

Mike Strain elected as OPA president

Mike Strain, managing editor of the Tulsa World, is the new president of the Oklahoma Press Association.

Strain was elected on June 18 at the annual business meeting held at the OPA office in Oklahoma City. He will serve a one-year term beginning July 1.

Other officers elected were John Denny Montgomery, co-publisher of The Purcell Register, as vice-president; and Jeff Mayo, publisher of the Sequoyah County Times, as treasurer.

Suzie Campbell, publisher of the Countywide & Sun in Tecumseh, was elected to a three-year term as director. Don Mecoy, managing editor of The Oklahoman, was re-elected to a three-year term as director, and Ray Dyer, co-publisher of the El Reno Tribune, will serve a one-year term as past president.

Other members of the 2020-2021 OPA board are Mark Millsap, The Norman Transcript; Zonelle Rainbolt, Wesner Publications; Shauna Belyeu, The Eufaula Indian Journal; and Sheila Gay, Woodward News. Mark Thomas is executive



MIKE STRAIN
2020-2021 OPA PRESIDENT

vice president of the association.

Strain has lived most of his life in Oklahoma. He graduated from Bray-Doyle High School in 1985, and from the University of Oklahoma in 1989.

His first newspaper job was at The Shawnee News-Star as a part-time sports writer. Strain joined The Oklahoman's staff in 1990 and spent nearly 15 years in various roles there. He joined the Tulsa World staff in 2005 as sports editor, became news editor in 2011 and managing editor in 2014.

"It's an honor to be

named president and especially at such a crucial time in our history," said Strain. "I know the pandemic has wreaked havoc and many communities and papers have been hit hard.

"I want everyone to know the OPA board and its staff is committed to helping our members through this time with a goal to come out stronger on the other side," said Strain.

"In the coming months, we will be contacting members in an effort to identify the best services we can provide.

"With all the half-truths and misinformation on social media and the internet, our papers and websites play an even more important role.

"We're the ones our communities trust to let them know what's happening. I believe our role today is more vital than at any time in my 30 years in the business."

Strain said he still remembers The Duncan Banner being delivered to the farm where he grew up.

"I was always a sports fan and more than 40 years later, I remember the thrill of seeing my picture in the

paper or reading about people I knew," he said.

However, the Banner wasn't his family's only news source.

"My grandfather lived in Pennsylvania, and he would regularly send us an envelope so stuffed full of newspaper clippings that it was nearly bursting. It wasn't as fast as getting news from the internet but a lot more exciting," said Strain.

He still remembers the smell of the newsprint in the newsroom from his first job at The Shawnee News-Star.

"I remember how much fun it was working with Fred Fehr, Brian Johnson and Mike McCormick," Strain said.

"More than 30 years later, it's safe to say I was hooked."

Strain has received numerous awards for his blog, feature writing and news coverage. He has also been a speaker at Oklahoma Press Association and National Newspaper Association events.

Strain and his wife Kay live in Claremore and have two adult sons.

3 AP changes writing style to capitalize 'b' in Black (and Indigenous).

5 The Lawton Constitution donates \$10,000 to help Arts for All support local arts during the pandemic.

7 City of Edmond issues proclamation declaring July 13-18 as Edmond Sun Week in honor of the newspaper and its employees.

9 OPA computer consultant Wilma Melot looks at more changes for Macs, 5G phones and more.

From the President

By Mike Strain, Tulsa World News Editor
OPA President 2020-2021



A few months ago, everything changed.

Our lives. Our neighbors' lives. Our kids' lives. Everyone's life was turned upside down.

We had never heard of COVID-19; and what is this odd phrase — social distancing? But those terms became part of our language faster than Google ever did. (Personally, I prefer Google over COVID.)

To say it's been a difficult time would be an understatement. Businesses have been devastated and our industry is no exception. For some, there have been furloughs or job losses. For others, there has been a reduction in the number of days printing the paper. It's been months of tough decisions and long weeks for us and for our communities.

If you're feeling exhausted and wondering, "Why do I keep doing this?" please pause for a moment and read an excerpt from a letter a reader sent not too long ago:

"To me, these words describe a great journalist in his/her work: integrity, substance, relevance, intelligence, humor, humility, empathy, wisdom and fortitude.

"You have them all, and then some. I am so grateful for the results of your very difficult jobs every day."

I found that letter recently, and here are two things I love about it:

First, there was no frightening twist at the end. Maybe you've gotten one of those letters or emails, where it seems to be heading a positive direction, before the plot takes an ugly turn and the writer suddenly says: **BUT WHAT YOU PUBLISHED TODAY ...**

Second, this letter came before the pandemic started. It was sent during the Thanksgiving season, and she just wanted to let us know she appreciated our work.

I have no doubt that letter could just as easily have been sent to the offices of papers around our state, and it's a good reminder of why we're doing this.

We have readers counting on us. They trust us to let them know what's happening in the community, whether it's COVID-19 case counts, introducing a neighbor they should know or sharing the inspiring story of that local student who makes us all proud.

You've probably gotten letters like that. And you've probably received what is among the highest of compliments — having a story or photo people want to share, whether it's on Facebook, pinned to a church bulletin board or stuck to someone's refrigerator door. (There's little real estate as valuable as the refrigerator door.)

