for the presentation of the award on July 10 in Clinton, Okla., were OPA Creative Services Assistant Morgan Browne; OPA Executive Vice President Mark Thomas; Gilliland; OPS Media Manager Cindy Shea and OPA Member Services Director Lisa Potts.

The Oklahoma Society of Association Executives presented the 2012 Excellence in Communication & Publication Award to Jennifer Gilliland, creative services director of the Oklahoma Press Association.

The award was presented July 10 at the Frisco Conference Center in Clinton, Okla.

Gilliland started at the OPA in 1984 and has been producing publications for the association for 28 years.

OPA Executive Vice President Mark Thomas nominated Gilliland for the award.

In his nomination letter, Thomas wrote, "Gilliland understands the difficult nature of writing and sending pub-

lications to every newspaper editor in the state, and always handles the task with grace, ease and a humble heart."

At the OPA, Gilliland's position includes producing monthly publications, promotional materials, educational materials, directories, books and other publications.

She also manages the association's computer network, website, phone system and member database.

Gilliland was inducted into the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame in 2006.

OSAE, founded in 1963, is the only organization in Oklahoma that serves the state's association profession. Members of OSAE are association staff and executives.

Sports writer joins staff at McAlester

Matt Goisman, a sports writer from Boston, joined the staff of the McAlester News-Capital this month.

Goisman is a recent graduate of Boston University's journalism master's program where he obtained a Master of Science in editorial journalism with a concentration in sports journalism.

Goisman attended Wesleyan University for his undergraduate degree, receiving a Bachelor of Arts in religion.

Goisman's work has been published

in the Boston Globe; the Globe's website, Boston.com; Somerville Patch and Sports of Boston.

He says he has written about sports ranging from little league baseball to underwater hockey.

"Matt's already hit the ground running, and I expect that momentum will build as he meets our area coaches, players and sports fans," said Examiner-Enterprise Executive Editor Kandra Wells.

PLAYER PROFILE



Name: **SHEILA BLANKENSHIP**
Owner, Publisher, Editor: THE HOOKER ADVANCE

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND: Hooker High School, 1976;
 Oklahoma State University – 1980, BS in journalism

FAMILY: Son, Ian, CCH software tech support, Wichita, Kan.

NEWSPAPER EXPERIENCE: Advertising Director, The Hooker Advance, 1980-1989;
 Editor, The Hooker Advance, 1989-present.

Each month, The Publisher will profile a newspaper executive in this space. Learn more about your peers from all corners of the state. To request the questionnaire for your Player Profile, email jjgilliland@okpress.com.



Q: What's something most people don't know about you?

A: Here, everyone knows but you might not – I am a two-time survivor of Hodgkin's Disease lymphoma and after first being diagnosed in 1995, have been cancer-free since 2001.

Q: What's the best part of your job?

A: I love getting to promote our town and the people who live here.

Q: What civic activities are you involved in?

A: A couple of years ago, I backed off several organizations but I am still active in St. John's Lutheran Church and auxiliaries, the Hooker Chamber of Commerce and the American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Texas County. Plus, I enjoy helping out other worthwhile projects with publicity.

Q: Who's had the biggest influence on your career?

A: Harry Heath, who took an OSU freshman who literally chose advertising

as a major just because she liked to make posters, and created a print media devotee. He taught me that any segment of journalism is not just a job, it's a calling and it comes with responsibilities.

Q: What would you describe as the three most important responsibilities of your job?

A: I must avoid sensationalizing news for the sake of the headline or extra papers sold; I must write for the betterment of the community and residents; and I must inform, entertain and encourage my readers.

Q: What about newspaper publishing gets you out of bed in the morning? What makes you want to stay in bed?

A: I feel that I am performing a service and that this community would be less if I wasn't there to take photos or take notes or take part. I need to be at home to care for my mother more hours a week.

Q: What's the biggest obstacle you've overcome in your career?

A: Trying to balance time between being a single mom or an only daughter and being "ye olde editor."

Q: What are you most proud of?

A: Although I am trying to sell the newspaper, people are always coming up to me to say, "I'm sure praying hard that you never find a buyer." It's a mixed blessing but it makes me think I've done something right.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Other than taking photos and taking notes wherever, I fight cancer with the American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Texas County locally and as chair of The Society High Plains Division Survivorship Workgroup of the Community Engagement Task Force. I also enjoy listening to audio Agatha Christie novels and short stories, reading and sending cards.

Q: Does your newspaper have a website?

A: No, I'm not blessed with technical skills or interest and there's just something unique about holding newsprint in my own two hands. However, the USPS may drive me to a website soon.

Q: How does your newspaper play an important part in the community?

A: We shine the spotlight on the people who are doing amazing things and we shine the spotlight on dark corners that people need to see.

Q: What type of annual events is your newspaper involved in?

A: If it happens in Hooker or local residents are involved, we're

working on it, too, and surprisingly, there's a lot going on in this little town.

Q: In what ways has your newspaper positively impacted the community?

A: A newspaper to a small town is like the stick'um that makes communities out of individuals so I believe we have helped get things done that needed to be done; we've helped change things that required attention and we've highlighted the people who worked at those things that were worth their time, talent and treasure.

