Engage young readers during Newspapers in Education Week

All APA member newspapers that have Newspapers in Education (NIE) programs should plan activities during NIE week set for March 5-9. This week is a great time to encourage teachers and students to participate in activities that utilize local newspapers in school curriculum.

A good approach is covering various subjects throughout the week using the newspaper, such as:

- **Monday, March 5** – General Newspaper. Use the index to find classified ads, sports, editorials, comics and local news.
- **Tuesday, March 6** – Language Arts. List all punctuation marks used in a news article.
- **Wednesday, March 7** – Math. Count the number of math terms, such as estimate, add or average, in the newspaper.
- **Thursday, March 8** – Social Studies. List all the stories with a location mentioned in the copy. Categorize each as local, state, national or international.
- **Friday, March 9** – Science. Find articles or ads about energy-efficient equipment, such as windows.

“Encouraging local schools to take advantage of the Newspapers in Education program is a community-building opportunity,” said Ashley Wimberley, APA executive director. “Newspapers in Education Week helps our children develop the habit of reading local newspapers, promotes literacy and increases hands-on learning in the classroom.”

APA ad awards to be announced at upcoming conference

The annual APA Better Newspaper Advertising Awards will be presented during the APA Ad Conference on March 15-16 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain near Morrilton.

Featured speaker Kelly Wirges, founder of ProMax Training & Consulting, will share practical techniques that can be put-to-work immediately. She offers concrete ideas on how to set a publication apart in the ever-more-competitive advertising environment.

The Lodge Great Room will be the site for a reception Thursday evening, followed by a group dinner at the River Rock Grill at the Institute. Friday morning there will be a “hot ideas” breakfast with exchanges of newspaper promotion, special section and advertising ideas for newspapers of all sizes.

Registration is open until March 9. To register online, visit [www.arkansaspress.org](http://www.arkansaspress.org). For questions or more information, contact Terri Cobb by email at terri@arkansaspress.org or by phone at (501) 374-1500.

Those registered so far are:
- Julie Allbrifton, Benton
- Jennifer Allen, Hot Springs Village
- Summer Benedict, Hot Springs Village
- LeAnn Brown, Sheridan
- Ed & Lisa Coates, Mountain View
- Brandon Collins, Harrison
- Opal Dennis, Huntsville
- Stephanie Dodson, Hot Springs Village
- Renee Durham, Pine Bluff
- Todd Edwards, Harrison
- Lori Freeze, Mountain View
- Kelly Freudensprung, Benton
- Shannon Hahn, Huntsville
- Teresa Hicks, Pine Bluff
- Amanda Howell, Hot Springs
- Debe Johnson, Hot Springs
- Kevin King, Hot Springs
- Millie McClain, Sheridan
- Bob Moore, Berryville
- Daphne Morton, Mountain View
- Jim Perry, Harrison
- Shantelle Redden, Walnut Ridge
- James Lee Silliman, Camden
- Sue Silliman, Camden
- Pat Stuckey, Benton
- Beth Taylor, Brinkley
- Sheri Underdown, Harrison
- Tom White, Monticello
You be the judge

APA is looking for volunteers to help judge the Louisiana Press Association Better Newspaper Contest. March 16 is the deadline to register as a judge; all entries will be judged online.

Award categories include news, feature and sports writing; advertising; photography; print quality and design. To sign up, register online at www.arkansaspress.org/event/JudgesSignup or contact Terri Cobb at the APA office by email at terri@arkansaspress.org or by phone at (501) 374-1500 to let her know what categories you’d like to judge.

“Judging is a great way to read quality work being produced by other newspapers and to get ideas for your own newspaper,” added Cobb.

Sunshine Week nearing

Make plans to participate in Sunshine Week, set for March 11-17, for a chance to spur discussion on the critical issue of access to public information. This year’s theme is “It’s Your Right to Know.”

Ads like the one displayed and newspaper stories are a good way to participate. Here are a few story ideas:

• Highlight the role FOI plays in reporting and the community. Tell how access to public records helped a story in your newspaper meet community needs.
• Demystify public records by letting your readers know what useful public records they can access.
• Review proposed open government laws or amendments to existing laws.
• Spotlight a local reporter or other person who waged a battle for access to information.

