

OPA proceeding with in-person convention

The Oklahoma Press Association's Annual Convention is back this year after skipping last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The in-person event will be held at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Oklahoma City on June 11-12.

"The annual convention will be a great opportunity to learn and get ideas you can take back to your paper," said OPA President Mike Strain. "That's always a valuable part of the convention. But to me, what makes it even better this year is the chance to get together again. After a year without a convention, I'm looking forward to seeing old friends and making new ones."

OPA Education Committee Chairman Shauna Belyeu is also looking forward to seeing everyone in person.

"So much of the world has changed since we have all last met," Belyeu said. "Last year we were all forced to dig deep, pivot and adapt. Our roles have never been more vital. That is why we are very excited to come together for this year's convention. We have a great lineup of educational speakers and sessions to

help you refuel and reset for the year ahead."

The theme this year is "Newspapers Tell the Stories of Hometown Heroes."

The two-day convention begins at 2 p.m. Friday, June 11, with the annual OPA Business Meeting and election of officers and directors for 2021-2022.

The first session, "Legal Issues Affecting Oklahoma," is made up of a panel of heroes that battle for open meeting and records – Doug Dodd and Anna Sanger, attorneys at Doerner, Saunders, Daniel & Anderson, LLP, and KatieBeth Gardner, the local legal initiative staff attorney for the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press based in Oklahoma.

Back by popular demand is the fast-paced News Flash session, which will feature more heroes that inspire and motivate you with their Revenue Success stories.

Evening events include a reception and dinner with live trivia entertainment.

Saturday morning begins with state leaders giving an update about the recent legislative session and

(See Convention, Page 3)

OPA 2021 CONVENTION SPEAKERS

(in alphabetical order)



Cindy Allen



Jason Collington



Doug Dodd



Holly Easttom



KatieBeth Gardner



Jeff Mayo



Paul Monies



Jennifer Palmer



Kim Poindexter



Anna Sanger



Ted Streuli



David Stringer



Thad Swiderski

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Register for the OPA Convention online at

OkPress.com/convention

From the President

By Mike Strain, Tulsa World
OPA President 2020-2021



When I joined the Oklahoma Press Association board several years ago, I looked forward to the year as president; but never did I envision writing the following words so enthusiastically:

We are going to have the annual convention! And it's going to be in person!

Now, I suppose something could change. If we've learned anything in the last year, it's that things can change quickly. Such is life in a pandemic. Right now, though – as the story on the front page indicates – the annual convention is a go. It's June 11-12 in downtown Oklahoma City.

You may have received some emails about the convention, and there's one I'd like to highlight here. There will be an hour-long News Flash session on Friday afternoon. You may remember this session from previous conventions. Presenters spend five minutes apiece and share a good idea. The session lasts about an hour. I've never failed to leave without seeing a couple of those ideas and thinking: We should be doing that.

This year, the goal is to share revenue-producing ideas, and here's where we hope you can help: We need people to share their ideas.

You may have seen that presenting requires a PowerPoint presentation, but don't let that deter you. The PowerPoint can be something as simple as a single image. The session's goal is to quickly share good ideas.

Every presenter will be entered in a drawing to win \$100.

Here are the details if you've got an idea to share: Email Christine Frank your presentation pitch. It can be just a couple of sentences, and you can send it to cfrank@okpress.com. She needs the pitch submitted by 5 p.m. Friday, May 28.

The convention will be full of good sessions, and of course, the annual awards night banquet. Looking forward to seeing everyone there.

Journalism Hall of Fame: Just like OPA's annual convention, the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame faced COVID challenges. Last year was the hall's 50th anniversary, but the banquet to induct new members was postponed until fall. Then it was postponed again.

The banquet was set for May 14 and a class of 20 was inducted into the hall. (Full disclosure: This was written before the banquet.)

Like other years, it's a terrific group of inductees. To learn more about this class or past inductees, check out the hall's website at okjournalismhalloffame.com. I visited the site again recently. Whether it's reading about Ralph Ellison (class of 1982) or Paul Harvey (class of 1973) or finding bios on people you know, it's a fun site.