Q: What challenges are facing your newspaper today and in the future?

A: The USPS and their total disregard for the need to deliver newspapers; and also my inability to give the 110% needed to do this thing right – my heart is other places now.

Q: What are some area attractions in your community visitors shouldn't miss?

A: Anyone visiting Hooker has to stop in at the Hooker Chamber of Commerce store and pick up a few "Hooker" T-shirts like "It's a location, not a vocation," "Not your typical Hooker" and "Once a Hooker, always a Hooker." And we have a great city park and recreational area featuring a modern zero-entry swimming pool, a sand volleyball pit, horseshoe pits, fenced basketball half-court, tennis courts and a brand new skate park. Once off the dreary highway, visitors praise our downtown with paved sidewalks of engraved bricks, shady trees, Pizza On Broadway and The Hooker Soda Fountain & Grill, which still sports the original "Rexall" sign from when it was a drugstore. Downtown also offers KaleidoScoops ice cream, flower shop, gift shop, antiques, nail salon, two hair salons, Hooker Health Club and more including The Hooker Advance newspaper and Christian gift/card shop. We also boast a 9-hole golf course, Jack Goosen Baseball Stadium, a great school system and 10 churches.

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DEATHS

PHILLIP THOMAS COWAN, former owner and publisher of the Bethany Tribune-Review, died June 28, 2012. He was 84.

During his life Cowan was very active in his community. He served three terms as president of Bethany Chamber of Commerce, was a charter member of the Bethany Museum and Historical Society, received the

Most Useful Citizen Award from the Bethany Chamber in 1980 and received the Freedom Foundation Valley Forge Award in 1981.

He was an active member of the local Kiwanis club, achieving 54 years of perfect attendance with the group as well as serving two terms as president of the Warr Acres-Puttnam City Kiwan-

is Club and as Lieutenant Governor of the Texas-Oklahoma Kiwanis District.

Cowan was the owner and publisher of the Bethany Tribune-Review from 1957-1989.

He is survived by his daughters, Sherry Mars and Sandra Neubauer; his son, Tom Cowan; 10 grandchildren and several great-grandchildren.

OMER GILLHAM, a former reporter for the Tulsa World, died July 9, 2012, in Tulsa.

Gillham's reputation for tenacity was revered in the Tulsa World newsroom, where he worked for 14 years.

"Omer was one of the best reporters the Tulsa World has ever had," said World Publisher Robert E. Lorton III. "He was a tireless worker who went above and beyond to get the story right. He will be greatly missed."

Gillham, 53, left the World in March to work on a book about his family history and growing up with alcoholism in the household.

His most recent assignment at the World was as a staff writer on the enterprise team, which produces investigative and enterprise stories and projects.

"During his 14 years at the Tulsa World, Omer Gillham worked several different news beats, but he distinguished himself as an investigative reporter," Executive Editor Joe Worley said. "Omer was the first reporter to uncover the federal investigation into federal and city law enforcement in November 2009. He stayed with that story until March 2012. No other reporter had his understanding of how the complex corruption case unfolded."

Gillham won numerous awards for

his work, including first place in the 2010 Great Plains Journalism Awards and a 2009 award from the Mental Health Association in Tulsa.

He received a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Oklahoma in 1992 after becoming a journeyman electrician. Before joining the World, Gillham worked at the Ada Evening News, The Ardmoreite and The Norman Transcript.

Gillham is survived by six sisters, Yvonne Sibley, Mary Vincent, Shirley Robertson, Melanie Gillham, Ellen Barnes and Sharel Massey, as well as Rachele Vaughan, whom he described as "the love of my life."

JESSE RAY TURNER, who worked for the Altus Times for more than 50 years, died July 10, 2012, at his Norman home. He was 82.

Turner was born on Nov. 25, 1929, in Pickton, Texas. He attended Altus schools and Altus junior college. He married Geneva Irene Taylor on Nov. 5, 1948.

He began his newspaper career for the Altus Times-Democrat as a paperboy on Dec. 7, 1941. Over the next 50 years, he held several positions at the newspaper including press operator and production manager. He retired in 1995 as advertising sales director.

He was a member of the First Assembly of God Church in Altus and

was involved in many community and philanthropic projects

He is survived by his daughter, Linda McLennan of Norman; his son, Larry Turner and wife Ann of Edmond; three grandchildren; five great-grandchildren, and his brother David Turner and wife Iva of Altus.

FRED GORDON TURNER, longtime publisher of the McAlester News-Capital & Democrat, died June 15, 2012. He was 79.

Turner succeeded his father and grandfather at the helm of the McAlester newspaper until his retirement in 1982.

Turner's father, Lowell Turner, was publisher of the newspaper for nearly two decades until his death in 1968. Lowell had succeeded his father-in-law, Fred Cowles, as publisher.

Fred Turner was born on July 29,

1932, in McAlester. He earned his bachelor's degree in journalism from Oklahoma State University and then served in the U.S. Army for two years.