My hope is that this column finds you well. That things aren't harried, and you're not exhausted from the effects of a global virus that calls no one friend. But if you're a bit worn down, I hope that readers' words resonate with you; because I guarantee you have people who feel the same way about your work.

I hope you can pause for just a second and remember: You are making a difference in your community.

Norman lawsuit alleges violations of open meetings act

The local chapter of the Fraternal Order of Police filed a lawsuit against the City of Norman on July 2.

The City of Norman is accused of violating the Open Meeting Act and violations of the voter-approved Public Safety Sales Tax (PSST).

According to the lawsuit, the city council violated the Open Meeting Act when the agenda "did not refer to reallocations of police department budget or defunding the police department."

The lawsuit petition states that the action taken by the council to decrease the Norman Police Department's budget by \$865,000 "was a willful and clear violation of the act, and that it is entitled to both a judicial declaration and injunctive relief."

The lawsuit further alleges a second Open Meeting Act violation occurred when members of the City Council discussed the defunding of the NPD prior to the meeting.

The FOP is asking the court to reallocate the funds back to the NPD and seeks recovery for court costs and attorney fees.

Legal publishing violation results in new election date

The Weatherford Daily News brought to the attention of the City of Weatherford the need for the city to publish a required legal about the change of filing periods for city council races.

The purpose of the legal filing is to provide

adequate notice to eligible citizens who may be interested in running for office.

There is a 10-day prior to filing period required to make it public by publishing it in a legal newspaper within the city. An oversight resulted in the legal not being published.

The Custer County Election Board, after visiting with legal counsel, acknowledged the error and declared the filings null and void. Candidates will be required to file again.

The election had been set for August 25. The

commission will now be required to set a new election date and the earliest available is November 3, according to the election board.

Also as a result, Clinton's city commission will be required to follow the same procedure.

OKC police claim pole-mounted videos not subject to state's Open Records Act

The Oklahoman recently asked to see footage from pole-mounted cameras carried by police during protests in Oklahoma City following the death of George Floyd, who died May 25 in Minneapolis police custody.

Police Capt. Larry Withrow said the videos would not be released because investigations for the incidents were not completed.

Withrow, who received advice from the municipal counselor's office, said pole-mounted camera videos "are not subject to

the Open Records Act" but release of them could be revisited after the department's review is complete.

Such video is restricted if the camera is not attached to a person or vehicle, Withrow said.

Mark Thomas, vice president of the Oklahoma Press Association, disputed the assertion.

"If law enforcement feels the need to carry a camera in public and video the public, the public ought to have the right to look at it," Thomas said.

The Oklahoma records

act says that law enforcement agencies shall make available for public inspection records that include: "Audio and video recordings from recording equipment attached to law enforcement vehicles or associated audio recordings from recording equipment on the person of a law enforcement officer."

In the case of pole-mounted cameras used by police, Thomas said the equipment is attached to a person, therefore its footage is subject to the Open Records Act.

AP changes style to capitalize 'b' in Black

The Associated Press announced that it has updated its stylebook to capitalize the 'b' in Black when referring to people in a racial, ethnic or cultural context.

The lowercased black refers to a color, not a person.

The news organization will also now capitalize Indigenous in reference to

original inhabitants of a place.

"Our discussions on style and language consider many points, including the need to be inclusive and respectful in our storytelling and the evolution of language," John Daniszewski, AP vice president for standards, announced in a blog post. "We believe this change serves those ends."

Daniszewski said the decision to change the writing style followed more than two years of research and debate among AP journalists and outside groups and thinkers.

The AP is continuing its discussion of whether white should be capitalized and expects to make a decision within a month.

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OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION
3601 N. Lincoln Blvd.,
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-5499
(405) 499-0020
Toll-Free in Oklahoma: (888) 815-2672
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You've Got Questions!

- Can I photograph minors without consent?
- Can police deny access to records by issuing a press release?
- Should I alter my archives when a person demands it?
- Can I report inaccurate testimony given in open court?
- What are the laws about liquor advertising?

These are questions answered by the attorneys for the OPA Legal Services Plan members in recent months. Newspapers always need timely legal advice on issues related to newspaper publishing.

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See www.OkPress.com/LSP or contact Mark Thomas at (405) 499-0033 or toll-free in Oklahoma 1-888-815-2672 today!

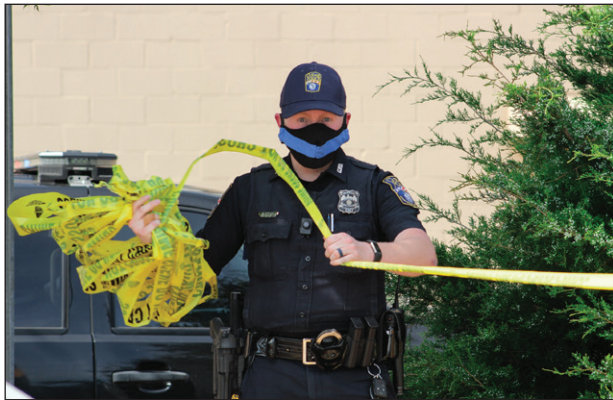


OG&E PHOTO CONTEST



Teachers and administrators from the Perry Public School District gather around the downtown square holding signs for families and students who drove around the square in support during the novel coronavirus.