Here are a few ways to get others in the community involved:

• Civic groups can organize local forums, sponsor essay contests and press elected officials to pass proclamations on the importance of transparency.
• Educators can use Sunshine Week to teach your students about how government transparency improves our lives and makes our communities stronger.
• Elected officials can pass a resolution supporting openness, introduce legislation improving public access and encourage training of government employees to ensure compliance with existing laws mandating open records and meetings.
• Citizens can write a letter to the editor or spread the word to friends through social media.

Arkansas is filled with beautiful views...

...but perhaps none is more important than the view inside our government.

Scientists available to answer questions on deadline

There is more science new to cover than ever before, but fewer full-time, dedicated science reporters to write those stories. Rick Weiss, director of SciLine, aims to help by building bridges between journalists and scientists. Reporters can access academics free through www.scline.org.

“Academic scientists and other experts need to step up to the plate and share their knowledge with reporters and the public, and keep the flame of factual evidence alive,” Weiss said.

SciLine, a philanthropically funded, free “matching service” makes scientific experts available to U.S. journalists on deadline or as needed. Hosted by the non-profit American Association for the Advancement of Science, SciLine was created to address the problem of there being more news than ever in the domains of science, health, and the environment, but fewer reporters with the time or resources to cover these increasingly complex beats well.
ANF internship application deadline next week

Four $1,500 internship grants are being offered by the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF). Newspapers applying for the internship grants are required to match the $1,500 from ANF, and selections are made on a first-come, first-served basis. Deadline to apply is next Saturday, March 10.

“Don’t miss the opportunity to host an intern this summer,” said Karen Brown, ANF executive director. “In addition to improving your newspaper today, you will be enriching the hiring pool for Arkansas newspapers in the future.”

Intern applicants must be journalism majors enrolled at an Arkansas college or university. Special consideration is given to newspaper journalism applicants. For more information, contact Karen Brown, ANF executive director, at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com or go to the Foundation tab at the APA website, www.arkansaspress.org.

There is an overly narrow and dangerous proposal working through the U.S. Department of Commerce with a very real potential of making access to your local newspaper and the valuable content more expensive and difficult to gather.

Furthermore, if successful, this could deal a deep and damaging blow to local democracy by placing a severe burden on community newspapers and their readers – the crucial tool many residents use to learn, share and gather trusted local information about their communities.

The commerce department has announced the initiation of “anti-dumping duty and countervailing duty” investigations of Canadian newsprint imports. The sole company seeking protection, North Pacific Paper Company, is owned by a New York-based hedge fund that operates only one mill in Longview, Wash.

The company is pushing for steep import duties in excess of 50 percent, and the petitions do not reflect the views of the paper industry in the United States. In fact, they are opposed by other U.S. producers of newsprint and the American Forest and Paper Association.

If Canadian imports of uncoated ground wood paper are subject to duties, prices in the newsprint market will be shocked and the supply chain could be disrupted, endangering the survival of some smaller community newspapers.

We bring this up for several reasons – first to reveal yet another example of the effectiveness of a narrow lobbying group in Washington. While this one hits close to home for you as a reader of The Daily News, it also underscores a lobbying group representing a very small constituency – in this case one company with a narrow objective to use their regulations or legislation to create an investment advantage for its single client – can broadly and negatively affect a wide range of innocent people or businesses.

This is the danger of unchecked lobbying in Washington.

Secondly, government powers should always strive to do good. Providing and protecting a level playing field while balancing the needs in a market is noble. But for government regulations or legislative activities to be used as a tool to serve the financial interests of a very select special interest group and create a severe competitive advantage is irresponsible and dangerous.

And thirdly, this is an example of your local newspaper bringing to light a proposed action about 1,400 miles away that could change your life if quietly implemented. This is what your local newspaper does – roots out events and issues for its communities.

This is a time of great transition in our nation. Democracy is based on a free-flowing exchange of credible and trustworthy information. Local newspapers are not big media companies with overreaching agendas.

We walk the same streets as you shop in the same grocery stores as you and attend the same houses of worship. We work each day with a goal to earn your trust, provide vetted information and call out the good, the bad and the ugly.

And poll after poll show the public still considers their local newspapers playing an important role in their gathering of local information. The action presented to the commerce department could really change all that for you.

Let’s not allow an overly narrow quest from a New York-based investment firm to put a reckless and greedy wedge into democracy for the sake of a fistful of dollars.