Turner then returned to McAlester where he was part owner, publisher and mainly editor for the McAlester News Capital from 1958 to 1982. He was also editor of the Pittsburg County News and Southeast Oklahoma News and wrote for the Eufaula Indian Journal, the McIntosh County Democrat and the Lake Eufaula World from 1999 to 2000.

Turner served on the election committee of Governor George Nigh and was Nigh's press secretary in 1981 and 1982.

He is survived by his wife Barbara Turner of the home; two daughters and sons-in-law, Terri and Dan Bragg of Mesquite, Texas, and Susan and Mark McConnell of Norman; son David Turner of Shelbourne, Mass.; sister and brother-in-law Anne Turner and Rex of Oklahoma City; and three grandchildren.

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A tattered American flag flies over a vehicle where two young girls were found dead after a massive tornado struck Hideaway Mobile Home Villa in Woodward shortly after midnight.

Photo by BONNIE VCULEK, Enid News & Eagle, April 17, 2012



OU golfer Michael Gellerman hits out of the bunker during Saturday's final round of the NCAA regional at Jimmie Austin OU Golf Club.

Photo by JERRY LAIZURE, The Norman Transcript, May 20, 2012



The Easter bunny gets a little help putting on his foot during the Skiatook Easter Egg hunt.

Photo by RACHEL ANNE SEYMOUR, The Bigheart Times, April 12, 2012



Yukon players celebrate a regional title with a dog pile right behind the pitcher's mound. Yukon routed Midwest City 13-0 to win their second straight regional title. YHS outscored their regional opponents 34-0 in three games.

Photo by CHUCK REHERMAN, Yukon Review, May 5 2012

APRIL 2012 DAILY WINNER:

**BONNIE
VCULEK**

Enid News & Eagle

APRIL 2012 WEEKLY
WINNER:

**RACHEL ANNE
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**CHUCK
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Yukon Review

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NOON

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PEAK TIME, WATCH YOUR USE

MIDNIGHT

8 9 10 11 12

PEAK OVER. START SAVING ...

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Find the drama in your writing



Clark's Critique
by Terry Clark
Journalism Professor,
University of Central Oklahoma
TClark@uco.edu

"Go for the drama," I try to teach my writing students about writing leads, whether feature or news. For those who tend to write "wooden" leads, or "bury" the leads, it often takes my editing pencil scratching out words, rearranging a few, and the use of multiple paragraph signs and inserted periods.

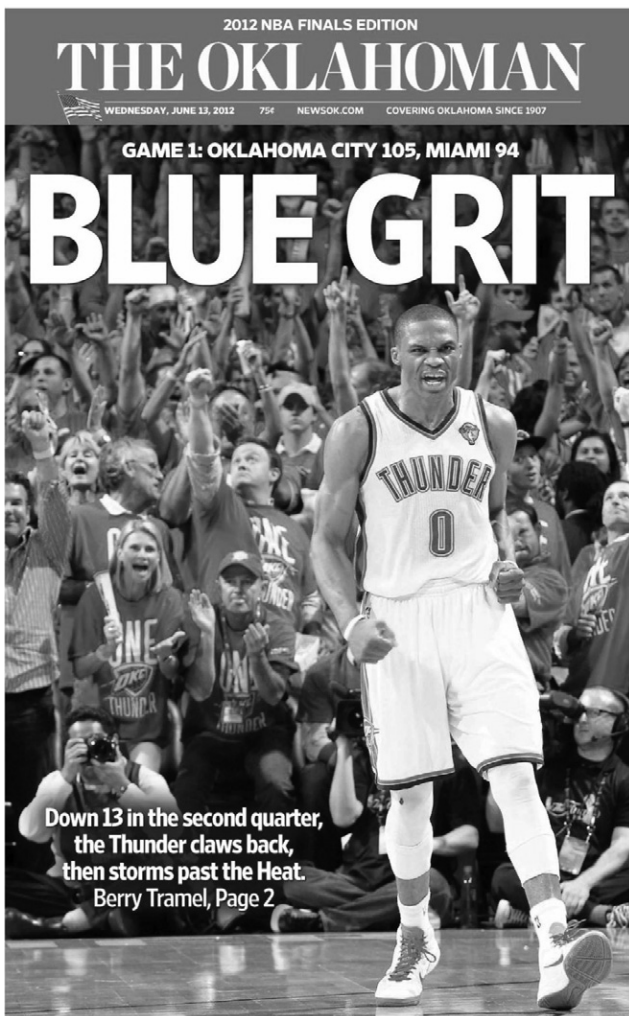
But it occurs to me that almost all journalism is about drama...not the fake ones like "The Real Housewives of..." show, or sensational, or manufactured.

But what are you doing when you put one story at the top of the page over another? When you make one photo larger than another? When you increase the size of a headline? You're using your news judgment to say to your readers, "This is more important," or "This is more interesting." Generally, it's because it's bigger news - affecting more readers. I'll bet in most cases there is action involved, because action often reflects conflict of some sort - hence drama.