Photo by JASON ELMQUIST, Stillwater News Press, April 24, 2020



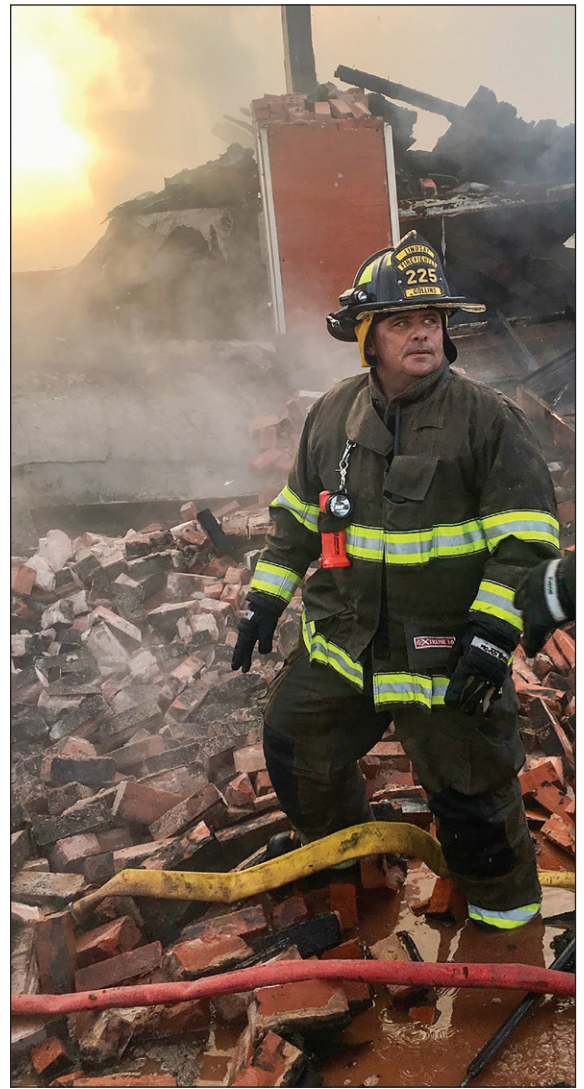
A Guthrie police officer took down the caution tape after the scene had been investigated following a shooting.

Photo by ASHYLND HUFFMAN, Stillwater News Press, May 1, 2020



Shell casings fly during the 21-gun salute at Stroud's Memorial Day observance.

Photo by CHELSEA WEEKS, Lincoln County News, May 28, 2020



Lindsay firefighter John Collins looks over the wreckage of the west wall of the Lindsay Web Press building after it collapsed on March 25.

Photo by SHANNON KILE, Lindsay News, April 2, 2020

APRIL 2020 PHOTO WINNERS:

JASON ELMQUIST

Stillwater News Press
Daily Division

SHANNON KILE

Lindsay News
Weekly Division

MAY 2020 PHOTO WINNERS:

ASHYLND HUFFMAN

Stillwater News Press
Daily Division

CHELSEA WEEKS

Lincoln County News
Weekly Division

The April and May 2020 contests were judged by members of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame.

View all winning photos at OkPress.com/OG-Photo-Contest

Enter and Win a \$100 Check from OGE ENERGY CORP.

For more information about the photo contest, visit okpress.com/oge-photo-contest



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Lawton Constitution supports local arts

The Lawton Constitution donated \$10,000 to Arts for All to help that organization support local arts during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

The gift was made available by the Carmage and Martha Ann Walls Foundation, which allows publishers at all Southern Newspapers Inc.-owned papers to choose a local non-profit to receive funds each year.

Carmage Walls founded Southern Newspapers, which owns 12 community newspapers in Texas and Oklahoma, including The Lawton Constitution.

Carmage and Martha Ann Walls' daughter, Lissa Walls, now owns the company.

"This gift is a reflection of the legacy of giving many newspapers through history have been a part of," said David R. Stringer, publisher of The Constitution. "Newspapers have supported all sorts of volunteer efforts sometimes through news coverage, or perhaps advertising and donations. We're glad the Walls family and Southern continue that legacy and history of community support. It's especially

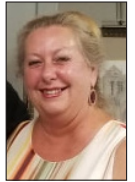
critical under today's conditions."

Arts for All was unable to hold its annual festival this year due to the coronavirus pandemic. The Constitution recognizes the value of the arts in society and wanted to support those artists who are struggling now.

Publishers of each newspaper recommend organizations for funding, and the foundation's board of trustees vote on distribution.

In the past 10 years, the foundation has given almost \$3 million to the communities Walls-owned newspapers serve.

Stilwell, Westville names Fite as editor



Renee Fite has been named editor of the Stilwell Democrat-Journal and Westville Reporter.

Fite served as editor of the Stilwell Democrat-Journal from May 2001 through November 2004. Prior to that, she served as editor of the Westville newspaper for more than a year.