Looking back: May in Oklahoma is storm season. We've all covered it, from the deadly tornadoes to historic floods. Strangely, that's not what comes to mind for me in May, though.

Instead, it's the spring sports state championships. They're not as high profile as our state's religion (football), but every year there are thousands of high school athletes competing for titles in track, tennis, baseball, golf, soccer and softball.

It's a time when our papers shine. No one provides the type of sports coverage that readers get from papers across the state. And that coverage makes a difference. Here's an odd way to prove it.

Maybe you've been on the wrong end of a phone call from an angry parent who wondered: Why didn't you write about my ...

Those calls can be painful, but they're a good reminder: The work we do in our communities really matters to people.

Money taken from news racks in Elk City

Five newspaper racks in Elk City were vandalized in late March with padlocks broken and money taken.

Neva Pyatt, Elk City News advertising manager, was alerted to the thefts and damage after receiving a phone call. The caller also told Pyatt that he had noticed a broken padlock on a news rack at another location over the weekend.

After notifying the Elk City Police Department of the thefts, Pyatt went to look at other rack locations and found three more had been robbed.

The Elk City News is seeking information about the break-ins. Hundreds of dollars of damage was done to the machines, but the amount of money stolen from each is impossible to determine.

OPA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, SATURDAY – JUNE 11-12

**OPA Convention at the Sheraton
Oklahoma City Downtown Hotel**

Register online at:
okpress.com/convention.

JUNE WEBINARS

June 3, 1:00 PM, OMC Webinar
#NoFilter: How to Effectively Use Instagram for Storytelling
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June 4, 1:00 PM, OMC Webinar
Using Automation to Increase Audience Revenue and Engagement
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June 17, 1:00 PM, Newspaper Academy
Kevin Slimp: 90 Minutes of Adobe InDesign Basics for Newspapers
For more information or to register,
newspaperacademy.com/webinar/video-kevin-slimp-basics-of-in-design-for-new-or-newer-users/

For more information and links to register for webinars, visit

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Convention

(continued from Page 1)

answering your questions. Next up will be Oklahoma's congressional delegation to discuss important issues affecting Oklahoma and your local communities.

The Awards Luncheon will honor new inductees into the OPA Quarter Century Club and Half Century Club, ONG Column and Editorial Sweepstakes award winners, OGE Photo of the Year awards, Magazine Contest awards, ONF Joseph H. Edward Outdoor Writer of the Year Award and the ONF Ray Lokey Memorial Award for Excellence in Reporting.

The afternoon offers attendees eight concurrent sessions with a break at 3:00 p.m. for an ice cream social and the annual Bloopster Show.

Concurrent sessions include an editorial track and a revenue track. Choose between "What Journalists Need to Know About the Oklahoma Open Records Act," presented by Katie-Beth Gardner, or general

revenue ideas presented at the Idea Exchange at 1:15.

At 2:15, panelists Kim Poindexter, David Stringer and Cindy Allen discuss editorial and opinion writing. For the revenue track, "Selling Total Audience" is the topic to be presented by Thad Swiderski, eType Services.

Holly Easttom, Oklahoma Baptist University, will speak about the "Evolving Craft of Journalism" at 3:50 p.m., while Jeff Mayo, Sequoyah County Times, discusses marijuana advertising.

Oklahoma Watch panelists Ted Streuli, Paul Monies and Jennifer Palmer will discuss investigative journalism at 4:45. Jason Collington, Tulsa World, takes the revenue track discussing how to use social media to make more revenue.

The finale of the convention is the annual Awards Banquet and presentation of the OPA Milt Phillips Award, ONF Beachy Muselman Award and OPA Better Newspaper Contest Awards.

"It is so exciting to know we will be meeting

for the awards dinner this year and the committee is thrilled with all the entries in the contest," said OPA Awards Committee Chairman Zonelle Rainbolt. "We hope everyone will join us as we celebrate the best of 2020 – and yes, there were many great moments for our industry in an otherwise dismal year and we are ready to celebrate all of them!"

Belyeu said she is also looking forward to the awards banquet.

"I'm looking forward to celebrating the great work of so many papers on awards night. It's always a good time but should be especially fun being back together in person," said Belyeu.