What spurred these thoughts was a dramatic full-page photo in *The Oklahoman*. The OKC Thunder had just beaten the Miami Heat in the first game of the NBA Finals. Consuming the front page of the paper's NBA Finals edition, wrapped around the regular front page, was this full-page photo of Russell Westbrook. It grabbed everyone who saw it. What really grabbed me was the headline, BLUE GRIT, completing a brilliant package of dramatic journalism.

I emailed managing editor Mike Shannon about who wrote that headline. Shannon replied the paper uses the Internet to ask for headline suggestions from readers during sports events. He wrote: "I am told this one came in even before the game was played. ...the game went just right so the head worked. ... the lesson is to engage your readers and listen to them when possible."

No, they don't know who the reader was, but I, like many others, have



Down 13 in the second quarter, the Thunder claws back, then storms past the Heat.
Berry Tramel, Page 2

Dramatic photos fill the pages of Oklahoma papers including *The Oklahoman's* "Blue Grit," *The Weleetkan's* "Make Hay while the sun shines," *Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise's* patriotic painting at Freedom Fest and *The Oklahoma Daily's* "Boren locks housing proposal."

never seen anything that's not a disaster captivating the state as the frenzy surrounding the Thunder's success. From the largest paper to some of the smallest it was news. Consider Derek Brown's report in the *Minco-Union City Times*: Headline: "Thunder falls - Support does not waver."

The news for the team was not good four games later. Headline writers had a field day. *The Oklahoman*, same format as game one), "OVERHEATED"; *Tulsa World*, "Overwhelmed"; *Enid News & Eagle*, "Just too hot"; *The Norman Transcript*, "Heat stroke"; *The Ardmoreite*, "Not their time"; *The Ponca City News*, "It's 'Wait till next year' for OKC Thunder"; *Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise*, "It's over: Swoon over Miami"; *Muskogee Phoenix*, "It was fun while it lasted."

Others included front page photos of fans in the *Stillwater NewsPress* and *The Shawnee News-*

Star.

OK, I know, you can't have that kind of drama on meeting stories, or Rotary club elections, but the lessons are the same. Find the most interesting and lead with it.

Here's a "Drama" checklist (or "Boring" checklist, looking at it the other way) for your pages and writing:

- Are all your headlines the same size? One should always be dominant in size and location.
- Same for photos.
- Strong verbs make headlines sizzle. Dull headlines make a boring page.
- Are your first sentences and paragraphs short?
- Are all your paragraphs the same length? Change that.

• Do you use a good quote high in the story?

LOOKIN'EM OVER: Here are examples of drama in writing:

John D. Montgomery at *The Purcell Register*, under "Val's Kitchen cold": "If you're used to getting Greek hash browns on Saturday, smacking on some of the best ribs around or counting on tasty catfish on Fridays you're going to have to find another haunt. / That's because Purcell institution..."

Jerry Benson in *The Lone Grove Ledger*, under "Tax and spend, or is it spend and tax?": "This was one of their spending meetings. / Councilors met a week before that and voted to raise taxes on about every possible charge they could. That includes traffic fines..."

Mandi Goforth at *The Weekly Express* in Westville: "The Summer Reading

Continued on Page 13

Clark's Critique Continued from Page 12

Program was a place of sweet dreams and (fictional) nightmares this week. On Monday, Magician Doug Anderson came to lead children on an Imaginary Journey to the Land of Dreams."

Zane Thomas of the *Wagoner Tribune*, under "Lil' cowpoke dreams big": "Kaleb Dorr is not even 5 years old, but he's already had 10 surgeries."

Karen Anson of *The Seminole Producer*, under "Sweet Sweet Summer – Garden Blossoms as Bees Buzz Kona-wa": "It is a warm morning at the height of June, with a thick cushion of layered leaves blocking the summer sun. / The smell of the grass in the Konawa meadow mixes with the aroma from the beekeeper's smoker, invoking the scent of incense. / Pavarotti sings his opera from the CD player in the beekeeper's shed, and Bill Tooley, at nearly 80, looks for all the world like a priest in his pure white clothing and headgear as he moves carefully, slowly, reverently from hive to hive. / As the smoke calms the bees, he removes the top of the wooden box. The workers cling to the lid and the hum from inside joins Pavarotti's voice in a crescendo of praise for this one sweet moment"

Cathy Spaulding at the *Muskogee Phoenix*, under "Making the climb": "Danielle Sanders beams while talking about how she's working to become a nurse. / She wasn't as hopeful when she sought help through the Muskogee Housing Authority in March 2011."

Bill Johnston, at the *Collinsville News*, under "All gave some, some gave all": "If the lights are off in the building, when you first walk in and flip the switch, it'll be the thing you see – the Purple Heart Wall at the Joe Keith VFW Post 3077."

Important content adds drama – *The Journal Record's* Briana Bailey writes about "Lessons from Penn Square." I've heard that name a lot in the past few months with the turmoil at Ches-

apeake. Rick Heaton in the *Owasso Reporter*, under "The Money Trail," writes about how schools sports funds are used.