"Renee is a very enthusiastic, dedicated journalist," said Gary Jackson, publisher of the two newspapers in Adair County as well as the Tahlequah Daily Press. "She has been a frequent freelance writer for our sister paper, the Tahlequah Daily Press, for many years."

Shawnee News-Star launches new website

The Shawnee News-Star launched its new and improved website on June 15.

The News-Star, which is now part of Gannett's USA Today Network, now provides a more streamlined experience for digital audiences on mobile and desktop sites.

Some of the features of the new website and apps are:

- Blazingly fast site speeds with quicker loading pages, photo galleries and videos.
- More prominent, easier-to-read headlines with a larger type size and modern font.
- Homepage that makes it easier to find content readers care about.
- Faster scrolling through today's top headlines.
- Prominent labels for specific content.
- More mobile-friendly newsletters.
- Easier to share content

Introducing the new news-star.com

This reimagined digital environment is your destination for trusted content you rely on to get the most important news, inform your decisions and ignite your passions. Our articles have a new, more readable format, allowing for easier navigation to additional content. Looking for news on-the-go? Download or update our new mobile app to easily check in before your morning coffee and throughout the day.

<p>Faster. Blazing site speed with quicker load times</p>	<p>Bolder. More prominent, easier-to-read headlines</p>	<p>More efficient. Redesigned navigation highlights top content</p>	<p>More nimble. Scrolling through headlines is speedier</p>	<p>More defined. Tags to indicate select content, like Opinions</p>
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**Reporting you can trust.
An experience you'll love.**

To announce the new website, The Shawnee News-Star created this ad, which showcases all the new features.

with friends and family across social media.

The top priorities in the redesign were to create a faster, better organized site that provides a more

streamlined experience for readers with a modern look and feel.

Visit the new website at www.news-star.com.

McAlester adds Hundley to staff



The McAlester News-Capital recently welcomed Jill Hundley to its staff.

Hundley fills a hybrid position with composing responsibilities and some sales duties.

A lifelong resident of McAlester, Hundley graduated from Oklahoma State University in 2016.

She replaces Denise Cantrell, who retired from the composing department on July 3 after 27 years at the paper.

From your office...

We want to see what's going on at your newspaper office. Send a photo from your office to news@okpress.com. Please include newspaper name and names of staff members in the photo.

(Right) – Members of the Youth Volunteer Corps of Muskogee stopped by the office of the Muskogee Phoenix and presented the staff with cookies to show their appreciation for the newspaper's employees being essential workers.

Photo by Muskogee Phoenix staff writer Ronn Rowland. Reprinted with permission.



Owasso Reporter staff members watch the Oklahoma Press Association virtual awards announcement of annual contest award winners on June 15. Standing is Shawn Hein, sports editor; seated is Art Haddaway, news editor.



Staff members at The Lawton Constitution gather in a conference room to watch the OPA's announcement of contest winners.



Countywide & Sun staff members show off their newspaper pattern face masks. From left, Jennifer Pitts, Gloria Trotter, Wayne Trotter, and Suzie Campbell, owner and publisher of the Countywide & Sun.



The Walters Herald recently moved to 120 S. Broadway in Walters. Standing in front of the new office space are Herald Editor Beth Davis and Kim Hicklin-Richardson, advertising.

City of Edmond honors closed newspaper

Dan O'Neil, mayor of the city of Edmond, Oklahoma, proclaimed July 13-18 as Edmond Sun Week in honor of the employees of The Edmond Sun.

The Edmond Sun premiered on July 8, 1889, and was continuously in operation for 131 years before closing on May 1, 2020.

"The Edmond Sun was an avid promoter and supporter of many Edmond businesses, activities and organizations," the proclamation reads.

"Over the years, the Edmond Sun won numerous awards and honors."

The proclamation lists the awards the newspaper received this year in the annual Oklahoma Press Association Better Newspaper Contest, including the Community Leadership award for James Coburn's series for the Samaritan Fund Drive to benefit the HOPE Center of Edmond.

The proclamation lists staff at the time the newspaper was closed as general manager Lance Moler; editor Mark Codner; reporters Patty Miller, James Coburn, Kari Tompkins and Aaron Albertson; account specialists Terri Bohanan and Nancy Sade; and business office workers Catherine Hillis-Jordan, Gayle Clark, Ashley Gentry, Elaine Welch and Stephanie Moler.

It also recognizes former Edmond Sun employees who helped build the legacy including Ed Livermore, Ray Hibbard, Carol Hartzog, Biruta Harris, Lisa Shearer Salim, Karan Ediger, Steve Patterson, Carol Smaglinski and Brad Lyons.

The proclamation was



Mark Codner and James Coburn display a Proclamation from the City of Edmond declaring July 13-18 as Edmond Sun Week in honor of the employees of The Edmond Sun. The Sun ceased publication on May 1.

presented to Codner and Coburn at the City of Edmond's council meeting on July 13.

"Edmond has a bright future," Coburn said at the meeting. "There's a lot to be thankful for in the past and a lot to look forward to."

"I hope and pray there will always be someone here to support you, to stand by you and to document the history of Edmond," Coburn said.

