Board elects Nat Lea president of APA

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) board of directors has elected Nat Lea, president of Wehco Media, Inc. in Little Rock, to serve as president next year.

Lea will be installed on Friday, June 24, at the annual SuperConvention to be held this year June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville. He will assume the office at the conclusion of the convention.

The installation will include the traditional “passing of the gavel” by APA past presidents in attendance. This ceremony will take place at the Friday convention luncheon.

Current president Rusty Fraser, publisher of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View, has held the office since the last convention. His term concludes at the closing gavel of the 2016 convention when he will assume the role of immediate past president on the APA board.

Other officers elected for the coming year include Byron Tate, publisher of the Pine Blue Commercial and several other newspapers owned by GateHouse Media, as vice president and David Mosesso, publisher of The Sun in Jonesboro, as second vice president.

Other APA board members include Tom White, publisher of the Advance Monticellonian of Monticello; Jay Edwards, editor-in-chief of The Daily Record, Little Rock; John Bland, publisher of The Times Dispatch, Walnut Ridge; Rusty Turner, editor of the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette; and Ellen Kreth, publisher of the Madison County Record in Huntsville.

Online submissions for APA contest begin

The submission period for the 2016 Arkansas Press Association (APA) Better Newspaper Advertising Contest opened Jan. 1 and will continue through Jan. 31. This year marks the first time APA is conducting this contest—as well as the Editorial Contest later this year—online. The first entries have already been submitted electronically by the Times-Herald in Forrest City.

The APA has now joined over 20 other state press associations currently using the program, ACES (Advanced Contest Entry System) developed by the Illinois Press Association. The contest will also be judged online.

“Using the ACES program will be faster and easier than the old method of submitting tearsheets and hard copies,” said Terri Cobb, APA’s business manager and coordinator for both of the association’s annual contests. The categories and rules will be the same as they were for the 2015 competitions. Newspapers are encouraged to start gathering PDFs of their best advertising, news-editorial content and photos for submission in the 2016 contests.

The Arkansas Press Association has now sent each newspaper its unique user name and password for submitting entries for the 2016 competition. The rules and categories for the Advertising Contest are now available at the APA’s website along with a link to the submission site.

Again, the submission period concludes in just over three weeks on Jan. 31, so APA is encouraging those interested in competing in the 2016 competition. The rules and categories for the Advertising Contest are now available at the APA’s website along with a link to the submission site.

APA recruiting judges for Nebraska contest

This year’s Arkansas Press Association (APA) Contests, both Advertising and News-Editorial, are being judged by members of the Nebraska Press Association (NPA). As part of a reciprocal arrangement between the two associations, APA has committed to judging the Nebraska Press Association Better Newspaper Contest.

APA is now looking for judges for the NPA contest. Approximately 40 judges will be needed, and APA is asking for volunteers to help fulfill its obligation. All judging will be conducted online, so there is no need for travel or any related expense to be incurred. Judging can be conducted from any computer or mobile device, so it could not be more convenient for those who pitch in to help judge.

Categories include advertising, photography, sports, news, editorial and digital. For convenience a sign up sheet for the judging is on page 5 of this issue, but all it takes to volunteer is to call Kathy Edwards at the APA headquarters at 501.374.1500. Those wishing to help out can also email their names and preferred categories to her at kathy@arkansaspress.org.

APA Advertising Conference, Winthrop Rockefeller Institute, Petit Jean
March 13-19
National Sunshine Week 2016
The Arkansas Press Association board of directors met in their annual Fall retreat early in December and dispatched a rather lengthy agenda of items that included electing new officers for the coming year, approving a budget document for the coming year and approving Arkansas Press Association (APA) advertising commission checks for participating newspapers.

Of course, they did much more than this over the two-day gathering, but these were among the highlights.

Congratulations are in order for Nat Lea, who was elected by the APA board to serve as president next year. Actually, his term will begin at the closing gavel of the 2016 SuperConvention, which will be held this year June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

Current APA President Rusty Fraser will continue as president until that time. Other officers elected by the board include Byron Tate as vice president and David Mosesso as second vice president.

Congratulations to each of these and thanks again to all the APA board members who give considerably and generously of their time to help lead the association.

Rusty Turner of Springdale, one of those APA board members, was named by president Rusty Fraser to chair the planning committee for the 2016 SuperConvention at the same fall retreat meeting. This group will help create the outline of the annual convention that will include programming for the convention and outside activities while there. Their first and likely only meeting will be held Thursday, Jan. 21, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

You could help with this, too. If you have suggestions for topics you’d like to see covered at the convention, or if you’ve heard a good speaker that you believe other APA members could benefit from, please pass them along to either Rusty or me. The committee will be looking for all sorts of suggestions.

One of the most popular features of the convention of late is the round table discussions and the panel discussions on varying topics featuring APA members. We’ll likely pursue relevant topics for these forums, and if you have ideas for that please pass them along as well.

We are on a roll for having a string of excellent conventions in succession. That is largely due to contributions of time and ideas from APA members either serving on the committee or just offering suggestions. The goal, of course, is to make the convention programming as relevant, entertaining and fun for APA members as possible. I’m convinced that’s what keeps so many coming back year after year to the conventions.

Another action item mentioned above for the board retreat was the approval of the “commissions” to be paid those APA member newspapers that participate in the ad network programs, namely the Statewide Classified Advertising Network (SCAN) and the Display Advertising Network (DAN).

The total amount approved for the network participating newspapers was $109,995, an amount divided evenly among the participants. That breaks down to about $500 per newspaper per network, so if a newspaper is participating in both networks, it got a check for $1,000. The checks were mailed shortly before Christmas.

The Advertising Networks continue to represent an excellent revenue opportunity for participating APA newspapers, but that only works for the newspapers if they sell into the networks. Otherwise the only benefit is the token “commission” paid at the end of the year.

We recently re-organized the network department at APA and have also re-organized our goals and objectives with the network approach. We’ll be talking about that and how participating APA newspapers can capitalize on the opportunity at upcoming meetings, including the APA Advertising Conference set for March 10-11 at the Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain.

If you’re looking for a way to increase advertising revenue in the New Year, this might be a good place to start.

Sports is seldom a topic raised in this space, but it would be difficult not to at least mention with great pride the Arkansas Razorbacks victory over Kansas State in the Liberty Bowl. They did it with talent and they did it with class, and they represented the state very well.

Not that Kansas State didn’t represent their school and their state well, too, and honestly I was glad to see that. Some of you may recall that my entire family comes from Kansas and many of them still reside there. Some are, yes, Kansas State fans, although there is a great division in the family over allegiance to Kansas vs. Kansas State just as there is in the entire state.

I generally pull for Kansas State, but, of course, not when they’re playing the Razorbacks. My dad played football at Kansas State many, many years ago. Some of the photos from that era are hilarious, wearing as they did the flimsy helmets with no face guards. Dad lost count on how many times he had his nose broken while playing from his defensive tackle position.

It was a different game in those days, to be sure.

I should make it clear that Dad did not graduate from Kansas State. He took a couple of detours along the way. For instance, he took off a couple of years between his junior and senior year in high school and rode freight trains with a buddy out of much of the eastern half of the country. They hopped on a train in Cherryvale, Kan., where Dad grew up, just for a lark one afternoon and next found themselves in Pennsylvania before the train stopped.

One thing led to another, and two years later they rode a freight train back into Cherryvale. Dad graduated from high school there, albeit a couple of years later than he should have.

After taking a couple years off helping the family, Dad enrolled at Kansas State and walked on as a player. Before he could finish that adventure, World War II broke out, and, like a lot of others, Dad’s career path took a huge turn, just like this column just did.

While attending college Dad was a tool and die maker for the Cessna Aircraft Company. It turned out his skills made him a natural fit in Naval aviation where he served out the war working on airplanes.

I mention this only because I know some of you remember my Dad from his newspapering years in Northwest Arkansas, but you may not have known about this part of his life.

So now you know.

Have a great week!

Tom
NNAF offers serialized story to newspapers

The National Newspaper Association Foundation (NNAF) is offering newspapers an opportunity to reach out to young readers again this year with “Window to the Past,” a free 8-chapter serialized story that looks back at the founding of the Girl Scouts in 1912.

This is the eighth year that the NNA Foundation has offered community newspapers the opportunity to take advantage of a free serialized story through the Reading Across the Nation campaign. The goal is to have young readers across the nation reading inside their community newspapers in 2016.

“Window to the Past” is produced by the Missouri Press Foundation. In the story, a young girl named Jenny finds a “Window to the Past” when she discovers a diary in an old attic trunk. The stories in the diary reveal that one of her ancestors was a friend of Girl Scout founder Juliette Gordon Low.

Each chapter in this 8-chapter story includes a newspaper activity. The companion guide is a terrific tool for teachers and may be used by Girl Scout leaders to help meet some Girl Scout badge requirements.

“Window to the Past” is available from January through June, 2016. The story is available at no cost during that time through a special partnership between NNA Foundation and the Missouri Press Foundation.

Newspapers interested in participating in the Reading Across the Nation project and publishing the serialized story, should visit www.moenie.com and use download code: mraed to access the files. When you log in using the download code, you will be provided several files to download, all in PDF form, including:

• Rules for Publication. These offer a few important guidelines, including a reminder that the story itself cannot be published on an unsecured website.
• Promotional ad. This ad is intended for publication in your newspaper prior to the story.

Applications open for Jim Elder scholarship

The Jim Elder Good Sport Fund is offering a $6,000 scholarship for Juniors and Seniors at Arkansas universities majoring in journalism or broadcasting. That definition can expand more broadly to a communications major, depending on the school. Juniors receiving the award will be eligible to continue to receive it as seniors if they take 12 hours and meet the 2.75 grade requirement.

Since the completed application must include transcripts and letters of recommendations, those wishing to apply won't be able to fill out the application online, but will be able to download a copy at jimelder.org. More information about the scholarship is available there as well.

The scholarship board will narrow the field to approximately four finalists, who will meet in a personal interview for the final selection.

The number of winners is flexible, depending on the students applying. Last year three scholarships were awarded — to Keandra Gross and Kirsten Pieri-May from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro and Austin DuVall from the University of Central Arkansas (UCA) in Conway. Mauricio Hernandez from UCA, a 2014 winner, also received his remaining scholarship for his Senior year, and has just received a promotion at KARK/FOX16.
Byron Tate purchases Sheridan Headlight

Byron Tate, publisher of the Pine Bluff Commercial and several other regional newspapers owned by GateHouse Media of Perinton, N.Y., has purchased The Sheridan Headlight. A long-time board member of the Arkansas Press Association (APA) and current vice president-elect, Tate bought the Headlight from a former APA board member, Melody Morehouse. Tate will continue in his multiple roles with GateHouse Media but is purchasing the Headlight privately as a single-owner newspaper.

The sale took effect at the end of December. Current staffing will remain the same with Millie McClain, managing editor; LeAnn Brown, advertising manager/creative director; Rob Patrick, sports editor, David Jeffery, news reporter, and Katherine Webb, business manager.

Established in 1881, The Sheridan Headlight remains one of the relatively few newspapers in Arkansas that is independently owned.

Rhabdomancy

n noun
1. divination by means of a rod or wand, especially in discovering ores, springs of water, etc.

Source: Dictionary.com

“A day without sunshine is like, you know, night.” — Steve Martin

A few words about buying signals

BY JOHN FOUST, RALEIGH, N.C.

In my senior year of high school, I met the new girl in town on the first day of school. Louisville, Kentucky seemed like a world away from Greensboro, North Carolina, where I had spent all of my life to that point. And I was intrigued by the girl whose family had just moved from that exotic place.