Jason Smith at *The Friday Gazette* in McLoud, under "There's a lunger lurking under that log," writes a series on sports fishing. Kathy Swann at the *Pawhuska Journal-Capital* features an artist under "From Horse Whisperer to Artist." Sometimes it's practical with *The Gage Record* offering tips on watering a lawn efficiently, *The Leader-Tribune* in Laverne carrying the town watering schedule, and Doug Russell of the *Stigler News-Sentinel* about county road and bridge priorities.

Drama of a different sort – *The Cordell Beacon* carried a full-page American flag, in color. *The Healdton Herald* overlaid a large head, "Fireworks Extravaganza," with the flag showing through the letters. *The City Sentinel* reported from AAA it costs 60 cents a mile to operate a car, and the *Okmulgee Times* about the county's low jobless rate.

HEAD'EM UP AWARDS: First Place, *The Oklahoman*:

BLUE GRIT

Second, tie, *The Purcell Register*,
Val's Kitchen cold

and *Collinsville News*,

All gave some, some gave all

Third place, tie, *Cushing Citizen*,
Hotter than a firecracker

and *The Lone Grove Ledger*,

**Tax and spend,
or is it spend and tax?**

Honorable mentions: *The Valliant Leader*, "Valliant Man Charged With Bloody Attack on Woman"; *The Vici Vision*, "June Ends on a Scorching Note."

ics as a reporter and photographer for the Indiana Daily Student.

"Our readers will appreciate Stephanie's eye for good stories and her passion or storytelling," said Oklahoman sports editor Mike Sherman. "Her hard work and dedication to readers make her a great addition to our staff."

Indiana graduate joins Oklahoman staff

Stephanie Kuzydym, a graduate of Indiana University, has joined The Oklahoman to cover Oklahoma football.

Kuzydym previously interned with the South Bend (Ind.) Tribune, Orlando Sentinel and USA TODAY,

As a student, she covered IU Athlet-

To be more appealing, play to your strengths

By ED HENNINGER, Design Consultant

Some newspapers are "photo papers."

Others excel at typography.

Still others use graphics very well.

Do you know which you are? And if you do, do you use those skills to make your paper more appealing to readers?

If you have a star photographer on your staff, it's to your benefit to create more photo packages and more photo pages to showcase her skills. Give her more opportunities – and give your readers more compelling packages as a result.

Better yet, get her involved in your weekly (or daily) and long-term planning sessions. (You do have regular planning sessions, don't you?) With her visual skills, she's bound to offer more ideas for you to attract readers.

Let's assume otherwise: You don't have that super photographer – but you do have a page designer who can take good (not great) photos and package them well with your stories to create pages that capture your readers' attention.

So be it! If that's the case, then have that designer help guide your newspaper's destiny with strong input in every issue – and even stronger input in long-term editorial planning. He can help point the way by suggesting story ideas and visual approaches that will bring increased attention to your every issue.

OK, so you have neither. No star photographer, no super designer. But you do have writers. And they may be the key to your winning more readers. If, that is, you encourage good writing. No, we're not talking about the inverted pyramid and the county sewer board meeting. But we are talking about those writers who can fashion gripping and memorable stories about your community and your readers.

I recall one newspaper I reviewed many years ago. Terrible design. But that paper had more than 95 percent penetration in its community. One of

This ain't no walk in the park. It's a tough, hot, grimy job but it's something that's important and it makes me feel good knowing I can help!

Hot jobs!
Trainers learn to face fears

BY FRANCIS HENNINGER
PHOTOGRAPHER

Go slowly, assess the scene and have and remember what your there for in the scene. It's not a photo, it's a story. Be on good luck and be on guard. You're not just a camera and lens, you're a person. You're a person who's there to help. You're a person who's there to help. You're a person who's there to help.

STAFF ALIVE
PHOTOGRAPHER

GO PLACED!
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AS FAR as possible without our...
PHOTOGRAPHER

SPREAD YOUR wings...
PHOTOGRAPHER

AVOID OOPS and expensive corrections...
PHOTOGRAPHER

IF YOU compare yourself with others...
PHOTOGRAPHER

ENJOY YOUR achievements as they come...
PHOTOGRAPHER

KEEP INVESTED in your own career...
PHOTOGRAPHER

EXERCISE CAUTION in your high-stress efforts...
PHOTOGRAPHER

PUPPY LOST 3 DAYS, FINDS HIS WAY BACK HOME
PHOTOGRAPHER

If photos are your strength, play your photos – big!

the reasons: its obituaries told the life stories of people in that town. Those weren't obits – they were true tales of how those people lived. And loved. And were loved. And those stories were, well...memorable.

The publisher of that newspaper asked me: "Why do I need to redesign? We are the story of our community!" Why, indeed?

His point was well made...and well taken.

And my point is this: Every newspaper has a star...a light that can glow for all readers to see.

That light may be a photographer. Perhaps a designer. Maybe a writer. Or maybe even a clerk who does your accounts and can make gorgeous charts with Excel.

Whatever your light is, don't hide it under a basket.

ED HENNINGER, an independent newspaper consultant and director of Henninger Consulting, offers comprehensive newspaper design services including redesigns, workshops, design training and design evaluations. Contact Henninger at www.henningerconsulting.com, email edh@henningerconsulting.com or phone (803) 327-3322.