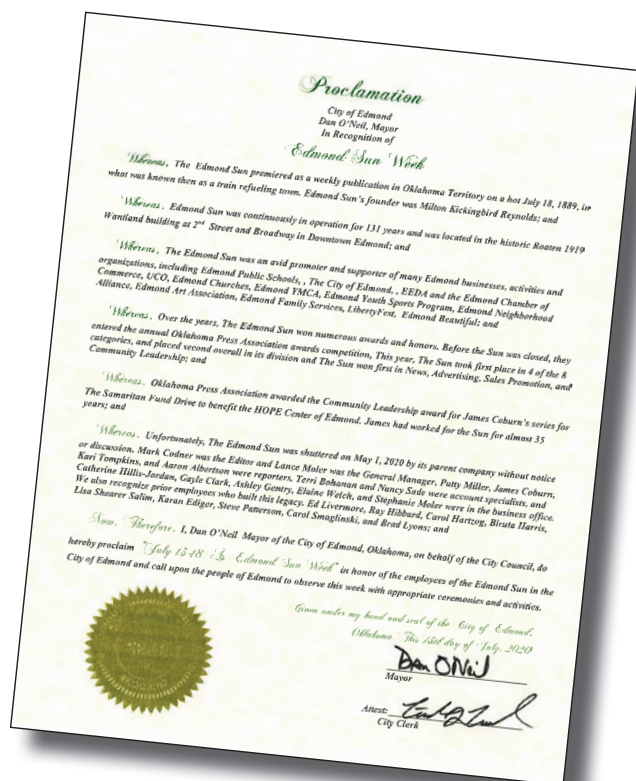
Coburn, who worked for The Edmond Sun more 34 years, was inducted into the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame in 2013.

"For 130 plus years, The Edmond Sun has performed the essential role of keeping government accountable, helping document and create our sense of place, our community," said Codner.

"On behalf of former Sun employees, I want to say

thank you to Mayor Dan O'Neil and the City Council for showing their appreciation of what's been lost in Edmond.

"I hope and pray we will have a replacement and continue documenting the stories James so well documented over the years."



DEATHS

MARY KATHERINE 'KAY' DYER, a pioneering Oklahoma journalist, died June 15, 2020. She was 92.

Dyer was born June 11, 1928, in Oklahoma City. After graduating from El Reno High School, she attended the University of Kansas where she earned a degree in journalism.

She broke barriers for future women journalists as the first woman promoted to city editor at The Oklahoman & Times. After 21 years at OPUBCO, she joined her family's

newspaper, the El Reno Daily Tribune, where she served as news editor, publisher and editor before retiring in 1990.

She served on the advisory board for the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation and was inducted into the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame in 1992. She was honored with a Ford Foundation Urban Journalism Fellowship, and is recognized as one of Oklahoma's most talented journalists.

Dyer always said one of the highlights of her career was covering the struggle for Civil Rights led by Clara Luper in Oklahoma City.

Survivors include her sister-in-law, Pat Dyer; nieces and spouses, Shanon (David) Eaton, Kelly (Chris) Fry, Tricia (Tod) Hobson, and Erin (Daniel) Thompson, and Teresa (Jim) Kaufman; nephews, Ray Dyer and Sean (Donna) Dyer; and a number of great nieces and nephews.

SALLY MAXWELL, former editor for the Sequoyah County Times, died June 14, 2020. She was 77.

Maxwell was born June 14, 2020, in Hamilton, Ohio. She was raised in Indiana where she attended the Ernie Pyle School of Journalism at Indiana University in Bloomington.

She and her family moved to Sallisaw, Okla., in 1979, and Maxwell

took a job at the Sequoyah County Times as society editor. She remained there as a news reporter and eventually managing editor for over 25 years. She joined the KXXM family as senior news director in 2014.

She was inducted into the Oklahoma Press Association's Quarter Century Club in 2006. Maxwell said the award she was most proud of was the

Mary Goddard Award for most promising journalist, which allowed her to attend an American Press Institute workshop in Los Angeles.

She is survived by daughter Tonya Maxwell of Sallisaw; sons Mark E. Maxwell of Fort Smith and Jimmy C. Maxwell of Prospect, Ky.; seven grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren.

JERRY McCONNELL, a former editor at The Oklahoman, died June 25, 2020, in Greenwood, Ark. He was 92.

McConnell attended Greenwood schools, and although offered a full football scholarship to the University of Arkansas, he enlisted in the U.S. Army. After he was discharged from the service in 1948, he returned to the University of Arkansas where he

majored in journalism, graduating in 1951.

A lifelong journalist, McConnell worked as a sports and news reporter at the Arkansas Gazette and the Arkansas Democrat in Little Rock. In 1971, he became managing editor of the Arkansas Democrat.

In 1978, McConnell moved to Oklahoma City to become the executive sports editor of The Daily and Sunday

Oklahoman and the Oklahoma City Times.

After retiring in 1992, he and his wife, Jo, moved back to Greenwood. She died in 2018.

McConnell is survived by his son, Mike McConnell of Seattle; and two grandchildren.