For more information and to register, visit okpress.com/convention.

Thank you to our event sponsors – Citizen Potawatomi Nation, Public Service Company of Oklahoma (PSO), First United Bank, Hilliary Communications, Inasmuch Foundation, OERB, AT&T, eType Services, the Chickasaw Nation and the Muscogee Nation.

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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.

You should join OPA'S LEGAL SERVICES PLAN!

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



A Chandler firefighter opens a valve on a fire hydrant while a house fire rages in the background at 13th Street and Allison.

Photo by BRIAN BLANSETT, The Lincoln County News, March 18, 2021



Norman North's Ezra Moser heads the ball during the Timberwolves' game against NW Classen on March 30, 2021, at Norman North High School

Photo by KYLE PHILLIPS, The Norman Transcript, March 31, 2021

MARCH 2021
WEEKLY WINNER:
**BRIAN
BLANSETT**

The Lincoln County News

MARCH 2021
DAILY, SEMI- AND
TRI-WEEKLY WINNER:
**KYLE
PHILLIPS**

The Norman Transcript

The March 2021 contest
was judged by a member of the
Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame.

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Norman Transcript promotes Keith to position of editor

Emma Keith has been named as editor of The Norman Transcript.



Keith joined The Transcript staff as a reporter covering Norman Public School and the University of Oklahoma in October 2019.

For the past year she has worked as both education reporter and as the COVID-19 reporter.

Keith graduated from The University of Oklahoma where she served three and one-half years in The OU Daily's newsroom, including one semester as editor-in-chief of the student publication.

She has also done stints in Washington, D.C., Detroit and Phoenix.

Keith said she is looking forward to serving as editor of The Transcript.

"I'm tremendously excited to do this job in a full-time capacity," she said.

Shields is new publisher at Stillwater News Press

Kevin Shields has been named publisher at the Stillwater News Press.

He replaces Jill Hunt, who retired earlier this year.

Shields comes to the News Press from The Journal in Seneca, South Carolina, where he was circulation director. He has been in the newspaper industry since 1999.

He said he is excited at the opportunity to grow the newspaper in circulation,



coverage and reputation.

"We want to be a spotlight on the community," he said. "... not shy away from accountability journalism, but we also want to be the area's biggest cheerleader."

His immediate goal is to increase coverage throughout the county.

"We're excited to introduce Kevin and his family to Stillwater," former News Press publisher and current regional CNHI Group

Publisher Dale Brendel said. "Kevin has a passion for newspapers and news products, and he's shown demonstrated experience in developing audience and community engagement."

Shields is a graduate of the University of Georgia. He is looking forward to his family joining him in Stillwater – wife Courtney, daughters Katie and Cassie and son Conner – and having his three children in the Stillwater Public Schools system.

The Cordell Beacon names Flores as general manager

Heather Flores has been named the new general manager of The Cordell Beacon.

Flores has spent the last two-plus years as office manager at The Beacon and is looking forward to the challenge of running the weekly newspaper.

"The Cordell Beacon has a long standard of outstanding journalism and



commitment to the community," she said. "I want to continue that standard. We have built a wonderful team at The Beacon, and I look forward to what the coming months and years will bring."

Joining Flores is new reporter Hector Lucas, who worked for the Watonga Republican, and new adver-

tising consultant Charla Ingram. Part-time sports-writer Flora Walters will continue her duties.

Flores has lived in Cordell for four years. Before working at The Beacon, she worked at iHeart Radio in San Antonio and Farmers Cooperative Exchange in Cordell.

Flores succeeds Thomas R. Martinez, who resigned to join the nonprofit, nonpartisan Fort Worth Report.

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Adobe Creative Cloud alternatives; Apple's new 24-inch iMac



Computer Notes

from the road
by Wilma Newby
wnewby@okpress.com

If you're looking for a way to update Adobe Creative Suite software so you can keep older computers in your office, read on.

The easiest way is to go for the Creative Cloud lease program – \$79 per month, per chair. This keeps software up-to-date so computers can be regularly updated. With the Apple and Microsoft plan of replacing computers every three years, it works nicely for them but may not be easy on a newspaper's budget.