Open source software options to consider



Computer Notes

from the road

by Wilma Melot

wmelot@okpress.com

You never get something for nothing but open source software is as close as it comes. This is my fresh look at some of these useful programs.

If the office approves of “bugware,” as some people call open source software, give it a try and then show the boss some of the things that can be done for free. Always download from the original website that the developers set up. They work hard to give us the software so their site should get the hits for the downloads.

If the paper uses Open Office for word processing – and if there are newer in-house computers – try LibreOffice 3.5.4. LibreOffice is based on Open Office but has an interface much like Microsoft Office 2003. It works on Windows, Mac and Linux platforms.

The word processor (called Writer) has macros for automating simple, repetitive tasks in documents. It will open just about any type of word processing document.

The spreadsheet program (called Calc) cannot compare to Microsoft Excel but for most simple spreadsheet work it does a good job.

LibreOffice also has a database program and math program, but no email or calendar like Microsoft Office.

If the office needs to share files on the fly, then Google Docs is the best choice. The only time I would not advise this is if those documents contain banking or other confidential information.


Google Docs best feature is the fact that the files are always accessible no matter what device the employee is using or what location the employee is at. It works on iPhones, iPads and any computer with a web browser.

Gimp is moving forward with the latest release of 2.8 on Windows and Linux versions. Mac is still at 2.6. Gimp is looking and feeling more like Photoshop all the time.

The floating windows are gone, replaced by a single-screen working environment. It still cannot turn a photo into CMYK but it is a good, basic photo editing program. If you're looking at

Gimp for an office, I would recommend Photoshop Elements for users without a full copy of Photoshop. With its \$99 price, it's a better option than Gimp.

If you want some way to keep your passwords private but to have them accessible try <http://www.password-pad.com>. This program will encrypt files and password protect them. Then the only trick is to remember the password to the file itself. It works on iPhone and Mac computers. The full version is only \$4.99. The lite version is free.

Filezilla is a  great, free FTP client for Windows and Mac. In the last year it has become one of the best at supporting both platforms. (Available at <http://filezilla-project.org/download.php/>)

Of course, all these programs will have to update in the next few months when Apple OSX 10.8 and Windows 8 are released. Now is a good time to download your favorite open source software so you have a copy that runs on the OS of your office computer.

Many open source developers don't keep backwards compatible versions of their programs for download. Burn a disk of older programs that work on the computers in your office if you plan to keep those machines alive for the next few years.

APPLE SET TO RELEASE OSX 10.8

It is fitting that Apple called the next operating system Mountain Lion – the right cat for the end of the Mayan calendar. This incarnation of the Apple operating system will be released this month as OSX 10.8.

If you own OSX 10.5 and have a new enough computer, you can still buy the Snow Leopard OSX 10.6 disk at the Apple store and then download OSX 10.7 or buy the USB Thumb. This all may go away with the release of OSX 10.8.

Will it run on your computer? Apple says it runs on these:

- iMac (mid-2007 or newer)
- MacBook (late 2008 aluminum, early 2009 or newer)
- MacBook Pro (mid/late 2007 or newer)
- MacBook Air (late 2008 or newer)

- Mac Mini (early 2009 or newer)
- Mac Pro (early 2008 or newer)

Look on the case of the computer to see the release date and go to “About this Mac” under the Apple menu to see the model. The “More Info” button will show the serial number of the computer. To look it up, copy the serial number and paste it in Apple's support site (<http://support.apple.com/specs/>) for full specs.

NEW FEATURES

Dictation is the most exciting thing for me in the new OSX. It works in any program you can type in, third party or not, like email or InDesign. The other cool thing is the ability for newly released Macs with solid state drives (no moving parts) to update even when the computer is in sleep mode.

Notification Center is a new feature modeled after the Notification Center on iOS5. You can see your email, calendar (formerly iCal) reminders and more.

Apple's Gatekeeper will still let you run third party applications but there is now a setting that can be turned on that only lets the user run Apple approved programs.

In **System Preferences > Security & Privacy > General**, you have three options for running software:

1. Exclusively from the Mac Apple Store
2. The Apple Store and non-Mac Apple Store developers who have registered with Apple
3. From any developer, anywhere

The Mac App Store has become the sole place for Apple software updates. When new software is available, you'll receive a notification in “Notification Center.” You can download updates by opening the Apple Store app and selecting the Updates tab. Notifications also carry over to any Mac Apple Store apps as well, meaning that you no longer need to perennially leave the Apple Store open to check for new updates to your programs.

iCloud is really the biggest innovation and is fully functional with the new OS. You can sync content across all Apple devices: mail, calendars, contacts, reminders, documents, notes on iPad, iPhone and the computer.

Apple is changing the names and interface of some applications (with

more to come) and creating an OS that is easy for iPhone/iPad-only users to sync with and feel at ease with. Hopefully, basic computer users will still have a place in the minds at Apple.

EMAIL SERVER PROBLEMS

The most asked question this month has been about mail servers at PLDI and AT&T, which changed the client email server settings for many papers.

Google took over PLDI's email and AT&T changed almost every server to Yahoo's mail servers. AT&T seems to change its mail server setting every few years, which could be a result of growing out of the old ones.