Remembering our friends & colleagues who died the previous year

Irvin Lee Miller
June 20, 2019

Robert Crout
July 17, 2019

Robert Standish 'Bob' Meacham, Jr.
July 29, 2019

Shelby Alice Miller
July 25, 2019

Thank you to the following for their recent donations to the Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation:

Tom and Sherry Muchmore
in memory of Joe McBride & Jim Mayo.

Please donate to the Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation. A donation to ONF will support its efforts to improve the state's newspaper industry and quality of journalism. ONF's programs include training and education for professional journalists, scholarship and internship programs for journalism students, and Newspaper in Education efforts. ONF relies on donations and memorial contributions to fund these programs. If you would like to make a donation, please send a check to:

OKLAHOMA NEWSPAPER FOUNDATION, 3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105



Apple changes processors; Microsoft's migration; 5G is coming



Computer Notes

from the road
by Wilma Newby
wnewby@okpress.com

Apple made the hard decision to switch Mac computers to ARM processors in 2021.

It's not going to happen all at once, but the full line will be converted in a couple of years.

Apple controls the production of these processors, which are used in their iPhones and iPads.

This move will streamline their platform and create greater control over security and development. With the integration of the three operating systems, applications that run on the Mac computer may also run on the iPad or iPhone.

Maybe we'll be able to make calls from the computer or open an InDesign page on an iPad.

This move means that all software will need to be compiled to handle the new chips. Once again, a real divide will be created in software that runs on Intel vs. ARM computers.

For a time, Apple is offering a software fix called Rosetta 2. It will let you run the software written for Intel Macs on the new models for a few years. That gives the software developers a chance to re-write the software for the new platform. Apple announced this at their developers' conference last month.

What this mean for newspapers is more change, but it's not quite as painful as the move Apple made a number of years ago when they switched to Intel.

Many newspapers are

now on the Adobe Creative Cloud software, which should work well with the change since it's always updated.

For Creative Suite users running Adobe CS-CS6, the end is in sight for computers that can run that software. Many will be forced to move to the new Creative Cloud or an alternative software to go forward.

Many developers of other hardware that works with Apple computers will need to be updated as well. This is mainly printer drivers and scanners. This change will not happen overnight. Apple is taking it slow, perhaps learning from other big platform leaps of the past.

If you're planning to buy a new Apple computer in the next six months, it might be wise to hold off until the new computers are out since all the software will be written for them in the coming years. There are some great deals for the Intel Macintosh computers right now, but think carefully about the upcoming change and the future use of the computer.

MICROSOFT MIGRATION:

Microsoft often updates its operating system and with these big, combined updates things are slowly moving under the hood.

One thing the Windows 10 programs are trying to change is moving everything from the old Control Panel to the Settings Panel. This has been going on for the last few years but now the Control panel > System is due for the move.

Windows 10 insider Preview Build 20161 was released July 1, along with the announcement about the change to the Control Panel. When the update is released to everyone, you will have to hunt to get to the info needed.

Currently, if a user searches for the Control Panel it brings up familiar settings and gives you more control over installing printers and other in-depth settings for the computer.

As Microsoft slowly changes to the new Windows setting controls, learning the workarounds as they become available is a good idea. Carefully read about feature updates as they come out. Like Apple, Windows is trying to consolidate the operating system to streamline use.

5G IS COMING: The next newest standard for the world's phone systems is the 5G.

It will be broadly adopted next year. The carriers have not completed Oklahoma's roll out yet. Right now, only Oklahoma City claims to have 5G through AT&T.

5G is touted to be up to 1 GB per second. If that pans out, it will blow away most broadband connections and make phones faster than computers.

This is the 5th generation of wireless networks and will succeed 4G LTE.

What you need to know is when to buy a 5G phone. Apple's next lineup will be 5G, and Samsung already updated its line. If you need a new phone today, see if any of the ones being considered is 5G.

Samsung 5G phones range from \$600 to \$1,200 on AT&T's website. The Galaxy A71 5G is the least expensive while the Galaxy Note 10+ is the most expensive. The Galaxy S20 5G is the latest in the lineup for around \$800.

Ask lots of questions about the phone. Is it mmWave? Some carriers like Verizon are only using this technology as they begin to roll out 5Gs. Check your carrier's website for the best information.

OPA Computer Consultant Wilma Newby'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.



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WORTH MENTIONING

LONE GROVE LEDGER HIT BY UNEMPLOYMENT FRAUD

Linda Hicks, owner and publisher of the Lone Grove Ledger, said unemployment fraud hit the Lone Grove Ledger Publishing Company.

Hicks said the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) wrote her a letter on June 19, 2020, to inform her that she had 10 days to respond to the unemployment claim.

"It was a good thing I dropped by the office on the day the letter arrived or this fraud would have been collecting unemployment on my dime," Hicks wrote in her column titled "It got me to thinking..."

Hicks tried to call to deny the claim, but was on hold for more than an hour. She finally hung up and instead sent a certified letter to OESC disputing the claim.

GOOD DEEDS RECOGNIZED IN MOUNTAIN VIEW NEWS

The Mountain View News honors kindness by featuring the "Good Deed Doer" award in the newspaper. Readers are asked to call or write if they know of a deserving person. Recent Good Deed Doers were submitted by a woman who had car trouble and wanted to

thank the people who came to her rescue. Another was a woman thanking all those who helped her and her husband while they were hospitalized.