We chatted several times between classes. Although her favorite topic was her boyfriend in Louisville, my teenage brain missed the significance of that information, because Louisville seemed a million miles away. After turning me down a number of times, she finally agreed to go to a movie. As we walked to the theater, she stopped in front of a wedding shop, and “oohed” and “aahed” over the wedding gowns in the window, saying she was looking forward to marrying her boyfriend.

That’s when I realized I didn’t have a chance. She couldn’t have been more obvious if she had said, “John, here’s a clue you can’t miss. I’m not interested in you. In fact, I’m planning to elope tomorrow.”

Things turned out for the best. I don’t know if she ended up marrying the boyfriend back in Louisville, but I eventually met the real woman of my dreams, to whom I am happily married.

Buying signals. If we pay attention, they will show us where we stand in the selling process. There are negative signals, like unmistakable “no” of the Wedding Shop Incident. And there are positive signals. Some are more definite than others. Let’s take a closer look:

1. Non-verbal signals. Your prospect may be prepared to move to the next step in the sales process if he or she...
   • Nods frequently, agreeing with the points you are making.
   • Leans forward with an increasingly pleasant expression.
   • Holds his or her pen near the advertising agreement, as if ready to sign.
   • Smiles while re-examining your sales materials, especially any suggested ads you are presenting.
   • Maintains good eye contact, and is not distracted by a cell phone, email, or non-related items on the desk.
   • Takes possession of the ads you are presenting, by positioning them on his or her side of the desk.
   • Calls for an associate to step into the room to hear your ideas.

2. Verbal signals. A number of prospects won’t say, “I’m sold. Where do I sign?” But they will say other things that show they’re ready to make a commitment. Be ready to move quickly, if he or she...
   • Asks about the agreement.
   • Asks when the ad campaign can start.
   • Asks about your billing procedures.
   • Requests clarification of earlier sales point. For instance, “Tell me again how you can reach my target audience.”
   • Requests a change in the ad copy you are presenting.
   • Indicates a willingness to close, by asking, “What’s the next step?”
   • Stops referring to THE ads and starts referring to MY ads. This is one of the strongest buying signals of all, because it shows that he or she already owns what you are selling.

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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.

REMINDERS AND RESOURCES

• Better Newspaper Advertising Contest. The submission period for the annual advertising competitions held by the Arkansas Press Association is now under way. For more information see the “Spotlight” section of the association’s website: www.arkansaspress.org.

• Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.

• Gov’t/Legal Resources: Members are reminded to take advantage of APA’s online resources for newspapers, including statutes governing publication of notices and tax delinquency lists, state and federal advertising regulations, etc.

Arkansas Publisher Weekly 4 January 7, 2016
We Need JUDGES

Help judge the Nebraska Press Better Newspaper Contest
All Judging is Online
February 2016

Categories Include:
News, Photography, Feature Story, Columns, Sports, Editorials & Advertising

Nebraska Press Better Newspapers - Judging Sign-Up

Newspaper/Company ______________________________ City _____________________

Phone ( ___ )____________________________ Fax ( ___ ) ___________________________

Name(s) Email Address Category Preference
1. ___________________________________________________________________________
2. ___________________________________________________________________________
3. ___________________________________________________________________________
4. ___________________________________________________________________________
5. ___________________________________________________________________________

Authorized by ______________________________ Title ___________________________

New FOI Handbooks are now available

The 17th Edition of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Handbook is now available from the Arkansas Press Association (APA) and the Office of the Arkansas Attorney General. A partial shipment of 24,000 books arrived at APA’s headquarters on Dec. 30, and the bulk of them were delivered to the Attorney General (AG) last week. The volume of the printing is gauged to provide enough copies for the Handbook for use by public officials, the media and average citizens who want to be involved in the government institutions they fund.

An electronic version of the publication, searchable by keyword is available at the APA’s website (www.arkansaspress.org/?page=foihandbook) and the Attorney General’s website (http://arkansasag.gov/media-center/foia/). The new edition incorporates updates reflecting actions taken during the 2015 General Assembly.

The Handbook is sponsored by the APA, AG, Arkansas Governor’s Office, Arkansas Broadcasters Association, Society of Professional Journalists and the Associated Press.

Jan. 31 is deadline for entering Ad Contest

The submission period for the 2016 Arkansas Press Association (APA) Better Newspaper Advertising Contest opened Jan. 1 and will continue through Jan. 31 (just over two weeks from now). This year marks the first time APA is conducting this contest—as well as the Editorial Contest later this year—online. The Times-Herald in Forrest City was the first newspaper to submit entries.

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Categories include advertising, photography, sports, news, editorial and digital. For convenience a sign up sheet for the judging is on page 5 of this issue, but all it takes to volunteer is to call Kathy Edwards at the APA headquarters at 501.374.1500. Those wishing to help out can also email their names and preferred categories to her at kathy@arkansaspress.org.
A quick look at the calendar reveals that “Black Friday” [otherwise known as “Friday the 13th”] fell on Wednesday this month.

That same quick scan of the handy calendar strip for 2016 strategically placed at the base of my keyboard reveals that the only “Black Friday” this year will be in May. If you’ve been planning on a Friday the 13th promotion, this is the only shot you’ll have this year.

This is, of course, a Leap Year meaning that we will have a Feb. 29 next month. It falls on a Monday and presents yet another great opportunity for a newspaper promotion. These opportunities don’t come along very often, every four years in fact, so if you miss this chance you’ll be waiting a while for the next one.

The story I relate regarding Leap Day promotions took place shortly after I took over a publisher of the Nevada (Mo.) Daily Mail in 1992, another leap year. That year Leap Day fell on a Saturday, and in those days our offices were open on Saturday morning. I’m not sure why, but we had always been open on Saturday morning, so we just kept on being open on Saturday morning.

Actually, we stopped the Saturday openings shortly after the Leap Day promotion.

Anyway, we thought since Leap Day fell on a Saturday and since we were open Saturday morning we would run a subscription special of 29 percent off a one-year subscription only on Leap Day. You could only get this special by purchasing it in person at the office Saturday morning, Feb. 29.

As luck would have it I had to make a quick trip back to Northwest Arkansas that weekend, but I called the office around noon on Saturday to see how it had gone. The two receptionists on duty reported that the line of people was out the door and down the street and around the corner. People were lining up to get this bargain, and they had been since the office opened at 9 a.m. It took until after 1 p.m. to get to everyone desiring to get in on this bargain.

As you can imagine our circulation took a nice jump. While many of those taking advantage of the offer were renewals, several were new subscriptions. Heck, for 29 percent off, almost one-third the regular rate, why not?

We did this promotion again in 1996, and while the results were not quite so dramatic they were still significant. I left there in late 1996, and I don’t know if they continue the special, but it sure worked well for a time.

April Fools Day falls on a Friday this year, an ideal spot for a promotion around the first day of April. There’s some fun to be had with this one, and an opportunity to generate some extra revenue, which, of course, is always appropriate.

June 15 of this year will mark the 180th birthday of the State of Arkansas. Entering the Union in 1836 with sister state, Michigan, the state was in, then out and then in again during the Civil War/Reconstruction era, but the June 15, 1836 date is still observed as the official birthday of the state.

There should be some great historically-themed promotions around this milestone.

This New Year, like so many others, presents a lot of opportunities for us in the newspaper business. The time to be planning for capitalizing on those opportunities is now.

Good luck in the New Year.

Speaking of planning, the planning committee for the 2016 APA SuperConvention will convene Thursday, Jan. 21, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville, site for the 2016 gathering.

The committee, chaired by Arkansas Press Association (APA) board member Rusty Turner of Springdale, will be finalizing a draft of the convention programming. Already on the rough draft is an outing to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Alice Walton’s amazing display of art in several mediums.

The Crystal Bridges building alone is a work of art. If you haven’t had an opportunity to visit the Arkansas gem that attracts visitors from across the country and from around the world, you’ll want to make it a point to share this experience with you APA friends and colleagues. It will be a great affair.

Also already locked up for an appearance and presentation at the SuperConvention is Penelope “Penny” Muse Abernathy, author of the book Saving Community Journalism: The Path to Profitability. This book, described by some as the best book ever written on journalism, is well worth the read if you haven’t already. I guarantee you anyone in the newspaper business will be able to identify with the book and to perhaps gain some insights into your own business. It is an extraordinary work.

Penny is presently the Knight Chair in Journalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She was formerly an executive with the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times.

These are but a couple of the highlights of the June 22-25 APA SuperConvention, but these alone should be enough to generate some excitement about attending. Mark your calendar now and make plans to attend.

Before the SuperConvention, however, APA will be returning to the Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain March 10-11 for its annual Advertising Conference.

The featured presenter for the conference this year is Mike Centorani, who does sales training and sales management consulting from traditional media throughout the U.S.

Also at the Ad Conference we’ll be rolling out the re-organization of the APA Advertising Networks with an explanation of what that means for APA newspapers that participate in the networks. What it could mean is an opportunity for additional revenue as several network participants have discovered in recent years.

In addition to this, we will also present the annual Advertising Awards, marking the first time the ad contest has been submitted and judged online.

This combination should make for another excellent APA advertising conference, and another event you really won’t want to miss.

Have a great week!

Tom
ANF and AT&T announce contest winner

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), local newspapers and AT&T Arkansas sponsored and challenged Arkansas students, ages 14-19, across the state to write an editorial or opinion column highlighting the dangers of texting while driving and encourage their peers to take the “It Can Wait” pledge. This year’s winner was Kaitlyn Miller, a 10th grader at Union Christian Academy in Fort Smith, Ark.

“We had a very good response to our first ‘It Can Wait’ editorial/opinion writing contest,” said Karen Brown, executive director of the ANF, the non-profit educational arm of the Arkansas Press Association (APA). “Students did a wonderful job with the contest assignment and teachers should be praised for encouraging their participation. For instance, Kaitlyn’s teacher, Cathy Smith, presented the contest information to her class as a real-life writing assignment.”

Melinda Faubel, director—external affairs at AT&T, was instrumental in the success of this program and was pleased with the turnout. AT&T sponsored the prize of $500 for the first place winner, along with a luncheon at The Little Rock Club for her and her parents, Jason and Amanda Miller. In addition, Miller was treated to a guided tour of the Arkansas State Capitol, the Arkansas Newspaper Museum and a private visit with Governor Asa Hutchinson.

Texting while driving is a serious problem. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that in 2012, driver distraction was the cause of 18 percent of all fatal crashes—with 3,328 people killed —and crashes resulting in an injury with 421,000 people hurt. Despite knowing the risks of texting while driving, 43 percent of teens admit to texting while driving. However, there is an opportunity to change this behavior. Ninety percent of teen drivers say they would stop if a friend in the car asked them and 78 percent say that they are likely not to text and drive if friends tell them it is wrong.

PNRC accepting entries for 2015 award

The Public Notices Resource Center (PNRC) is now accepting Entries for the 2015 Public Notice Journalism Award.

State press associations are urged to begin reviewing their Better Newspaper Contest entries and other qualifying articles for nominations for the 2015 Public Notice Journalism Award. Stories from 2014 or 2015 are eligible, though editorials are not. Entries should be news or feature stories that highlight the importance of public notices in newspapers. Judges will give positive weight to the use or linking of the public notice involved when there was one to the core story. The award is sponsored by the PNRC, a national organization devoted to keeping public notices in newspapers and preserving citizens’ right to know.

Entries may be any time before Feb. 1 to carolpierce@americanpressworks.com.