At any rate, it requires users to change their client programs to the new settings. The old setting works for a while, then one day just stops working with little warning.

A client email program is one that brings email messages onto the computer itself, thus giving us our own copy of the email to be stored as we wish, independent of larger servers like Yahoo. This is a good thing for messages that might have legal ramifications in the future. You will want to keep them.

I do not recommend only using web mail as I've seen people lose all their folders on the web mail server when it changed to a new one. In one afternoon, they lost all their important email backup.

Email clients like Outlook, Mac Mail, Thunderbird, Windows Live Mail and others all need to have POP forwarding turned on at the web server's site. This means the user must go to a webmail site (GMail, Yahoo, etc.), sign in and then look for the setting options and turn on POP forwarding.

Look for the IMAP or POP server setting link to find the current setting for your email client on the same page as the POP forwarding settings. Then look for Accounts or Preferences in the mail client program to enter the server addresses.

OPA Computer Consultant Wilma Melot's column is brought to you by the Oklahoma Advertising Network (OAN). For more information on the OAN program, contact Oklahoma Press Service at (405) 499-0020.



Listen to your followers



That InterWeb Thing

by Keith Burgin
kburgin@okpress.com

Using Twitter at a newspaper is about more than ad sales – although that would be nice as well. The truth is, Twitter may not directly affect your bottom line much at all. Indirectly, those 140-character exchanges can bring you more than you think.

Twitter is all about conversations, exchange of information and networking. As with each of those things in the real world, it's better to listen than to speak.

I'll give you an example of the sort of thing that builds an information network. It's going to sound very "Mayberry RFD," so bear with me.

Let's say Margaret at the corner coffee shop tweets that her dog found a hole in the fence. Butch has gone missing!

Retweet that lost dog alert! Furthermore, follow up with her two or three times over the next couple days. Use a hashtag (#) to identify the issue you're discussing.

#LostDogAlert_Claremore @Latte_ladyM Hey Margaret, did you find your missing pup?

If not, remind everyone

#LostDogAlert_Claremore Hey folks, @Latte_ladyM still missing her dog. Small, mixed-breed brown&white terrier. Name is Butch.

If Butch is returned to Margaret, thank your followers whether they were involved in the find or not.

#LostDogAlert_Claremore @Latte_ladyM and Butch are reunited. Thanks

to everyone who kept a lookout and responded.

Keep an eye on your Twitter stream. Folks you follow will tell that their garbage pickup is days late, detail damage to their roof during the last storm, gripe about existing issues and tip you to impending ones. You can relay silver, amber and even "brown paw" alerts. Talk about upcoming events, even mention sponsors and sales.

Occasionally, you may even find help with a story.

#Council_Poteau Anyone hear what transpired between the mayor and the council? We couldn't hear. DM us please. (DM is a direct message that someone you are following can send you. It's private.)

These are just examples. My suggestion is that you involve yourself with your Twitter followers. Have fun. Retweet birth announcements, graduations and other important events.

Of course, promote your print or

web product, promote sponsors, local sales, etc. Just make sure you're giving as much or more than you're getting. If you talk about yourself too much, folks get bored and tune out.

I have a friend, an independent writer, who made about \$2,500 in sales the first 24 hours after his book hit Kindle. All he had to do was let his Twitter friends know it was up and ready for sale. When someone posts that they liked the book, he retweets and says thank you.

Granted, he has over 6,000 followers but he got there through being friendly, helping folks with advice and having fun with people. Plus he's a great storyteller.

All I can tell you is that if you're a good community member the community will respond.

As I've said before, it's not a case of "If you build it they will come." With Twitter it's more, "If you've built it, they helped."

Secret court proceedings



Legal Notes

by Michael Minnis
OPA Attorney

Public institutions tend to gravitate towards secrecy. The secrecy is often imposed with good intentions. Nonetheless, most, if not all, of this secrecy is contrary to the openness historically and constitutionally required of public offices.

The latest manifestation of this inclination to secrecy is a case filed in Major County that is the subject of Enid News

& Eagle articles and a pending motion to intervene.

Within a few hours of the filing of a criminal felony charge against an attorney, the case ceased to exist in the public domain. The case disappeared: no docket sheet, no case number, no filed documents. Fortunately, prior to closure, the Enid News & Eagle had seen and copied the docket sheet from the On Demand Court Records' website.

The case file is still under seal and the attorneys involved in the litigation are under a gag order. The Enid News & Eagle is seeking to intervene to get the case file opened to the public.

What has been learned publicly to date is indicative of the problems inherent in closing court files to public access. The judge ordering the sealing says he was concerned that the charge may have been brought without sufficient evidentiary support and/or the blessing of the district attorney. Instead of dismissing the charge as improvidently filed, the court sealed the case and gagged the attorneys.

Because the defendant was a lawyer, this inevitably gave rise to concerns of favoritism toward lawyers. However, it also had the inevitable consequence that the judge's motives would be under suspicion because no record existed of why the judge closed the case file, i.e., made the case disappear. If, as the defendant alleges, the charge should

never have been filed then the public is being deprived of possible information about misbehavior by the district attorney's office.