OKC FRIDAY PRINTS LIST OF MOST POWERFUL OKLAHOMANS



OKC Friday featured the "50 Most Powerful Oklahomans" in its July 3 issue. Vicki Clark Gourley, publisher of OKC Friday, said more than 250 community leaders are asked to vote by ballot for those they consider the post powerful in directing Oklahoma. The list includes those who use their time and/or treasure to improve life in the state and for its citizens.

WEATHERFORD DAILY NEWS HOSTS ELECTION FORUM

The Weatherford Daily News hosted an election forum for Custer County

and District 57 candidates on June 18 at the Weatherford City Hall. Candidates all answered a variety of questions, helping the public to make an informed decision at the polls on June 30. The full forum was available on the WDN Facebook page, and answers from the candidates were printed in the newspaper.

PERKINS PUBLISHER DESCRIBES TRAVELING DURING PANDEMIC

David Sasser, publisher of the Perkins Journal, is writing a four-part series on what it's like to travel during the coronavirus pandemic. For the past couple of years, Sasser has taken his grandchildren, and their parents, on a trip to visit some of the national parks.

In June, the Sasser family embarked on a trip to the American desert southwest where they would visit Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park and Grand Canyon National Park.

Sasser wrote about air travel and hotel stays in his first article.

JOURNAL RECORD STARTS NEW ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

The Journal Record recently launched a new series of weekly online dis-

cussions that focus on how Oklahoma City and the state can best bounce back from the pandemic. Expert guests focused on opening Oklahoma following the pandemic. Joe Dowd, interim editor of The Journal Record, moderated the first 45-minute long live discussion. Dowd asked panelists to share their thoughts about how quickly the COVID-19 pandemic forced change on business and life in general in Oklahoma and advice about how to manage such a rapidly evolving crisis.

PICNIC IN THE PARK BENEFITS FROM SUBSCRIPTION SALES



The Weatherford Daily News is having its annual July half-price subscription special and this year's beneficiary is Picnic in the Park.

A \$5 donation is required in order to purchase the half price subscription, which will help feed children.

Phillip Reid, publisher of the Daily News, said they were able to get the price for the snack lunches down to \$1 per lunch by working with Ben E. Keith.

OPA STAFF DIRECTORY

ADMINISTRATION

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

JEANNIE FREEMAN, Accounting Manager
jfreeman@okpress.com, (405) 499-0027

SCOTT WILKERSON, Front Office/Building Mgr.
swilkinson@okpress.com, (405) 499-0020

MEMBER SERVICES

LISA SUTLIFF, Member Services Director
lsutliff@okpress.com, (405) 499-0026

CHRISTINE FRANK, Membership & Meeting Dir.
cfrank@okpress.com, (405) 499-0040

ADVERTISING

LANDON COBB, Sales Director
lcobb@okpress.com, (405) 499-0022

CINDY SHEA, Advertising Director
cshea@okpress.com, (405) 499-0023

DIGITAL CLIPPING

KEITH BURGIN, Clipping Director
kburgin@okpress.com, (405) 499-0024

JENNIFER CATES, Digital Clipping Dept.
jbeatley-cates@okpress.com

SAMANTHA SMITH, Clipping / Advertising
ssmith@okpress.com, (405) 499-0035

CREATIVE SERVICES

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

COMPUTER ADVICE

WILMA NEWBY, Computer Consultant
wnewby@okpress.com, (405) 499-0031

GENERAL INQUIRIES

(405) 499-0020
Fax: (405) 499-0048
OkPress.com
Toll-free in OK: 1-888-815-2672

Advertising is a problem-solving business

BY JOHN FOUST
RALEIGH, NC

When I heard the doorbell ring that Saturday afternoon, I did something I had never done before. I bought something from a door-to-door salesperson.

It was a pest control representative who was canvassing the neighborhood for new business. The logo on his bright green golf shirt matched his truck in the driveway.

He introduced himself and said, "I see you have a vole problem. Have you tried anything?"

"How do you know there's a vole problem?" I asked.

"When I got out of the truck, I noticed the spongy ground next to the driveway. That's an obvious sign."

In just a few seconds, he had identified a problem. Obviously, he knew what he was doing.

"You're right," I said. "We've had voles in our yard for several years. A company has been working on the problem, but that

doesn't seem to be helping."

Voles are small mole-like rodents that burrow underground and feast on the bulbs and roots of plants. The ground in an infested area is spongy, because their tunnels are close to the surface. A mating pair can produce up to 100 voles in a year. In other words, if voles settle in your yard, you'll have a lot of them in a short period of time.

That salesperson caught me at the right time to make a sale, because he was observant.

He knew without a doubt that there was a problem that needed to be solved.

He said his company had a special treatment which was proven to have impressive results.

I agreed to let them give it a try. Within a few weeks after their first treatment, we could tell a difference.

Although the treatments haven't eliminated the problem completely (can anything do that?), it has dramatically reduced the infestation.

His approach illustrated the importance of being observant.

His company's customer database probably revealed information about neighborhoods with vole problems.