The award—including a $700 prize—will be presented in Washington, D.C., on March 17, 2016.
Mass communications law book now on sale

Bruce Plopper, a long time member of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Coalition and tireless advocate for open government laws, stopped by the Arkansas Press Association (APA) headquarters yesterday with copies of the Ninth Edition of Mass Communication Law in Arkansas. He was providing free copies to Tom Larimer, executive director of the APA, and Tres Williams, communications director and lobbyist. Williams gratefully accepted the books.

The book is authored by Plopper, holder of a Ph.D. in journalism from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale and professor emeritus at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and Stephen D. Ralph, J.D., a Conway-based attorney who teaches media law and ethics at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. Mass Communication Law in Arkansas has been hailed as an essential resource for working journalists.

The Ninth Edition may be purchased at a number of online booksellers including Amazon.

Ten things I’d tell publishers

BY ED HENNINGER

Some time back, I was asked to give a quick after-lunch talk to a group of publishers at a statewide newspaper convention.

It was short notice. I only had a half-hour to put together some thoughts. I decided I’d seize the opportunity and give them my “Top Ten” list of ideas for community newspapers.

Here they are:

1. **Print is not dead.** More new community newspapers are starting up. Advertisers believe in the value of print. Readers still want print. So, please, let’s stop with the “newspapers are dying” garbage! It’s just not true.

2. **Local, local, local.** We all know the mantra. Metro and regional newspapers have tried time and again to go “local.” They can’t. They don’t have (or won’t commit to) the resources it takes—in people, energy and time—to do community journalism. But we can. And we prove that in every issue. We are focused on local people, places and events. It’s what we do…and we do it very well.

3. **Sports is big.** We often struggle to find ways to get younger readers. To my mind, the answer here is simple—and most of you are already doing a good job with it: Sports. Your sports coverage is about kids. It’s about them, their friends, their classmates. Boost your sports coverage and you’ll boost your number of younger readers. Yes, there are other events, like scouting, classroom achievement, choir, band and the like. But sports is big. Give it big coverage.

4. **It’s OK to be a booster.** Nothing disappoints me (and readers, too, I think) more than to see a newspaper in a town where a team has just won a district or state championship and the story and photos are….splashed all over the sports front. It’s disappointing because those stories and those photos should be on the front page. Most of your readers will be happy to see a page 1 poster of the winning basket or the winning touchdown. Sports is about striving and achievement and dedication and teamwork. What’s wrong with celebrating those qualities. And, yes, on your front page when the achievement is big.

5. **Build revenue.** The metros think they have the answer to satisfying their corporate owners and stockholders: cut costs. They’re into hubs and outsourcing and layoffs. At community newspapers, we’re already thin. But we’re also aggressive when it comes to generating new revenue. Let’s keep searching for new approaches, like selling ad position and selling our photos online and creating more options for advertisers. This takes some rethinking on our part but that’s what got us here.

6. **Invest in your product.** If your editor and/or writers need some training, look for ways to get that for them. Your state press association is always a good resource. If you’ve just invested in some new software, give those who will use it some training so they can make the best use of it. If your ad staff has won some awards in the annual press association contest, reward them by sending them to the state convention so they’ll know how much you appreciate their work.

7. **Invest in your product.** You don’t need to be the first to buy that new Mac, but don’t be the last. You don’t need to be the first to upgrade your system software, but keep it at least reasonably up to date. Your newspaper is your business. It’s just sound business practice to make sure you have the tools you need to get the job done.

8. **Design matters.** What’s the first thing your readers and advertisers see when they look at your newspaper? Right: its design. If your design is outdated, if your text makes your paper difficult to read, if your content placement is inconsistent…your newspaper is less than it can be. And readers and advertisers will find it wanting. Some may choose not to read, some may choose not to advertise…until you fix those problems.

9. **Be the best** at who you are. You’re not a metro or a regional newspaper. Most of you don’t carry wire, but you do carry those obits and events listings and city and county council meetings that are important to your readers. Most get only limited national advertising, but you are the only source of advertising for that shoe shop down the street. Don’t try to be what you’re not—but do everything you can to be the best at what you do. Your newspaper is part of the lifeblood of your community. Keeping that in mind will drive you to do your best.

10. **Remember who the boss is.** Sorry…you may be the publisher, but you’re not in charge here. Your readers and advertisers are the real boss. It’s your obligation as a publisher to bring them your best—in every issue.

Ed Henninger is an independent newspaper consultant and the Director of Henninger Consulting. Phone: 803.327.3322; email: ed@henningerconsulting.com

weekly WORD

cineaste (cinéaste)

/ SÎN-ee-ast, SÎN-ey-

noun
1. any person, especially a director or producer, associated professionally with filmmaking.
2. an aficionado of filmmaking.

Source: Dictionary.com

“There are two types of people in this world. People who hate clowns...and clowns.”

— D.J. MacHale
We Need JUDGES

Help judge the Nebraska Press Better Newspaper Contest
All Judging is Online
February 2016

Categories Include:
News, Photography, Feature Story, Columns, Sports, Editorials & Advertising

Nebraska Press Better Newspapers - Judging Sign-Up

Newspaper/Company ________________________________ City _____________________

Phone ( ___ ) ______________________________ Fax ( ___ ) _________________________

Name(s) Email Address Category Preference
1. ____________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________
5. ____________________________________________

Authorized by ________________________________ Title ___________________________

FOI Handbook, 17th Edition now available

Last week Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge and the Arkansas Press Association (APA) jointly announced the release of the 17th Edition of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Handbook. A partial shipment of 24,000 books arrived at APA’s headquarters on Dec. 30, and the bulk of them were delivered to the Attorney General (AG) on Jan 6. The volume of the printing is gauged to provide enough copies for the Handbook for use by public officials, the media and average citizens who want to be involved in the government institutions they fund.

An electronic version of the publication, searchable by keyword is available at the APA’s website (http://arkansaspress.org/?page=foihandbook) and the Attorney General’s website (http://arkansasag.gov/media-center/foia/). The new edition incorporates updates reflecting actions taken during the 2015 General Assembly.


Jan. 31 is deadline for entering Ad Contest

The submission period for the 2016 Arkansas Press Association (APA) Better Newspaper Advertising Contest opened Jan. 1 and will continue through Jan. 31 at the end of next week. This year marks the first time APA is conducting this contest—as well as the Editorial Contest later this year—online.

The APA has now joined over 20 other state press associations currently using the program, ACES (Advanced Contest Entry System) developed by the Illinois Press Association. The contest will also be judged online.

The Arkansas Press Association has sent each newspaper its unique user name and password for submitting entries for the 2016 competition. The rules and categories for the Advertising Contest are now available at the APA’s website along with a link to the submission site.

Again, the submission period is rapidly coming to a close, so APA is encouraging those interested in competing in this year’s contest to make their online submissions as soon as possible. Entries will be judged by the Nebraska Press Association, and winners announced during the 2016 Advertising Conference on March 11th at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute.

The APA’s other major contest, the 2016 Editorial Contest, will open March 1 with a submission deadline of March 31. The winners will be announced at the Awards Luncheon on June 25 during the 2016 APA SuperConvention.

“This change is a significant shift from the traditional ‘hard copy’ submissions we have used for years,” said Tom Larimer, executive director of the APA, speaking of both contests. “However, I am convinced that the new system will be a welcome upgrade for both contest entrants and judges.”

APA needs judges, offers incentives

This year’s Arkansas Press Association (APA) Contests, both Advertising and Editorial, are being judged by members of the Nebraska Press Association (NPA). As part of a reciprocal arrangement between the two associations, APA has committed to judging the Nebraska Press Association Better Newspaper Contest.

APA is now looking for judges for the NPA contest and to date does not have enough volunteers. Approximately 40 judges will be needed, and APA is asking members to help fulfill its obligation. As an incentive for volunteers, the first five newspapers to send in four judges’ names will receive a $20 Subway Gift Card.

All judging will be conducted online, so there is no need for travel or any related expense to be incurred. Judging can be conducted from any computer or mobile device, so it could not be more convenient for those who pitch in to help judge.

Categories include advertising, photography, sports, news, editorial and digital. For convenience a sign up sheet for the judging is on page 5 of this issue, but all it takes to volunteer is to contact Kathy Edwards at the APA headquarters at 501.374.1500. Those wishing to help out can also email their names and preferred categories to her at kathy@arkansaspress.org.
Tom Larimer’s

Potpourri

If all goes well, and by that I mean if the weather cooperates allowing safe travel conditions, the 2016 Arkansas Press Association (APA) SuperConvention Planning Committee will convene today at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville. This is the site for the annual convention June 22-25, and what is stacking up to be one of the best ever.

We’ll know more about exactly what we’re going to be doing after the committee meets and makes some decision on convention programming. We already have some top presenters lined up, and by that I mean speakers who will have relevant information for APA member newspapers and their staff.

I don’t want to completely spill the beans on the lineup, but I will give you a sampling. Penelope Muse “Penny” Abernathy, author of Saving Community Journalism: The Path to Profitability has already committed to join us in Bentonville.

If you haven’t read this book, I highly recommend it. Regardless of the size of your newspaper, you will find a lot of references and information highly pertinent and relevant to your situation. Some have described Abernathy’s book as “the best book ever written on newspapers.” The book takes an insightful look into the transformational stage in which newspapers find themselves, and provides through research, interviews and analysis pathways to long-term profitability for newspapers.

Abernathy fills the Knight Chair in Journalism and Digital Media Economics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She was formerly an executive with the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times.

Once the planning committee has signed off on the balance of the programming for the convention, we’ll pass that along so you can see for yourself that this summer’s meeting will be one you won’t want to miss.

One other activity that I will mention is the Thursday evening outing to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the museum built by Alice Walton to showcase her extensive art collection. The building alone is a work of art. You may recall that the APA presented Ms. Walton the “Headliner of the Year Award” in 2012 after she opened the museum to great international fanfare and acclaim.

Since its opening admission to the museum has remained free to the public, and each year it attracts visitors virtually from all over the world to Bentonville. It is truly a world-class facility. If you haven’t had a chance to see it, this would be a great opportunity to do just that. From someone who has seen the Crystal Bridges Museum, it exceeds all expectations.

We’ll have a reception there and an opportunity to tour the museum. This should be yet another highlight of this convention, one that is figuring to be one with several such highlights all combining to make this a convention not to be missed.

The winter weather in the forecast this week in Northwest Arkansas (NWA) may be the only sticking point for this very important committee meeting. Flurries in the forecast for parts of NWA Monday turned out to be measurable snow in several areas of that part of the state. More is forecast for later in the week.

Be watching The Arkansas Publisher Weekly for more information on the convention, especially if this committee meeting takes place.

Before we get to the convention this year, we’ll have yet another annual APA advertising conference to be held again this year at the Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain March 10-11.

We’ve been to this facility for this meeting for the past few years, and we return at the request of those attending. It seems to be a popular spot for those seeking to glean more information on what they do, and to learn ways in which to do it better. If you’ve ever been to the Rockefeller Institute you can readily understand why so many would prefer it for such a meeting.

The meeting facilities are first rate as are the sleeping quarters. And, of course, the meals are excellent. They do, after all, have a culinary school on the premises.

The facility sits on the grounds of Winrock Farms established by the late Winthrop Rockefeller in 1953. Rockefeller would later become the first Republican governor since reconstruction.

The University of Arkansas operates the Institute. The facility is still a working farm. Several head of the Santa Gertrudis cattle, the favored breed of the late owner, are still in evidence on the Institute grounds.

Mike Centorani will be the featured presenter at this year’s advertising conference. Mike is known for his “real world” approach to the sales call process and his ability to teach sales reps “how to speak to small business owner’s language” and to make the right sale based on the customer’s needs.

We will also have a panel discussion at the Ad Conference, along with a presentation of the APA Advertising Networks, highlighting the great opportunity the networks present to participating APA newspapers.