Choice two would be to change software to another program like QuarkXpress. The going price for the business version is \$671 with support for a year. That price is for one computer. There is no outright buy for the software's business version.

Quark does page design, photo editing, graphics and illustrations and web design. Mobile app creation is even offered. Worth noting is that photos can be edited right on the page in a nondestructive way.

Quark has been Adobe's chief competitor since the late 1980's. Their software is full featured and

has everything needed for newspaper production.

The ID2Q InDesign to Quark converter will be needed for a short time to convert all pages.

For a large business, I don't see the advantage of switching from the Creative Cloud to Quark if you have to lease the software anyway.

Microsoft Publisher is a choice some newspapers using Windows computers have gone with in the past. It's not as full featured as InDesign and other software.

If you're thinking of going this route, a Photoshop-type program would have to be obtained. One choice is Gimp, which is free and works on all platforms.

This path could be obtained for \$12.50 per month per user – \$150 per year per chair. That's a lot less than Creative Cloud but has a high learning curve and requires lots of workarounds. Also, the pages would need to be rebuilt from scratch in Publisher.



The last alternative is the upcoming company Affinity. It has a suite of software that closely resembles the

Creative Cloud. Affinity Publisher replaces InDesign; Affinity Photo replaces Photoshop; Affinity Designer replaces Illustrator. This suite of software runs on Windows and Mac computers and Affinity Publisher will directly open most InDesign versions files. Some versions of the Creative Suite files need to be exported in the exchange format to be opened in Affinity Publisher, but no extra software is required to make the conversion happen.

Affinity software is very close to the Adobe suite. The menus are in slightly different places but it has everything you need to put out a newspaper. The best part is the price. Right now, it's a one-time purchase of \$25 per chair (normally \$50). This makes it a great time to download and try the software. And this is a **No Lease** software. It's a perpetual license, one time buy. Maybe updates will cost something but it's very cheap compared to the others.

Affinity software understands CMYK formatting and PDFs can be exported with lots of control.

Affinity Photo is a good tool for Photoshop replacement. It does batch processing edits in RAW format and seems to do most

anything we would do in Photoshop.

Affinity Publisher even runs on older computers – as far back as OSX 10.9 Maverick and up on Macs, and Windows 7 through 10.

Mac OSX High Sierra or Windows 10 is needed to run some of the high-end features. Affinity even runs on Linux computers and its photo app runs on iPads.

Affinity offers keyboard commands similar to the Adobe Suite. There are many InDesign or PageMaker features and even some Quark features.

The blend was easy to figure out and adapt to. It has master pages, style sheets and the ability to create template files. There's also a preview mode and text wrapping around an object or photo.

Files can be saved as template files, packaged or can easily create a PDF for print production.

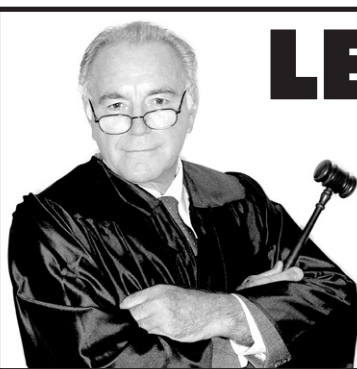
NEW 24-INCH IMAC

Apple released new iMacs this month. They're fast, colorful and expensive.

The low-end model is \$1,300 but you need to consider upgrading to 16GB of RAM memory. You can't add more memory later with this model. The gigabit Ethernet port is also a good upgrade option for \$30. With those two upgrades, the total cost will be \$1530.

Parallels now runs the latest versions of Windows within the OSX of the M1 computer, which widens the options of software.

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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Media group files open records lawsuit in Lawton

The Southwest Ledger, owned by Hilliary Media Group, filed a lawsuit against the City of Lawton on April 21 alleging violations of the state's Open Records Act.

On March 31 and April 1, Hilliary Media Group and the Southwest Ledger requested any communication sent or received by Jay Burk that involved his duties as a City Council member.

On April 15, the city denied the requests for communication on Burk's personal cell phone, stating that such records were not in possession or control of the City.

