Tom Larimer retires from Press Association

Tom Larimer, executive director of the Arkansas Press Association (APA), announced his retirement Wednesday.

Larimer has been director of the association since 2004 after a long career in newspapers. He is a Berryville native who, after serving in the U.S. Navy and graduating from Arkansas Tech University, worked in his family newspaper and printing business. After the business sold, he held newspaper positions at Nevada, Mo., Murfreesboro, Tenn. and Nashville.

Since joining APA, Larimer has been a leading defender of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act, testifying before state legislative committees and appearing at public forums around the state stressing the importance of public access to government business.

“We appreciate Tom’s many years of service to the association and to our member newspapers,” said Byron Tate, owner of The Sheridan Headlight and president of the APA Board of Directors. “At a time when many state press associations are struggling financially, ours has remained strong and active. Tom played a significant role in helping our association not only survive, but thrive.”

A search for Larimer’s replacement will begin immediately. Ashley Wimberley, director of marketing for Arkansas Press Services, will serve as APA’s interim executive director.

Intern seeking window now open for APA newspapers

The clock is ticking for applicants seeking one of the four paid internships offered this summer by the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation. The deadline for applications is Saturday, March 10.

The Foundation grants are $1500 each. A match of that amount is required of newspapers receiving the internship grants. What the newspaper gets in return for this amount is some additional summer newsroom help during the 8-10 week project.

The interns selected get valuable hands-on experience working in a real newspaper newsroom to supplement their formal education. The intern applicants must be enrolled at an Arkansas college or university and must be majoring in journalism. Special consideration is given to newspaper journalism applicants.

The interns bring fresh perspectives and a new energy to newspaper newsrooms, and provide great fill-ins for APA newspapers covering for vacationing staff members.

If you would like more information about the ANF Matching Grant Program for paid summer internships, email Karen Brown, Executive Director, at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

There also is a lot of information on the ANF interns program, along with applications and other information under the Foundation tab on the APA web site at www.arkansaspress.org.

But don’t hesitate. The host newspaper selections are made on a first-come basis. The deadline may not be until March 10, but waiting that long might cause you to miss out on this great opportunity to host a summer intern and use the Foundation grant money to pay for half of it.

Journo ethics topic for SPJ event

Journalism ethics will be the topic when the Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) gets together Thursday, February 22, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Vino’s Brewpub, 923 West Seventh Street in Little Rock. The event is free.

The group will explore a variety of journalistic challenges, including but not limited to the use of anonymous sources, using graphic images, and conflicts of interest.

The evening will include a presentation on “What Would You Do?” with competitors on two teams learning about the SPJ Code of Ethics by playing editor in a variety of sketches designed to test ethical reasoning.

Judges will award points for each response. The team with the most points wins the game.

If you’d like to compete, email Sarah DeClerk at sdeclerk@arkansasonline.com by Friday, February 9.

Spectators are also welcome at this fun and educational event.
Send APA your staff updates

APA member newspapers are reminded that if you have job openings or if you’re looking to sell a piece of equipment or anything else, you can post it on the APA’s “Jobs Bulletin.”

The deadline is the close of business on Mondays and released on Wednesdays. APA members and associates receive an email when the Jobs Bulletin is ready for viewing, and it can be found on the APA web site under the Publications heading at www.arkansaspress.org.

There is no fee for posting job openings or items for sale in the Jobs Bulletin. Items may be sent to info@arkansaspress.org.

Mark Your Calendar!

March 15-16: Ad Conference, Winthrop Rockefeller Institute, Petit Jean Mountain

Ad conference returns to Winthrop Rockefeller Institute

The annual Arkansas Press Association (APA) ad conference will return to the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute atop Petit Jean Mountain on March 15-16.

Kelly Wirges, founder of ProMax Training & Consulting, is the featured speaker. Wirges has authored more than 50 training programs, has customized materials for hundreds of companies and has helped more than 200,000 ProMax alumni increase sales.

She is known for her ability to combine a dynamic presentation and lively interaction with the necessary information and tools to achieve the desired results.

The ad conference will kick off at 1:30 on Thursday, March 15, with Wirges’ presentation the feature of the afternoon. Afterwards, there will be a reception in the Lodge Great Room and a group dinner onsite at River Rock Grill.

The conference will resume Friday morning with the “hot ideas” breakfast session – a lively exchange of newspaper promotion, special section and advertising ideas for newspapers of all sizes. The conference will conclude with the annual APA Better Newspaper Advertising Awards.

A full conference schedule and registration form can be found in this edition of the Arkansas Publisher Weekly.

Newspaper Postal Rates Could Climb Significantly

By PAUL BOYLE

Publishers could see an extreme rise in their mailing costs in the next five years because of recently proposed changes to the current price structure for Marketing Mail and Periodicals.