The networks represent potential for a significant revenue stream for newspapers. APA network specialists will break it all down for those attending the ad conference, and explain how easy it is to capture this vital revenue for newspapers.

And, of course, we will be presenting the annual APA Better Newspaper Advertising Contest Awards at the ad conference. That will take place at the luncheon on Friday.

For the first time this year, the APA contests will be submitted and judged in a digital environment. Instead of submitting hard copy tear sheets of ad or editorial entries, the entries will be submitted as pdf files or some other digital file compatible with the new contest software.

It is very user friendly and the judging of the contests become much more manageable utilizing the new contest software purchased by APA for this purpose.

Take a moment now to mark your calendar for the March 10-11 APA Advertising Conference and for the June 22-25 SuperConvention. These two events promise to be very helpful and memorable stops on your 2016 travels.

Have a great week!

Tom
James K. Joslin

James K. Joslin, 46, of Stuttgart died Jan. 18 in a hunting-related accident in rural Arkansas County. Joslin was editor of the Tri-Lakes, Three Rivers and River Valley & Ozark zoned editions of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette headquartered in Little Rock. An Arkansas native and graduate of Arkansas Tech University in Russellville, Joslin worked at newspapers in England, Stuttgart, Russellville and Pine Bluff before joining the Democrat-Gazette. He was a page designer for the newspaper from 2007-09. He joined the zoned editions editorial staff in 2011 and was promoted to niche publications editor in 2012.

—30—

postal notes:
newspapers get ‘warnings’ of future penalties

by max heath, national newspaper association postal chair

Newspapers across the country that have converted to electronic documentation and then Full-Service Intelligent Mail barcoding (IMb) are reporting confusion over U.S. Postal Service (USPS) warnings of penalties in effect starting July 1, 2016, for being out of compliance with a multitude of internal measurements for providing Full-Service status.

Although intended to be helpful, many of the complicated requirements are not always understood by operators of newspaper software and require detailed help and analysis from their presort circulation software providers. And because so many newspapers rely on their printers to provide those presort mail service, operators can be further removed from any involvement with what is actually happening, and understandably so.

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) is holding a seminar for mailers March 16 in conjunction with its Community Newspaper Leadership Summit in Washington, with a half-day session at USPS headquarters that is geared just for third-party printers and mailers. Please consider attending if you are a provider, or encourage your provider to attend with a copy of this column or other promotional material that can be found in this issue.

With the help of Brad Hill, NNA’s electronic expert on the USPS Mailers Technical Advisory Committee and president of Interlink Software, we will try to explain some of whys and wherefores of the warnings.

Three points to be aware of for background:

1. The penalty involved is miniscule if a mailer fails to be in compliance, consisting of the loss of the one-tenth of 1-cent additional piece discount available to Periodicals mailers using Full-Service IMb.

2. Moving to Full-Service IMb is optional, not mandatory, thanks to the work of NNA in filing comments and the agreement of the Postal Regulatory Commission that mandatory imposition would be considered a price increase. USPS declined to make it mandatory under those circumstances.

3. NNA has encouraged its use so long as not mandatory because it can lead to free electronic Address Change Service notices and provide improved tracking and “visibility” of newspapers within the mail processing network. That is still our position, despite the frustration caused by the so-called “warning” e-mails.

What is happening now

PostalOne! database operatives, mostly contractors that work for the Postal Service, are producing reports on a variety of the myriad software requirements for Full-Service IMb mailers. These go from headquarters to the various USPS district offices for Business Mail Entry (BME). Then top-level BME staff members are contacting newspapers with word of errors that, if not corrected, could lead to “penalties” starting July 1. (Note: The deadline had been April 1, but was moved forward three months. Depending on mailer feedback, deadlines often are pushed forward.)

Community newspaper circulation managers or clerks are uncertain how to respond to these error notices because they involve technical details many of them are unaware of. And that’s mostly as it should be. Operators should not necessarily have to know all these intricacies, which are highly technical.

By/For error report:

There is much confusion about a requirement for proper By/For information in the reports analyzed as part of the Business Mailer Scorecard within PostalOne!. This information exists in situations where commercial printing plants mail newspapers for another party. The “By” is the mailing agent, and the “For” is the Periodical, or “mail owner.”

Trouble is that a large number of newspapers, probably still a majority, mail their own newspapers. Therefore, the “By/For” has to be identical. But PostalOne! kicks it back, because it does not believe the By and the For can be the same entity. So the kickback shows up as a major error (7140) in the Scorecard. However, mailings of fewer than 5,000 copies are to be exempt, which covers a lot of community newspapers. Unfortunately, that exemption is not automatically applied to all mailings as it should. This is a problem that comes from

—continued on page 4
Webb joins Paragould paper as sales mgr.

Ashley Webb, has been named sales manager for the Paragould Daily Press. She had previously accumulated 12 years of sales experience with The Sun in Jonesboro. Born and raised in Tuckerman, Webb is a 1998 graduate of Arkansas State University — Newport.

Promote your staff, your newspaper:

APA encourages members to send news of staff changes or other happenings and associated photos for inclusion in this publication to:

Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspres.org).

Newspapers get ‘warnings’

—continued from page 3

USPS designing its software to fit the large direct mail and commercial printing industry, rather than us. We are working on it.

Today there are two ways to eliminate this error. An account can be flagged as a mail owner by PostalOne! Help Desk or district BME staff, causing this check to be bypassed. The other option is to configure postal software to identify only the By in eDoc, omitting the mail owner. PostalOne! allows this, but only for mailings of less than 5,000 copies.

Non-Identical barcode report

USPS requires Full-Service IMb users to ensure no individual mailpiece barcode is reused within 45 days of mailing. Technical failure in this regard also results in an error report that disqualifies the mailing for Full-Service discounts. One tip that should help: If a newspaper serves as a central software hub for multiple titles, as in some regional groups, it should be sure to have separate MIDs (Mailer IDs) and CRIDs (Customer Registration IDs) for each publication. Then the individual piece will look different for each of the customer publications.

© Max Heath 2016

Max Heath, National Newspaper Association (NNA) Postal Chair, is a postal consultant for Athlon Media Group (Parade, American Profile, Relish, Spry Living, TV Times and Athlon Sports magazines) and Landmark Community Newspapers LLC. E-mail maxheath@jcni.com.

PNRC accepting entries for 2015 award

The Public Notices Resource Center (PNRC) is now accepting Entries for the 2015 Public Notice Journalism Award.

State press associations are urged to begin reviewing their Better Newspaper Contest entries and other qualifying articles for nominees for the 2015 Public Notice Journalism Award. Stories from 2014 or 2015 are eligible, though editorials are not. Entries should be news or feature stories that highlight the importance of public notices in newspapers. Judges will give positive weight to the use or linking of the public notice involved when there was one to the core story. The award is sponsored by the PNRC, a national organization devoted to keeping public notices in newspapers and preserving citizens’ right to know.

Entries may be any time before Feb. 1 to carolpierce@americanpressworks.com.

The award—including a $700 prize—will be presented in Washington, D.C., on March 17, 2016.

Serialized story available to newspapers

The National Newspaper Association Foundation (NNAF) is offering newspapers an opportunity to reach out to young readers again this year with “Window to the Past,” a free 8-chapter serialized story that looks back at the founding of the Girl Scouts in 1912.

“Window to the Past” is produced by the Missouri Press Foundation. In the story, a young girl named Jenny finds a “Window to the Past” when she discovers a diary in an old attic trunk. The stories in the diary reveal that one of her ancestors was a friend of Girl Scout founder Juliette Gordon Low.

Each chapter in this 8-chapter story includes a newspaper activity. The companion guide is a terrific tool for teachers and may be used by Girl Scout leaders to help meet some Girl Scout badge requirements.

“Window to the Past” is available from January through June, 2016. The story is available at no cost during that time through a special partnership between NNA Foundation and the Missouri Press Foundation. Newspapers interested in participating in the Reading Across the Nation project should visit www.mo-nie.com and use download code: nnaedere to access the files. There will find several files to download, all in PDF form, including rules for publication, a promotional ad, an educational guide for teachers and eight individual story files, one per chapter, ready to publish.

“Before you publish the story, notify your schools and offer to deliver copies of your newspaper for classrooms — if you don’t already. Find a local sponsor to help provide classroom copies and to cover the value of the space in your newspaper to publish the feature,” suggested Doug Crews, executive director of the Missouri Press Association.

“Window to the Past” was written and illustrated by longtime Girl Scout volunteer Kanetra Kopp of Odessa, Mo. Newspapers needing assistance with planning, promoting or publishing “Window to the Past,” should contact Dawn Kitchell, NNA’s Newspaper In Education liaison, at 636.932. 4301 or dawn.kitchell@gmail.com.

Weekly WORD

onomatopoeia

\on-uh-mat-uh-PEE-uh, -mah-tuh-\ noun

1. the formation of a word, as cuckoo, meow, honk, buzz or boom, by imitation of a sound made by or associated with its referent.

2. a word so formed.

3. the use of imitative and naturally suggestive words for rhetorical, dramatic, or poetic effect.

Source: Dictionary.com

“My doctor told me to stop having intimate dinners for four. Unless there are three other people.”

— Orson Welles
We Need JUDGES

Help judge the Nebraska Press Better Newspaper Contest
All Judging is Online
February 2016

Categories Include:
News, Photography, Feature Story, Columns,
Sports, Editorials & Advertising

Nebraska Press Better Newspapers - Judging Sign-Up

Newspaper/Company ________________________________ City ________________

Phone ( ___ )____________________________ Fax ( ___ ) ___________________________

Name(s) Email Address Category Preference
1. ___________________________________________________________________________
2. ___________________________________________________________________________
3. ___________________________________________________________________________
4. ___________________________________________________________________________
5. ___________________________________________________________________________

Authorized by ________________________________ Title ___________________________

APA needs judges, offers incentives

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APA issues final reminder for Ad Contest

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The APA has now joined over 20 other state press associations currently using the program, ACES (Advanced Contest Entry System) developed by the Illinois Press Association. The contest will also be judged online.

The Arkansas Press Association has sent each newspaper its unique user name and password for submitting entries for the 2016 competition. The rules and categories for the Advertising Contest are now available at the APA’s website along with a link to the submission site: www.newspapercontest.com/Contents/ArkansasPressAssociation.aspx.

Those needing a user name and password should call or email Kathy Edwards (501.374.1500; email: kathy@arkansaspress.org). Contestants are reminded to be sure their entries are full-page PDFs and not just a PDF of the advertisement being entered. The newspaper name and run date should be visible.

After a newspaper representative has finished submitting entries, he or she will have the option to pay the entry fee with Paypal or a credit card. Those not choosing that option may forward a check to APA for the total entry fee.

important dates

Sunday, Jan. 31
Deadline for entering APA’s 2016 Advertising Contest

Tuesday, March 1
Online submission period for APA’s 2016 News-Editorial contest opens
The 2016 SuperConvention Planning Committee met Thursday at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville, the headquarters for the summer reunion…or…-convention.

This actually came up in the conversation shortly after the meeting. The Arkansas Press Association (APA) conventions are and always have been a reunion of sorts. You see people at the convention that perhaps you only see at conventions, but it’s great seeing them again and renewing friendships, and acquaintances.

The “reunion” aspect has always been an element of the conventions. Although it’s less so now perhaps than it once was, it is still very evident. There is definitely a “family” element in the newspaper business in Arkansas. The same could likely be said for other states, too, but APA has been fortunate to retain a group that has been loyal in attending its conventions for years. For many, they just wouldn’t miss it.