After the denial, the media group requested copies of text message on the councilman's city-issued telephone. The city replied that it had released all available records and was not in possession of the requested text messages, even on the city-issued cell phone.

Hilliary Media Group contends that the Oklahoma Open Records Act entitles them — and the citizens of Lawton — to “prompt, reasonable access to the records.”

AMY LANE RAYMOND, who worked at The Oklahoman for more than 20 years, died suddenly on May 9, 2021. She was 45. Raymond was born March 16, 1976, in Denver. She attended Oklahoma Christian University, where she was editor of The Talon News, graduating in 1997 with a degree in biology.

Soon after graduation she joined the staff at The Oklahoman as a staff writer, working her way up the newsroom ladder as a copy editor, page designer, and then as night news editor.

DEATHS

Raymond met her husband, Ken, in the newsroom at The Oklahoman. They were married in 2004.

At The Oklahoman, Amy Raymond helped launch three publishing systems. She was the trainer who guided reporters and editors to understanding the rapidly changing technology.

For many years, she helped coordinate The Oklahoman's long-running Newsroom 101 program in which reporters volunteered their time mentoring area school kids interested

in careers in journalism. She also edited The Oklahoman's Viva Oklahoma publications.

Shortly after arriving at The Oklahoman this year, Executive Editor Ray Rivera promoted Raymond to the role of digital news editor and lead planner, noting her old title did not reflect the entirety of her contributions to print and online news.

Amy Raymond is survived by her husband, Ken; parents Ann I. and William Greene, and sister Ange Liebst.

Remembering our friends & colleagues who died the previous year

Marguerite Babb
April 28, 2020
Dennie Hall
April 17, 2020
Jake Norman McDonald
April 1, 2020

Nancy Janice 'Jan' O'Leary
April 23, 2020
Frederick David Seaton
April 18, 2020

Kenneth Wayne Dickerson
May 30, 2020
James H. 'Jim' Keisman
May 26, 2020
Karla Paxton
May 15, 2020

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Barb Walter in memory of Fritz Wirt

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OKLAHOMA NATURAL GAS CONTEST WINNERS

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MARCH WINNERS

Column: **ART HADDAWAY**, *Owasso Reporter*

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

MARCH COLUMN WINNER

ART HADDAWAY, *Owasso Reporter*

Reflecting on a year of covering the pandemic

A year ago this month, all of our lives changed as the pandemic became a prominent front-page story across the world.

The news was unexpected and unprecedented — a historic turn of events that, unbeknownst to us at the time, would ultimately reshape how we live, interact with others and perceive the world.

I remember leading our March 18, 2020, paper with the headline, “Area schools shut down,” followed by another, “City closes restaurants, bars,” in the following week’s edition. It was at that point I knew our weekly coverage would never look the same going forward.

Those stories would grow from two to nearly 200 over the next 12 months. That averages to about three to four articles per week. I’ve written the majority of those, covering everything from citywide cases and hospital stats to vaccination updates and school district quarantine rates.

That’s not including the many uplifting stories that spotlight inspiring students, resilient parents, unwavering business owners and hardworking medical staff who struggled through the tumultuous last 365 days.

To say I’m familiar with the state of the coronavirus on the local front would be an understatement. That’s not a pretentious statement, just a reminder that I’m overdue for a much-needed vacation (but aren’t we all).

Of course, we’re not out of the woods yet. Ideally, my goal is to see an eventual downturn in virus-related coverage in conjunction with a decreased number of cases and deaths.

In retrospect, covering the pandemic taught me a lot. I gleaned valuable lessons from each story and every interview. I’ve learned to be kinder, to count my blessings, to embrace change and to lend a listening ear to those with differing viewpoints.

I’m privileged to serve in a position that gives me the opportunity to capture historic moments our community will look back and reflect on for years to come. Reporting on such significant events — sometimes heartwarming and heartbreaking, other times cordial and controversial — has been a humbling experience.

What’s more, I’m proud to call Owasso home. I’m proud to share this place with other Owassons, who, regardless of their political or spiritual beliefs, come together during difficult times and press forward to pave the way for a better tomorrow.



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2. Include the author's name, name of publication, date of publication and category entered (column or editorial).
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