On December 1, 2017, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) concluded a year-long review of the current system for regulating rates for market-dominant classes of mail, including Marketing Mail (Total Market Coverage products) and Periodicals (both In and Outside County). Most importantly, the PRC ruled that the current Consumer Price Index (CPI) price cap system has not (1) ensured the financial health of the Postal Service, (2) allowed rates to cover costs for some classes, or (3) fostered high-quality service standards.

To fix these failures, the PRC proposes major changes to the current price cap system, which has largely kept rates reasonable and predictable over the last 10 years. First, it would allow the Postal Service to raise rates by a “supplemental” 2 percent (above the CPI price cap) per mail class per year for five years. Second, it would allow an extra 1 percent “performance-based” increase per year indefinitely based on certain measures of operational efficiency and service quality standards. Third, for mail that does not cover its costs — which is the case for both In and Outside County Periodicals — an additional 2 percent would be allowed any time they are still “underwater” when rates are increased.

If adopted, the total cumulative increases could be imposing. Assuming CPI stays at 2 percent per year for the next five years, after five years the proposed 2 percent increase would result in a 21.67 percent increase after compounding (more than twice the increase allowable under today’s price cap). Add the separate 1 percent for efficiency and service, and the cumulative increase after five years could be 27.6 percent. Thus, in five years, newspapers that mail Total Market Coverage (TMC) products could see rates that are 27.6 percent higher than today. In contrast, under the current rate cap structure, rates for Total Market Coverage products (4.0 ounces; HD Plus; DDU entry) experienced a cumulative rate decrease of 12.5 percent over the last five years.

For “underwater” products, such as Periodicals, the PRC is proposing even higher rate increases. Again assuming 2 percent annual inflation, Periodicals rates — both for In and Outside County — could rise by more than 40 percent after five years.

If the U.S. Postal Service uses its newfound authority to raise rates in this way, the proposed rate-setting system would be very damaging for newspapers that mail TMCs and newspapers. The Alliance will be weighing in on this proposal in comments that are due on March 1.

(Paul Boyle is the senior vice president of public policy at News Media Alliance. He is also the scheduled keynote speaker for the APA’s SuperConvention in June in Eureka Springs.)
THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2018

1:00 p.m. Registration Desk Opens
1:30 p.m. Welcome, Introduction & Announcements

Session 1:
Don’t be an Average Joe (or Josephine) Part 1

2:15 p.m. Break
2:30 p.m. Session 2:
Don’t be an Average Joe (or Josephine) Part 2

3:15 p.m. Break
3:30 p.m. Session 3:
Developing a Competitive Advantage

6:00 p.m. Reception
Lodge Great Room

7:00 p.m. Group Dinner
River Rock Grill

8:30 p.m. Group Gathering
Lodge Great Room

FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 2018

8:00 a.m. Registration Desk Opens
8:30 a.m. HOT Ideas Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Round Table Discussions
12:00 p.m. 2018 Newspaper Advertising Awards Luncheon

GUEST SPEAKER

Kelly Wirges

For more than 25 years, Kelly has assisted companies increase sales and revenue in all facets of business. In her career, she has enjoyed positions in sales, marketing and management and has been a partner at an advertising agency focusing on small business development. In 1993, she founded ProMax Training & Consulting, Inc. ProMax develops practical, customized solutions that help companies retain, develop and align talent with business strategies.

She has authored more than 50 training programs, has customized materials for hundreds of companies, and has helped over 200,000 ProMax alumni increase their success. Kelly is known for her ability to combine a dynamic presentation and lively interaction with the necessary information and tools to achieve the desired results.

Kelly understands the challenges and opportunities that exist in today’s competitive and complex environment. With this knowledge she prepares and shares practical techniques that can be put-to-work immediately for increased success.

Maintaining partnerships with leading organizations across the country, Kelly has received national notoriety for her program development, interactive and fun workshops and content-rich materials. Kelly’s educational background includes an advertising, marketing and business degree from the University of Nebraska, as well as a graphic design degree from Platt College.
Arkansas Press Association

2018 AD CONFERENCE

Sign Up Today!

Newspaper: __________________________
Mailing Address: __________________________
City/State/Zip: __________________________
Phone: __________________________ Fax: __________________________
Attendee Name: __________________________ Email: __________________________
1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________

Please list any additional names on a separate sheet.

Conference Fee ($125) Includes:
Reception, Thursday Dinner, Breaks, Friday Breakfast, Awards Banquet,
and all Conference Materials.

Total Attendees:
___ x $125 Full Conference Fee $_____
___ x $110 Hotel Room $_____
___ x $40 Awards (Lunch Only) $_____
TOTAL $_____

Payment Options:
_____ Check Enclosed _______ Bill Me
Credit Card # __________________________
Expiration Date _____ VCN# _______

Room 1: Double / King Circle One
Person 1
Person 2

Room 2: Double / King Circle One
Person 1
Person 2

Room 3: Double / King Circle One
Person 1
Person 2

Please list any additional names on a separate sheet.

Register online at http://www.arkansaspress.org/event/2018AdConference
or send registration and payment by Friday, March 9 to:
Arkansas Press Association, 411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 or Fax 501.374.7509.