We’ll venture to Bentonville for this year’s renewal of the APA SuperConvention series. It will take place June 22-25. The site is in the extreme northwest corner of the state, likely the farthest into the corner we’ve gone for a convention since the last one in Helena many years ago. In Bentonville, you’re not that far from Missouri or Oklahoma.

The convention committee, chaired by APA board member Rusty Turner, came up with an excellent lineup of sessions and activities that will easily make the trip to the northwest corner of the state worthwhile. Other members of the committee included Annette Beard, Karen Brown, Hector Cueva, Kent Marts, Matt Shelnutt and Tom Stallbaumer.

Together this group came up with some great ideas for fun, entertaining and education activities for those attending the convention. There will be a full accounting of these events when the schedule is nailed down, but for now suffice it to say that it is going to be outstanding.

One event I can say will be one of the highlights of the convention will be an outing to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the absolutely beautiful museum housing the galleries of Alice Walton’s art collection. Recall that in 2012 APA presented Alice Walton with the “Headliner of the Year” award shortly after the successful opening of the Crystal Bridges facility.

Since that opening much has been added, as the museum literally remains a work in progress. A few of us visited Crystal Bridges after the committee meeting to look at the venue proposed for our reception there. I can report that it is spectacular. This event is one you will not want to miss.

The venue is extraordinary and affords a great view of the museum and surrounding grounds. The room has glass walls giving it a feel as if it’s actually outside. Considering our event there will be in late June, and considering it could be really hot outside by that time, we will appreciate this venue not only for the beautiful surroundings but also for the air conditioning that comes with it.

You will be hearing much more about this summer’s APA convention, but take the time now to mark your calendar for June 22-25 and make plans to be among those making the trip into Northwest Arkansas, one of the fast growing regions in the country, and see what it’s all about.

As you most likely know by now, APA has made a dramatic change in the annual contests. As changes go, it couldn’t get much bigger.

For years the APA has continued to operate the advertising and editorial contests as it has always done, requiring hard-copy tear sheets of entries to be submitted from various categories. The entries were shipped or taken by APA to a distant city in another state for judging.

These on-site judging events brought together a roomful of newspaper people creating excellent networking opportunities while performing the worthwhile function of judging contest entries. It also afforded the opportunity to get new ideas in story or ad treatment from the contest entries being judged.

Over the years it became more and more difficult to coerce enough people to travel to the judging site to help out. Newspapers, with their respective staffs spread ever thinner, no longer had “extra” people they could spare to help judge. Those who did show up were inundated with entries to judge, sometimes more than could be accomplished in the allotted time.

Years ago, and I’m honestly not sure when this all began, some associations and others who stage statewide contests regularly, began using the digital judging approach. The entries shifted from hard copy to digital files. This way the judging could be done from the judge’s work place or home computer, and the judging could be done at his or her leisure.

Over time the digital judging software packages became easier and easier to use and offered greater control for contest administrators with less handling of the entries than had been required in the old way of doing things. For years, APA resisted making this change. Perhaps I should take the blame for that because I never cared for the digital judgings. Maybe it’s just that I don’t like change any more than the next person, but, honestly, I felt like the entries being judged should be in the same format as the end user of the newspaper…our subscribers…would see it.

Everything, pictures especially, looks good on a computer screen. How it translates to print is often quite another matter. Many an award-winning photo, for instance, has been screwed up in the pressroom.

In the end the cold realities in today’s newspaper world dictated that it was prudent, yes almost mandatory, that we make the change to digital judging. This will be our first year for our contest entrants to submit in this fashion. So far it’s going quite well with several contest entries already received.

Be reminded, however, that the advertising contest deadline is Jan. 31. If you have not looked at the new contest entry procedure, now might be a good time to do so rather than waiting until the deadline to figure it out. If you have problems or questions, don’t hesitate to call the APA office. Our team of experts is standing by to help you in this transition.

The Better Newspaper Advertising Awards will be presented at the Friday luncheon, March 11, at the annual APA Advertising Conference at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain.

I hope to see you there.

Have a great week!

Tom
Arkansas Publisher Weekly

is a member bulletin published each Thursday by Arkansas Press Association
411 South Victory, Little Rock AR 72201
501.374.1500 voice | 501.374.7509 fax

View this newsletter and related materials online at: www.arkansaspress.org

Publisher

www.arkansaspress.org

—are—

Arkansas Publisher Weekly 3 January 28, 2016

Publisher

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publisher

—30—

Alyce Binzer

Alyce Marie “Tootsie” Moore Binzer, 87, of Madison, Ind. died Dec. 23 at her home. A native of Blytheville, she grew up in Hoxie and Walnut Ridge, graduating from Walnut Ridge High School as salutatorian in 1946. She worked for the Times Dispatch in Walnut Ridge typing correspondent news before relocating to Memphis and enrolling in Baptist Hospital School of Nursing there. She became a licensed registered nurse in 1949.

Alyce Binzer

are—

Whitney Jones

William “Whitney” Jones, 65, of Little Rock died Jan. 21. A Little Rock native, he graduated from high school at Castle Heights Military Academy in Lebanon, Mo. and attended college at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro and the University of Arkansas—Fayetteville. He had over 20 years of experience in the media, including positions with newspapers in Arkansas, Missouri and Texas. He began his career as a sports writer for the Benton Courier (now The Saline Courier), later operating his own newspaper, The Pacemaker. He served as editor of the Benton Courier and the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway.

Whitney Jones

—30—

Ad Convention online registration available

Online registration for the 2016 Arkansas Press Association (APA) Advertising Conference is now available. It will be held March 10-11 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute at Petit Jean Mountain. The electronic registration site can be accessed by following this link: www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016AdConference. Highlights of this year’s convention can also be found there. In addition, a registration packet with more information will be mailed to all APA members this week.

The featured speaker is Mike Centorani, co-founder of Sales Transformation Now, Inc. He will make a presentation to attendees on Thursday afternoon titled "Selling in the Real World".

According to event planners for the advertising forum, “an evening reception and world class steak dinner will be served in the River Rock Grill Thursday evening.”

Friday morning will feature the ever-popular “Hot Ideas” session with cash prizes for the best idea. A luncheon will follow featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Arkansas Press Association Better Newspaper Advertising Awards.

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

publisher

—30—

PNRC accepting entries for 2015 award

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Arkansas Publisher Weekly

publisher

17th Edition of Handbook now available

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The new edition incorporates updates reflecting actions taken during the 2015 General Assembly.


Arkansas Publisher Weekly
Invested in the future of news media

BY DAVID CHAVERN, NAA PRESIDENT & CEO


All of them have made significant investments in newspapers, despite the media pundits that have been claiming the death of the newspaper industry for years. Just a few weeks ago, Buffett acquired his 32nd paper, the Fredericksburg Free-Lance-Star, demonstrating that print journalism remains relevant even as our digital audience — on mobile, social media, virtual reality and a variety of other platforms — continues to grow rapidly.

It can be easy to overestimate the challenges and underestimate the value of any organization. But when an investor as successful as Warren Buffett continues to view newspaper media as worthwhile, profitable investments, it’s time to take a second look.

In reality, the demand for original, relevant reporting has only grown. Readers are hungry to understand their world, from the city council to foreign policy. Communities still want to be informed and connected. The format of the news will continue to evolve, but the need for journalism remains — and this need is uniquely met by newspaper organizations.

Who else has the resources or dedication to fund reporters to cover key beats, showing up at the city hall, Capitol Hill or school board meetings days after day? To drill down into the messy details of an investigation? To fact-check claims and piece together eyewitness reports, providing context and analysis? There are certainly wonderful digital-only news organizations that hire reporters and devote significant time and energy to journalism, but the vast majority of these stories are produced by newspaper companies.

Now, you may or may not open a copy of a print paper every day to get that news. But maybe you open an app, or the links shared on Twitter, or check Google News. All of these successful platforms are aggregators, collecting and curating the original reporting produced by news organizations. Google, Apple and Snapchat don’t have reporters on salary, but they do have partnerships with news media that enable them to provide this content. As a result, the news audience continues to grow.

In many ways, this reminds me of Hollywood. In the first half of the 1900s, we turned exclusively to movies for video entertainment. To become a star, you had to first make it to Los Angeles and land a major role on the silver screen. Then the advent of television created a new, personalized way to consume content and more opportunities for actors to get noticed. They no longer had to rely exclusively on movies to make it.

The model has changed again just in the last 10 years. We have Netflix, Hulu, and self-made stars on YouTube with an even broader fan base than some of Hollywood’s A-list celebrities. Video consumption is even more targeted and personal. And while the format and delivery has varied widely, the demand for such entertainment continues to grow — as evidenced by EMarker’s estimate that Americans spend 5.5 hours consuming video each day on phones, mobile and television.

Similarly, we find that the audience for this in-depth, trusted and local news is soaring on digital platforms. According to comScore research, 179 million adults engaged with digital newspaper media in August 2015. That’s a 10 percent increase year over year, and double the growth rate for the Internet overall.

This is why I — and so many other business leaders — remain confident about the future of the news industry: because the need and demand remains high. There is no denying that the last several years have been both challenging and transformative, and the industry has had to make some tough choices to evolve with the culture. But we are evolving, just as the growing audience numbers suggest.

I believe this is what Buffett, Bezos, Henry and Taylor see in the future for news. While they value the public service journalism of local news organizations, they are also smart investors. They know how to identify assets that will turn a profit.

In a 2013 letter to shareholders, Buffett announced that his company would continue acquiring newspapers “as long as the economics made sense.” His recent purchase is just one more proof point that the economics do, indeed, make sense.

David Chavern is president and CEO of the Newspaper Association of America.
We Need JUDGES

Help judge the Nebraska Press Better Newspaper Contest
All Judging is Online
February 2016

Categories Include:
News, Photography, Feature Story, Columns, Sports, Editorials & Advertising

Nebraska Press Better Newspapers - Judging Sign-Up

Newspaper/Company ________________________________ City _____________________

Phone ( ___ )____________________________ Fax ( ___ ) ___________________________

Name(s) Email Address Category Preference
1. ___________________________________________________________________________
2. ___________________________________________________________________________
3. ___________________________________________________________________________
4. ___________________________________________________________________________
5. ___________________________________________________________________________

Authorized by ________________________________ Title ___________________________

Sunshine Week nears, Albarado to chair

National Sunshine Week, the nation wide observance that annually emphasizes the importance of transparency in government and citizen access, begins Sunday, March 13 and runs through Saturday, March 19. The Arkansas Press Association (APA) is encouraging all members to participate in and help promote this important event. The APA is continually fighting an increasing number of attempts to weaken the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act and conceal more documents and meetings from the public. Sunshine Week provides an opportunity to promote transparency in government to legislators as well as readers at large, especially in this election year.

Sonny Albarado, special projects editor at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock, has been named state chairman for the 2016 observance of Sunshine Week. There are plans across the country for special news reporting, events spotlighting open government and the release of freedom of information studies. To assist newspapers and other media in helping call attention to Sunshine Week, a toolkit is being developed and some materials are already available at the official website: www.sunshineweek.org.

A wealth of other information can be found there as well. Sunshine Week is an annual initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. Participants include news media, civic groups, libraries, nonprofits, schools and others interested in the public’s right to know.

Ad Conference online registration open

Online registration for the 2016 Arkansas Press Association (APA) Advertising Conference is now available. It will be held March 10-11 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute at Petit Jean Mountain. The electronic registration site can be accessed by following this link: www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016AdConference. Highlights of this year’s convention can also be found there. Jennifer Allen, Teresa Mason and Margie Savage of the GateHouse Central Arkansas Newspaper Group were the first to register online for the event.

In addition, a registration packet with more information was mailed to all APA members last week. A sign up form is also attached.