Like so many other efforts to close court records or courtrooms, the notoriety the defendant sought to avoid was exponentially increased by the closure of the case and reputations were possibly hurt unnecessarily even if the intensions were pure.

Finally, this case raises the continuing problem of secret court proceedings indicated by gaps in the numbering of court cases filed. All newspapers in every county would do their communities a great service by exposing these secret cases and opening the light of public access.

OPA STAFF DIRECTORY

ADMINISTRATION

MARK THOMAS

Executive Vice President
mthomas@okpress.com
(405) 499-0033

ROBERT WALLAR

Accounting Manager
rwallar@okpress.com
(405) 499-0027

SCOTT WILKERSON

Front Office/Building Mgr.
swilker@okpress.com
(405) 499-0020

MEMBER SERVICES

LISA POTTS

Member Services Director
lpotts@okpress.com
(405) 499-0026

ELI NICHOLS

Member Services Coordinator
enichols@okpress.com
(405) 499-0040

ADVERTISING

CINDY SHEA

Media Manager
c Shea@okpress.com
(405) 499-0023

LANDON COBB

Account Executive
lcobb@okpress.com
(405) 499-0022

COURTNI SPOON

Advertising Assistant & OCAN/2X2 Contact
cspoon@okpress.com
(405) 499-0035

CREATIVE SERVICES

JENNIFER GILLILAND

Creative Services Director
jgilliland@okpress.com
(405) 499-0028

MORGAN BROWNE

Creative Assistant
mbrowne@okpress.com
(405) 499-0029

COMPUTER ADVICE

WILMA MELOT

Computer Consultant
wmelot@okpress.com
(405) 499-0031

POSTAL ADVICE

BILL NEWELL

Postal Consultant
bnewell@okpress.com
(405) 499-0020

OPEN

(DIGITAL CLIPPING)

KEITH BURGIN

OPEN Manager
kburgin@okpress.com
(405) 499-0024

KYLE GRANT

Digital Clipping Dept
kgrant@okpress.com
(405) 499-0032

OPEN (CONT'D)

BRENDA SUMMITT

Digital Clipping Dept.
bsummitt@okpress.com
(405) 499-0030

NELSON SOLOMON

Digital Clipping Dept.
nsolomon@okpress.com
(405) 499-0045

GENERAL INQUIRIES

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APRIL 2012 COLUMN WINNER **SUZIE CAMPBELL, THE COUNTYWIDE & SUN**

Smiling through tears: Daddy's home

For eight months we have planned, dreamed and waited on this day to arrive. I could feel the butterflies bouncing around inside my stomach as I marked the days off the calendar one by one. I felt anxious and a little giddy as I counted down the hours, then minutes, then seconds until his arrival.

I was excited to see my son, but I was more excited to see Delilah spend time with her dad. Then he was here. I watched as he walked towards us through the airport. I watched Delilah, who thought we were at the airport to see the planes. She turned and spotted her daddy. She stopped dead in her tracks and just looked at him with wide eyes.

This man looked like her daddy, but her daddy was in Korea. We all watched and waited.

"Hi, Punkin," was all he said. But that was enough. Her feet grew wings as she flew across the room and jumped into Kyle's arms. She hugged him and kissed him. She softly ran her tiny fingers over his face, all the while grinning from ear to ear. Daddy was finally home.

She clung to him as he carried her from the airport to the car. I followed behind, watching as the two of them continued to exchange looks, softly whispered their secrets to each other, then hugged some more. She willingly shared her ice cream with him when we stopped for him to grab a bite to eat.

We stood in the parking lot talking, no one wanting to say good night and go back to their own homes for a good night's rest before gathering again for more stories and hugs.

As we all finally made our way into our vehicles, Delilah poked her head back out the door and said, "Daddy, are you coming home with me?" I caught

myself as I felt the tears well up in my eyes. I couldn't control the joy I felt as I listened to her delighted squeal when he said yes.

Although his time here is brief, the two of them are making the most of his visit. Daddy's vacation is being spent taking Delilah to school, shopping, riding bikes and 4-wheelers. I even caught him playing Barbie dolls with her, though I doubt he will admit to this.

There are plenty of tender moments where the two of them just cuddle up to read a book or watch a movie. These are the moments that make my heart soar: watching my son and my granddaughter lovingly transition back into their same old routines.

I remember my dad traveling when I was a young girl. He was never gone for more than a couple of days, maybe three. But I can't imagine how hard it is for young children of military parents to go about their daily lives for months at a time. They do it every day, though. Delilah has continued her routines, only stopping briefly in the evenings before bed as she waits for me to tell her it's time to go see Daddy on the computer.

This visit for Delilah and Kyle has been wonderful to watch and I am so thankful to have been a part of their reunion. But ours is only one of the many families who are experiencing all these emotions as their loved ones return home. I pray that all their reunions are just as sweet to watch unfold.

Thank you to my son Kyle, my nephew Cody (who returned home the following week) and to all the military men and women and their families. Words cannot express how grateful I am to all of you for your sacrifices.



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