And he looked for symptoms when he pulled into the driveway.

Although selling advertising is not quite like selling pest control services, there are a number of things to observe before approaching an advertising prospect.

Here are a few examples:

- 1. History.** What promotions has your prospect run in past years? What were the results? What lessons can be learned?
- 2. Time of year.** Is there a prime buying season for the widgets your prospect sells? People usually don't buy lawnmowers in the winter or snowblowers in the summer.
- 3. News stories.** Have they announced the addition of a new prod-

uct line? Is there going to be a grand opening of a new location? Has there been an ownership change?

4. Ads in other media.

Are they running ads in other advertising outlets? That's a clear sign that they have a marketing budget and may be open to other ideas.

- 5. Competitors.** What products and services are currently being promoted by their competitors? They're running those ads now for a reason. Maybe you could follow their example.

Who knows? One of these ideas might ring a bell.

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John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com.

NNA Convention to be held online

The National Newspaper Association's 134th Annual Convention and Trade Show will be virtual this year.

Oct. 1-3 is still the dates for the event, which was originally scheduled in Jackson, Fla.

Registration will open soon at a price of \$50 per person. For more information about the convention, visit nna.org.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE APRIL & MAY WINNERS

April Column: **JENNIFER PITTS**, *Countywide & Sun*

April Editorial: **KIM POINDEXTER**, *Tahlequah Daily Press*

May Column: **KIM POINDEXTER**, *Tahlequah Daily Press*

May Editorial: **DAVID STRINGER**, *The Lawton Constitution*

APRIL COLUMN WINNER

KIM POINDEXTER, *Tahlequah Daily Press*

Public schools should get all stimulus money

With the minds of Oklahomans on the COVID-19 pandemic, it would be easy for elected officials to take actions that play to their base and their donors, rather than serve the majority in this state. Any move by Gov. Kevin Stitt to funnel money toward private schools would fall into that category.

Oklahoma is reportedly in line to get \$40 million in stimulus money earmarked for education. But that will hardly scratch the surface, now that the bottom has fallen out of the oil and gas market. Because of the insistence of successive regimes at the Capitol and governor's mansion that the state put all its economic eggs into one basket, it was bound to happen, and it did – again. History will continue to repeat itself ad nauseum, because here in the Sooner state, top officials never learn their lesson. Many voters have a problem with that, too, since they keep returning to office the bootlickers of the fossil fuel industry, rather than moving forward with diversification like Texas has done.

Everyone pays the price for economic dol-drum, which have been magnified exponentially by COVID-19. But there's no entity stuck with a bigger tab than public education, and therein lies the rub when it comes to the stimulus money: The package gives Stitt latitude to spend money on either public or private institutions.

Especially given the dire straits Oklahoma and many other states find themselves in right now, there is no justification for funneling money into private schools. So though they may err on some matters, as we all do, the House Democratic Caucus is right to lobby the governor to back off his talks to take money from taxpayers – who for the

most part send their kids to public schools – and hand it to private institutions where the greatest benefit will be to wealthy patrons.

Private schools have a place in Oklahoma, and parents who want to send their kids to one should have that option – if they can afford it without grubbing in the pocket of taxpayers. The trouble is, few can afford it, even with scholarships, grants and other monies to supplement parental payments. Oklahoma has 227 private schools, with 38,949 schools enrolled, and the average tuition is just over \$5,000 for elementary schools and \$7,031 for high schools. Who has that kind of money these days, especially with jobless rates at an all-time high?

On the other hand, public schools educate about 700,000 Oklahoma kids, as they are required to do by law. A number of legislators seem to be as unfamiliar with the state constitution as some federal-level top officials are ignorant about the contents of the U.S. Constitution. In Oklahoma, all students are guaranteed a free education. That cannot happen with private schools, no matter how much public funding the well-heeled procure for it.

The Democratic Caucus offered Stitt some suggestions as to ways the stimulus money could be put to good use. It's clear that despite the Legislature's attempts to fill some holes, public schools are still starving for money – and with a \$1.3 billion revenue shortfall looming, the situation will worsen. Cherokee County residents should let the governor know that if he misuses this stimulus money, he'll pay the price at the polls – and so will any legislators who get behind such a pie-in-the-sky plan.



Enter and Win a \$100 Check from Oklahoma Natural Gas!

The April and May 2020 Oklahoma Natural Gas Column and Editorial Contests were judged by members of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame.

1. Each month, send a tearsheet or photocopy of your best column and/or editorial to Oklahoma Natural Gas Contest, c/o OPA, 3601 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105-5499. Entries also may be emailed (full-page tearsheet) to news@okpress.com.
2. Include the author's name, name of publication, date of publication and category entered (column or editorial).
3. Only ONE editorial and/or ONE column per writer per month will be accepted.
4. All entries for the previous month must be at the OPA office by the 15th of the current month.
5. Winning entries will be reproduced on the OPA website at www.OkPress.com.

Entries must have been previously published in print.

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Although Oklahoma Natural Gas Company selects representative contest winners' work for use in this monthly ad, the views expressed in winning columns and editorials are those of the writers and don't necessarily reflect the Company's opinions.