The theme of this year’s Advertising Conference is “Selling in the Real World: How to make the right sale vs. any sale.” The featured speaker is Mike Centorani, co-founder of Sales Transformation Now, Inc. He will make a presentation to attendees on Thursday afternoon titled “Selling in the Real World”.

According to event planners for the advertising forum, “an evening reception and world class steak dinner will be served in the River Rock Grill Thursday evening.”

Friday morning will feature the ever-popular “Hot Ideas” session with cash prizes for the best idea as well as a session on “Success with APA Statewide Networks” presented by Eva Bakalekos and Neil McConnell, advertising network sales consultants for Arkansas Press Services, Inc. A luncheon will follow featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Arkansas Press Association Better Newspaper Advertising Awards.
“Good journalism.”

What does that mean to you? Can you think of an excellent example or two?

You really don’t have to look very far for good examples. I see it each and every week when I peruse Arkansas Press Association (APA) member newspapers that make their way to the office for tear sheet purposes.

This is a favorite activity of mine, although I don’t get to spend as much time doing it as I would prefer. I read some of our “local” newspapers (of course, all of our members are “local” newspapers), and I can readily see that the community is being well served by the journalism that’s going on in their community.

Not that most of our readers would acknowledge that it’s going on, but deep down they know it is. They read the local newspaper because of it, and because they still want to know what’s going on in their home community and with the people with whom they share it.

During the course of a regular week for me, I come into contact with a lot of people in the community where I live and work, right here at APA central. I see people at lunch or run into them at the seemingly endless string of meetings I attend during a “normal” week.

Hardly an encounter of this nature passes without someone making a comment about something in “the newspaper.” Of course, the actual newspaper in which they may have read something may vary, but whatever it was, they found it compelling enough to read and to ask me if I read it or what I think about it.

Truly, this happens all the time, and what it does is reinforce for me how important the newspaper remains to people who truly want to know what’s going on. And you know what? I never hear someone say they don’t believe what they read in the newspaper. Never.

They might suggest that about a letter to the editor or they might say that about a guest column, but not about the news content. Newspapers remain the most believable medium. Almost any credible survey will tell you as much. When people are polled about which medium they trust to remain the most believable medium, it’s the newspaper in which they may have read something may vary, but what almost always agree about something they’ve read in “the newspaper.” It’s called credibility, and yes it’s called “good journalism.”

From time to time, during these sorts of lively discussions, I ask the question, “Where would we be without newspapers?” Yes, it’s a self-serving question, but it always gives pause for reflection. It sometimes creates one of those awkward pauses while the question is mulled. Seldom is there an immediate reaction, but it’s always clear that nobody really wants to think about it.

Even those who live to be critical of “the newspaper” don’t want to think about a world without them. Not really. And they’ll even admit it if you press them on it.

Why do you suppose that is? I suspect it’s because serious newspaper readers feel a close connection to their newspaper because they feel a close connection to the community in which they live, in which they make their living, and in which they raise their families.

Nobody has the time and likely few have the ability to ferret out the information that is important and relevant to them, the type of information they’re reading every day and every week in the newspaper. That’s where newspapers come in. That’s where “good journalism” comes in.

It’s what we do, and we do it quite well I think.

Those of you in the trenches, gathering the facts, composing them into story form, and those who edit this work need to remind yourselves every so often just for whom we are doing this. It’s our job, yes of course, but “good journalism” is more than just a job. What you do…what we do…has a profound affect on our readers, how they perceive things around them and even maybe, just maybe how they feel about a particular issue.

That’s pretty heady stuff when you take the time to stop and think about it, but don’t stress. It’s always been this way.

It’s “good journalism” and all that that implies.

Have a great week!

Tom
APA makes Election Directory available

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) has obtained 100 copies of the 2016 Election Directory. As the title suggests it is published biennially by the Arkansas Farm Bureau as the regular preferential primary and election approach. The Bureau generously reserves 100 copies each year for the APA both for lobbying purposes and to share with its membership.

Tom Larimer, APA executive director, and Tres Williams, lobbyist and communications director, brought a box full back to the headquarters last week from the monthly luncheon of the Arkansas Society of Professional Lobbyists.

The Election Directory contains a profile of Arkansas legislative races, and listings of all candidates — state and national — along with photos and contact information for each. The information it contains may be useful to both advertising and news divisions of Arkansas newspapers. Copies may be obtained from the APA at no cost while supplies last. Interested persons may contact Kathy Edwards (phone: 501.374.1500; email: kathy@arkansaspress.org).

Say ‘I do’ to the creative process

Advertising is a business which is fueled by creativity. Once you get a handle on how to get ideas — ideas that work — you’ll have a big advantage over the competition.

No matter how much you sell, it all comes down to how much your ads will sell. When the ads get results, your advertisers will be happy. And when they’re happy, they’ll keep running ads.

If you’ve ever recycled old ideas because you couldn’t think of anything better, maybe it’s time for a new approach. One way to generate ideas is to look elsewhere for a spark. For example, my wife and I recently went to a wedding. Along the way, she mentioned the old British rhyme about things that a bride is supposed to wear: “Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue.” A saying as simple as that could provide the starting point for a new advertising idea. Let’s take a look:

Something old: Think history. If an advertiser has been in business for a number of years, that can give you plenty of inspiration. You can use vintage photographs from their files to demonstrate a sense of tradition and stability. You can feature a side-by-side comparison of their first building and their current building. (“Look how we’ve grown. And it’s all because we have a commitment to our customers.”) You can even feature a quote from the company’s founder — with a tie-in to their continuing business philosophy.

Something new: Although the words “new and improved” have become an advertising cliche, the general concept has been around for a long time, because it is effective. Consumers like newness — as long as it’s relevant.

What is new with your advertisers? Do they have new products? Have new features been added to old products? Do they have new services? New locations? New hours of operation? Is there new management?

If you use this technique, be sure to show how the new things are better than the old ones. Emphasize benefits.

Something borrowed: Why not find someone else to speak for your advertiser? A testimonial from a real life customer can be a powerful advertising message.

A testimonial adds a couple of important elements to an ad campaign. First, by featuring someone who represents the advertiser’s target audience, a testimonial can help consumers identify with the company. Second, a customer can say things that wouldn’t be believed if the advertiser said those same things. (“Their widgets are great!” has more weight than “Our widgets are great.”)

Something blue: Consumers get the blues. They have problems that need solving. Can your advertiser reduce energy bills? Or help improve students’ grades? Or take the hassle out of building a custom home? Show people how your advertiser can solve a specific problem, and they will pay attention to the message.

This approach to creativity can be seen as a two-step process. First, get inside information about your advertisers, their products, their services and their customers. Then look for ideas sparks from outside sources.

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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.

Reminders and Resources

- Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.
- Gov’t/Legal Resources: Members are reminded to take advantage of APA’s online resources for newspapers, including statutes governing publication of notices and tax delinquency lists, state and federal advertising regulations, etc.
2016 Ad Conference

Selling in the Real World
How to Make the Right Sale Vs. Any Sale

March 10-11
Winthrop Rockefeller Institute,
Petit Jean Mountain
## Conference Schedule

### THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2016

1:00 p.m. Registration Desk Opens

1:30 p.m. Welcome, Introduction & Announcements

**Part 1: Selling in the Real World**
*Learn how to “make the right sale” vs. any sale*
Presented by: Mike Centorani, Rock Theatre

3:00 p.m. Break

3:30 p.m. **Part 2: Selling in the Real World**
*Learn how to “make the right sale” vs. any sale*
Presented by: Mike Centorani, Rock Theatre

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 11, 2016

8:00 a.m. Registration Desk Opens

8:30 a.m. HOT Ideas Breakfast
Governor’s Room

10:00 a.m. **Success with APA Statewide Networks**
Presented by: Eva Bakalekos & Neil McConnell, Governor’s Room

12:00 p.m. **2016 Newspaper Advertising Awards Luncheon**
Show Barn Hall

2:00 p.m. Conference Adjourns
Guest Speakers

Mike Centorani

Mike Centorani is the Co-Founder of Sales Transformation Now, Inc. and the former Vice President of Sales Training and Development at Matchcraft. Sales Transformation Now offers Sales Training and Sales Management consulting for traditional media and search companies throughout the US and in 17 countries worldwide. Mike brings over 25 years of print media experience combined with over 10 years of search engine marketing expertise. In addition to passing the advanced Google AdWords Professional Exam, his company was chosen by Google to offer sales training to their Google Premier SMB Partners in 2011. He has worked with many of the largest newspapers in the US, such as Scripps, Newsday Media, McClatchy, Lee Enterprises, AdvanceNet, Maine Today Media, and others.

Mike is known for his “real world” approach to the sales call process and his ability to teach sales reps “how to speak the small business owner’s language” and “make the right sale” based on their specific needs. He now specializes in working with all types of traditional media companies around the world helping them to sell the combination of search and traditional media together.

Mike has a Bachelor’s Degree from the University of Binghamton in upstate New York with a major in English and a minor in Advertising.

Eva Bakalekos

Eva Bakalekos is a sales and network coordinator at the Arkansas Press Association (APA). She sells and assists newspapers in the placement and operations of the Arkansas Display Advertising Network (ARDAN), Statewide Classified Advertising Network (SCAN) and Daily Connection programs. Eva has 20 years of experience in newspaper advertising sales and production and has been employed at the APA for nearly 11 years.

Neil McConnell

Neil McConnell is a sales and network coordinator at the APA. Neil has been with the APA for more than four years. In those four years his primary focus has been selling retail and network ads. Now his primary focus is both the SCAN and ARDAN networks. He also has 10 years experience selling and writing radio commercials in Little Rock for 8 radio stations and two radio networks.
Register Online or by Mail

Register online at http://www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016AdConference or send registration & payment by Monday, March 7 to:
Arkansas Press Association, 411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 or Fax 501.374.7509.

Newspaper: ________________________________
Mailing Address: ____________________________________________________________
City/State/Zip: ________________________________________________________________
Phone: __________________ Fax: __________________

Attendee Name: __________________________ Email: __________________________
1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________

Please list any additional names on a separate sheet.

Thursday/Friday Conference Fee ($75) Includes:
Reception, Thursday Dinner, Breaks, Friday Breakfast, and all Conference Materials.
Awards Lunch Not Included.

Total Attendees:
   _____ x $75 Conference Fee  $ _____
     Thursday Dinner/Friday Breakfast
   _____ x $100 Hotel Room  $ _____
   _____ x $35 Awards Lunch  $ _____
TOTAL $ _____

Payment Options:
   _____ Check Enclosed  _____ Bill Me
Credit Card # ____________________________
Expiration Date __________ VCN#__________

Room 1: Double / King圈
   Person 1
   Person 2

Room 2: Double / King圈
   Person 1
   Person 2

Room 3: Double / King圈
   Person 1
   Person 2

Please list any additional names on a separate sheet.
Foundation rolls out Internship Program

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), the educational arm of the Arkansas Press Association, has announced the kick off of its 2016 Paid Internship Program. The Foundation has four openings for newspapers wishing to participate as hosts in the 2016 Internship Program.

ANF provides four matching grants of up to $1,500.00 to host newspapers for the summer internship position. The host newspapers are selected on a first-come, first-served basis. Those selected may interview and select an interview from applications received through the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation or they may select their own applicant from a local source following the same criteria.

Applications, deadlines and further information are available online in the ANF section of the Arkansas Press Association’s website: www.arkansaspress.org. The page dedicated to the Internships may be accessed with the pull-down menu titled “Foundation.” There visitors will see a menu item, “ANF Internships.” Clicking that will bring up the appropriate page with a downloadable student application and a fact sheet for newspapers.

Those interested in participating in this year’s program may also contact ANF’s executive director, Karen Brown, via email: arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

Ad Conference online registration open

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In addition, a registration packet with more information was mailed to all APA members last month. Details and forms are also available in the “APA Spotlight” section on the association’s website (www.arkansaspress.org).

The theme of this year’s Advertising Conference is “Selling in the Real World: How to make the right sale vs. any sale.” The featured speaker is Mike Centorani, co-founder of Sales Transformation Now, Inc. He will make a presentation to attendees on Thursday afternoon titled “Selling in the Real World.”

According to event planners for the advertising forum, “an evening reception and world class steak dinner will be served in the River Rock Grill Thursday evening.”

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Nominations for special awards open

It is time once again for Arkansas Press Association (APA) members to make nominations for the annual APA “Special Awards” to be presented Friday, June 24, at the SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

The special awards include:

• Golden 50 Service Award, for those who have labored at least 50 years in the newspaper industry.

• Distinguished Service Award, for those who have made a significant contribution to the APA and/or the newspaper industry.

• Headliner of the Year Award, presented to a person who has brought good headlines to the state of Arkansas during the past year and/or over the years. This could be a person, a group or even an organization.

• Freedom of Information Award, given to the person who has made significant contributions to journalism education in Arkansas, either at the high school or the college level.

• Journalism Educator Award, presented to a person who has made significant contributions to journalism education in Arkansas, either at the state of Arkansas during the past year and/or over the years. This could be a person, a group or even an organization.

Nominating forms are available here: Special Awards Nominating Form. A list of past winners can be found here: List of Recipients of Special Awards. The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 25. The APA Board of Directors will select the honorees from the nominations submitted at their annual spring retreat April 7-8.

important dates

Tuesday, Feb. 29
Online submission period for APA’s 2016 News-Editorial contest opens
Potpourri

We begin this week with a thanks and a “tip of the hat” to Sonny Albarado for accepting the role as chairman of “Sunshine Week” in Arkansas.

Brenda Blagg and then Dennis Byrd, both now retired veteran Arkansas journalists, had previously held this post recently. In fact, Dennis was still listed on the National Freedom of Information Coalition (NFOIC) website as the state chairman as of Monday of last week.

I hadn’t noticed this or even thought about it until the NFOIC contacted me about updating our contact information on the website. The state chairman needs to be someone with an understanding of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and a history of utilizing it to gain public information and access to public meetings.

Brenda and Dennis, while still active journalists, were very active on the Arkansas Freedom of Information Coalition. Sonny has been as well for the past several years.

I contacted Sonny to see if he’d be interested in taking over this chairmanship, or failing that to recommend someone who might be good at it.

Only a few minutes lapsed before Sonny emailed back accepting the post.

It’s always encouraging when big people are willing to add to their load for the better good. I always appreciate that and this latest example of people stepping up to perform a task that needs to be done.

If you see Sonny, tell him thanks.

Sunshine Week is a national initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. Participants include news media, civic groups, libraries, nonprofits, schools and others interested in the public’s right to know.

The week of March 13-19 has been designated this year for the annual observance. The time is now to be preparing the presentation your newspaper will create for this observance.

To that end and to help in making plans, Sunshine Week has its own website where you can find resources for features, editorials, cartoons and so on for your promotion of Sunshine Week. That can be found at www.sunshineweek.org.

The FOIA remains kind of a big deal for everyone, including newspapers. Actually, of course, that is kind of an understatement. While the FOIA is often considered the media’s law it is far from it. It is the people’s law that ensures they have access to public records and that the public’s business is conducted in the open, exposed to the “sunshine” of daylight.

Increasingly the Arkansas FOIA comes under attack at each legislative session during which any number of bills will be introduced to amend the FOIA, and by amend I mean weaken. Seldom, perhaps never or at least not in a number of years, has an FOIA bill been introduced that would strengthen the law.

It is a full time job, literally, keeping up with the bills filed to amend the FOIA during legislative sessions. It is always a bit mystifying how so many can profess support for the FOIA while introducing legislation to weaken it. Most often these bills are designed to carve out a special exemption for a particular entity or for a particular set of open records.

An excellent example was a bill that passed in the last general assembly to exempt certain tax records of restaurants. A legislator and café owner didn’t like that his competitors could see how much sales tax he was paying, so he introduced a bill to close those records that, like most others regarding sales tax, were open to the public.

The bill sailed through the legislature — though the Arkansas Press Association was successful in having the author amend it to preserve public access to aggregate tax records — and was signed into law by the governor. So yet another public record was closed to public. Yeah, it’s not the end of the world, but it is the proverbial slippery slope to which we often refer. It just opens the door to other special interest legislation that slowly erodes the public’s right to know.

We deal with these every legislative session, and we take a stand to preserve the FOIA, and with your help we are most often successful in this fight. The fear, of course, is that if we do not stand up for the FOIA, we’ll wake up one morning and have no access to government records or public meetings.

Yes I know that sounds a little far-fetched, but the reality is it has happened in more than one state. It has happened, and there are now people in those states working diligently to re-open closed public records or to remove ridiculous exemptions to the law created by a special interest in the legislature. The sad thing is that they’re finding it is much easier to keep the records open or the fight the exemption before it is granted than it is to remove them once they are in place.

It’s honorable work and it is something in which you can play and have played an active role but keeping your local legislative representatives aware of how important it is that the FOIA remains strong.

Of course, the law isn’t perfect. There are few laws, if any, that are. But it works for the people of Arkansas and it is certainly in the best interest of them to keep public records open and public meetings open and accessible to the public government is designed to serve.

The annual APA Advertising Conference is right around the corner, March 10-11 actually, and registration is now open for the conference. In fact, we’ve already received some registrations.

For the first time this year you may register for the ad conference online and pay online if you choose to do so. It sure does simplify the process.

An excellent program has been lined up for the 2016 advertising conference, and again this year it’s being held at the Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain. The ad conference seems to have found a home at the Institute as those attending continue to give glowing feedback on the venue.

When you add to those great surroundings great programming that provides some excellent training for newspaper advertising representatives and the ad conference continues to grow in popularity. The only thing that would make it better is if we would see you there.

Come join us on the mountain. You’ll be glad you did.

Have a great week!

Tom
Reed joins Saline Courier as ME

Beth Reed has joined the staff of The Saline Courier in Benton as managing editor. Born and raised in Hot Springs, she graduated from Lakeside High School before earning a bachelor’s degree in photojournalism from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. She began working in the journalism field in Jonesboro writing and taking photos for area magazines and then returned to Hot Springs where she covered tourism for The Sentinel-Record there. She was subsequently named associate editor of Hot Springs on the Go Magazine.

Frantz named GM of Sentinel-Record

Todd Frantz, 52, has been named general manager of The Sentinel-Record in Hot Springs. A native of Illinois, he moved with his family to Leavenworth, Kan. at the age of 12. He graduated from the University of Kansas in Lawrence and began his newspaper career with the Leavenworth Times, working his way up to the position of advertising director. Frantz went on to gain more than two decades of experience with newspapers in Kansas, Texas, Northern California and Utah, most recently as general manager of a daily and weekly newspaper in Stephenville, Texas.

National Sunshine Week starts March 13

National Sunshine Week, the nationwide observance that annually emphasizes the importance of transparency in government and citizen access, begins Sunday, March 13 and runs through Saturday, March 19. The Arkansas Press Association (APA) is encouraging all members to participate in and help promote this important event. The APA is continually fighting an increasing number of attempts to weaken the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act and conceal more documents and meetings from the public. Sunshine Week provides an opportunity to promote transparency in government to legislators as well as readers at large, especially in this election year.

Sonny Albarado, special projects editor at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock, has been named state chairman for the 2016 observance of Sunshine Week. There are plans across the country for special news reporting, events spotlighting open government and the release of freedom of information studies. To assist newspapers and other media in helping call attention to Sunshine Week, a toolkit is being developed and some materials are already available at the official website: www.sunshineweek.org. A wealth of other information can be found there as well.

Sunshine Week is an annual initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. Sunshine Week 2016 is made possible through the support of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Bloomberg and The Gridiron Club and Foundation. National coordinators are the American Society of News Editors and the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

Participants include news media, civic groups, libraries, nonprofits, schools and others interested in the public’s right to know.

APA/AG Roadshow starts in West Memphis

The Arkansas Press Association has, for many years now, partnered with the Arkansas Attorney General to present a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Road Shows” across the state. Staff members of Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge and the Arkansas Press Association recently concluded plans to hold the round of forums again this year.

The first of the 2016 shows will be held March 9 at Arkansas State University Mid-South, Marion Berry Renewable Energy Center, Room 136 in West Memphis. The event is free and open to all, but registration is required. Those wishing to attend can sign up for the road show at ArkansasAG.gov or email to foiaroadshow@ArkansasAG.gov.

The forums are designed for elected officials and custodians of public records as well as members of the general public and the press—anyone wanting to know about his or her rights and responsibilities under the state’s open government and transparency provisions. This program has been approved for 2.0 hours of general Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit.

Newspaper groups decry ad tax proposals

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) recently spoke out against proposals to tax advertising revenue, saying “Main Street commerce could be hit hard if congressional tax writers opt for the advertising tax as a way to fund lower corporate taxes for Wall Street companies.” NNA and other newspaper groups called on the Senate Finance and House Ways and Means Committees to retain advertising tax deductibility as they try to find nearly $1 trillion in new revenues to tackle major tax reform legislation.

A key goal in tax reform is to reduce the corporate income tax rate. So, another tax source must be found, NNA urged. “Eliminating a portion of the deductibility of advertising expenses is a juicy target, producing about $179 billion in new federal revenues.”

Newspaper groups pointed out that advertising is a major economic driver in the U.S. and cited a recent study reported in December 2015 that U.S. companies spent an estimated $297 billion on advertising in 2014.
APA makes Election Directory available

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) has obtained 100 copies of the 2016 Election Directory. As the title suggests it is published biennially by the Arkansas Farm Bureau as the regular preferential primary and election approach. The Bureau generously reserves 100 copies each year for the APA both for lobbying purposes and to share with its membership. Tom Larimer, APA executive director, and Tres Williams, lobbyist and communications director, brought a box full back to the headquarters.

The Election Directory contains a profile of Arkansas legislative races, and listings of all candidates — state and national — along with photos and contact information for each. The information it contains may be useful to both advertising and news divisions of Arkansas newspapers. Copies may be obtained from the APA at no cost while supplies last. Interested persons may contact Kathy Edwards (phone: 501.374.1500; email: kathy@arkansaspress.org).

Weekly WORD

avuncular

\ uh-VUHNG-kyuh-ler \n
adjective
1. of, relating to, or characteristic of an uncle.

Source: Dictionary.com

“Be it pestilence, war, or famine, the rich get richer and poor get poorer. The poor even help arrange it.”

— Will Rogers

Facing a tough call?
Talk it out

BY JIM PUMARLO, WWW.PUMARLO.COM

Newspapers routinely face challenging decisions. Should we run this photo? Should we accept this ad? Should we report on every monthly meeting of a local activist group?

An editors’ hotline regularly raises these and many other issues. As you might expect, the opinions vary widely depending on the circumstances and an editor’s perspective. Consensus is frequently reached through a thread of e-mails – and, more often than not, a healthy minority opinion is delivered, too. That shouldn’t surprise. There rarely is a one-size-fits-all response.

The discussions are always enlightening, forcing everyone to rethink positions and crystallize their arguments.

The hotline underscores one of the most important steps for editors when setting policies for ethical and challenging circumstances: Have a conversation with as many people as possible; you have more resources than you might realize. For example:

Quiz your staff: Whether you have a newsroom of two or 10, get the take of other reporters. Two opinions are always better than one.

Go beyond the newsroom: Your newspaper family – your co-workers in all departments — often represents a cross-section of the community. Their feedback is as valuable as the instincts of your reporters.

Connect with the community: Most editors have their “kitchen cabinet” – key individuals in the community that you connect with on a regular basis. As time permits, seek their perspectives. Who you connect with may well vary with the specific issue at hand.

Consult your peers: Short of weighing in on an editors’ hotline, take the pulse of individuals you respect in the business. They have all had their share of difficult decisions and are usually more than willing to be a sounding board.

Know your legal rights: State and federal laws dictate what information you can access, which can be a key ingredient in your decision. Many state press associations have a legal hotline; you should have the number memorized.

Setting policies for tackling the tough and challenging stories involves three steps: Develop the policy. Implement the policy. Explain the policy.

The more effort you put in the process, the more dividends you’ll reap for your newspaper and your readers. Talk with staff. Talk with community members. They may not all tell you what you want to hear, or even agree with your final decision, but you’ll earn their respect for seeking their opinions.

We also must be realistic. Many decisions must be made on the spur of the moment and on deadline. Editors don’t always have the time or luxury to seek the feedback of others.

That said, newsrooms should regularly set aside time to brainstorm how to approach those challenging decisions that inevitably will come your way. Do you report suicides? What’s your approach to coverage of sexual abuse charges and the subsequent trial? Do you identify high school athletes missing a contest due to violations of high school league or school district rules? Do you publish photos of fatal accident scenes? Do you accept ads that many readers may view as offensive? Do you publish all letters to the editor?

In the end, the editor makes the final call. There rarely is an absolute “yes” or “no” on what to do. As is frequently the case when facing ethical decisions, there often is more gray than black or white.

That’s all the more reason that editors should take the final step in setting policies: Explain your decision in a column. Most important, your column should not try to convince readers that you made the “right” call. Rather, you should outline what went into the decision – assuring them that you put serious thought and time into how to approach the sensitive circumstance.

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation is announcing the student internship program for the summer of 2016. Information will be sent to journalism programs at all Arkansas colleges and universities with active departments as well as other departments such as English or political science departments as requested. We believe that this program will benefit newspapers directly by providing paid internships to students who are interested in the newspaper industry. We hope to encourage students to work at the newspaper and to enjoy a positive experience during their internship.

Again this year, recent high school graduates enrolled in an accredited college are also eligible. (Recent high school graduates must provide college enrollment papers or other proof of admission with completed application.)

- There will be four (4) matching funds opportunities available from the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation. We will be providing $1,500 to four (4) member newspapers that agree to match the funds for compensation for the paid intern position.
- Interested newspaper must complete an application form and return it to the ANF prior to March 10, 2016. The four newspapers that are selected to participate in this project will be notified on or before March 12, 2016 on first-come, first-served basis.
- It is suggested that interns work 6-10 weeks on a schedule that fits with the newspaper’s temporary employment criteria. Interns are not employees of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation; therefore, the newspaper is responsible for setting up employee procedures for the intern.
• Interested students will be required to complete an application. Applications will be sent to the selected newspapers for review and selection.
• Newspapers agree to complete an intern evaluation form upon completion of the program.
• Students will have the opportunity to request a location on their application form, as some students may wish to work at a newspaper close to their home during the summer months. **In turn, newspapers have the option of finding their own intern that meets the application criteria.**
• Newspapers may find their own intern through a local school, college or other contact.
• Student applications will go out for the spring semester. If you know of someone who is interested in applying, please have him or her email me.
• This information is available in the ANF section of the Arkansas Press Association website soon: [http://www.arkansaspress.org/?page=anfinternships](http://www.arkansaspress.org/?page=anfinternships)
• The interview process and selection should be completed by April 5, 2016. Extension for the interview process may be requested.

If you have any questions, please email Karen Brown at [arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com](mailto:arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com) or call Karen at 479-936-6471. Best wishes!

ARKANSAS NEWSPAPER FOUNDATION
2016 STUDENT INTERN APPLICATION

Application must be completed and submitted no later than **March 20, 2016**.
To be eligible, the applicant must either be a registered student at an Arkansas college or university.

Full Name _____________________________________________________________

E-Mail ________________________________________________________________

HOME/PERMANENT INFORMATION
Telephone (    ) _____________________________________________________

Address ______________________________________________________________

City __________________________ State ________ Zip __________

CAMPUS INFORMATION (if different)
Telephone (    ) _____________________________________________________

Address ______________________________________________________________

City __________________________ State ________ Zip __________

High School Attended __________________________________________________

Year Graduated ____________ If a recent graduate, please provide proof of college enrollment.

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY INFORMATION
School Name __________________________________________________________

Major __________________________ Minor_______________________________

Credit Hours Completed _________________

Newspaper Interest  *(Check as many as you wish)* Other _________________________

_____ Editorial (writing, reporting)   _____ Photography

_____ Advertising (sales/ad design)   _____ On-Line Journalist

**Check Region (s) of Arkansas You'd Be Most Interested In:**

_____ East   _____ Central   _____ South

_____ West   _____ North   _____ No preference
Have you previously worked for or interned at a newspaper, other than a school/college newspaper? 
Yes     No
If "yes,: 
Newspaper__________________________________  Town _____________
Year __________________

Have you previously worked for your high school/college/university newspaper?    Yes     No
If "yes,"
Newspaper__________________________________  Town _____________
Year __________________     Advisor __________________________________

List computer equipment and software with which you have experience:

Do you have experience with photography? Yes    No
If yes,  please describe.

Do you have a valid driver's license?    Yes     No
Do you have/own a vehicle?    Yes     No

While every attempt will be made to match students with newspapers in their region selected, it is possible the student will have to commute to that newspaper or rent an apartment.
If you do not have or own a vehicle, how will transportation be provided?

List three references (no relatives), including at least one from your school, college or university:
1. Name
   Telephone (    )

2. Name
   Telephone (    )

3. Name
   Telephone (    )

Work experience/resume, including part-time and full-time jobs. (Resume may be attached.)
List of college activities: (clubs, organizations, fraternity/sorority) Essay must be attached.

List of any high school, college scholarships or awards received:

I hereby verify that all information is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Full Name: ____________________________________________ Date: _________________

Application must be completed and submitted no later than March 20, 2016.
ANF Internship Program, ANF, 411 S. Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201
Email applications to: arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com
Application must be complete and legible.
APA seeking Special Awards nominations

Last week the Arkansas Press Association (APA) announced that it was now accepting nominations for the annual APA “Special Awards” to be presented Friday, June 24, at the SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

The special awards include:
• Golden 50 Service Award, for those who have labored at least 50 years in the newspaper industry.
• Distinguished Service Award, for those who have made a significant contribution to the APA and/or the newspaper industry.
• Headliner of the Year Award, presented to a person who has brought good headlines to the state of Arkansas during the past year and/or over the years. This could be a person, a group or even an organization.
• Journalism Educator Award, presented to a person who has made significant contributions to journalism education in Arkansas, either at the high school or the college level.
• Freedom of Information Award, given to the person who has defended the Arkansas FOI Act in some way, either in a single act or for ongoing efforts.

Nominating forms are available here: Special Awards Nominating Form. A list of past winners can be found here: List of Recipients of Special Awards. The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 25. The APA Board of Directors will select the honorees from the nominations submitted at their annual spring retreat April 7-8.

Ad Conference registration closes March 7

Online registration for the 2016 Arkansas Press Association (APA) Advertising Conference has now been available for weeks. It will be held March 10-11 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute at Petit Jean Mountain. The electronic registration site can be accessed by following this link: www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016AdConference. Highlights of this year’s convention can also be found there.

In addition, a registration packet with more information was mailed to all APA members last month. Details and forms are also available in the “APA Spotlight” section on the association’s website (www.arkansaspress.org). The deadline to register is March 7.

The theme of this year’s Advertising Conference is “Selling in the Real World: How to make the right sale vs. any sale.” The featured speaker is Mike Centorani, co-founder of Sales Transformation Now, Inc. He will make a presentation to attendees on Thursday afternoon titled “Selling in the Real World.”

According to event planners for the advertising forum, “an evening reception and world class steak dinner will be served in the River Rock Grill Thursday evening.”

Friday morning will feature the ever-popular “Hot Ideas” session with cash prizes for the best idea as well as a session on “Success with APA Statewide Networks” presented by Eva Bakalekos and Neil McConnell, advertising network sales consultants for Arkansas Press Services, Inc. A luncheon will follow featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Arkansas Press Association Better Newspaper Advertising Awards.

ANF launches 2016 Internship Program

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), the educational arm of the Arkansas Press Association, has announced the launch of its 2016 Paid Internship Program. The Foundation has four openings for newspapers wishing to participate as hosts in the 2016 Internship Program.

ANF provides four matching grants of up to $1,500.00 to host newspapers for the summer internship position. The host newspapers are selected on a first-come, first-served basis. Those selected may interview and select an interview from applications received through the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation or they may select their own applicant from a local source following the same criteria.

Applications, deadlines and further information are available online in the ANF section of the Arkansas Press Association’s website: www.arkansaspress.org. The page dedicated to the Internships may be accessed with the pull-down menu titled “Foundation.” There visitors will see a menu item, “ANF Internships.” Clicking that will bring up the appropriate page with a downloadable student application and a fact sheet for newspapers.

Those interested in participating in this year’s program may also contact ANF’s executive director, Karen Brown, via email: arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.
It wasn’t that long ago, maybe a month or so, that I was searching my email for a message I was supposed to have received but hadn’t. At these times someone always says, “check your spam folder,” so I did and wow it was full.

When I got tired of deleting unsolicited email I started, years ago, just marking it as “spam.” It doesn’t stop the solicitors from sending email, but at least it doesn’t hit my inbox. Instead several of these have for months been going to my spam folder and the accumulation is incredible.

It’s hard to imagine that those using this marketing approach getting much response from these mass sendings, but it’s my understanding that if they get one percent response that’s considered excellent. So if they send a solicitation to, say, a million email addresses and get response from one percent of them, well that’s a gain of 10,000 prospective customers.

Some would find that satisfactory I guess. Some might even get giddy over that sort of response, but for the vast majority of us this type of email communication is just so much spam folder filler.

My policy has long been not to open any email from someone I don’t know, and sometimes I don’t open email from people I do know if there’s no good reason for them to be emailing me.

I made the mistake of opening one from a tennis friend a few months ago and sure enough it wasn’t from him. His email account had been hacked and a “Trojan horse” email was sent to everyone on his contact list, which is why I got it. Anyone who opened his email was “owned” by the hacker.

The next thing I know I’m getting calls from people on my contact list wanting to know if I had emailed them. Well no, I hadn’t. That’s when I knew that I, too, had been hacked. Now about 99 percent of my incoming email goes directly to my trash folder. I check my email by going to my trash now. I thought at the time this would be a temporary thing, but apparently not. It’s been months now and my incoming email still goes to my “Trash.”

So with all this in mind, I set out on a mission a few months ago to begin “unsubscribing” from unsolicited email I continue to receive, although now it comes to my trash folder cluttering it up. It just takes a second to scroll to the bottom of most of the emails where there will be an option to “unsubscribe” from any further email from this person or entity.

That’s a bit satisfying, at least initially until you realize that “unsubscribing” is apparently a myth to most of the email marketers. They just keep right on sending it, and why not? Who’s going to pull them over and cite them for violating my “unsubscribe.” In short, nobody.

I think it was Edward R. Murrow who once described television as a “vast wasteland.” Murrow was a broadcast journalist whose reports during World War II were followed closely by the American public. He was often seen doing his broadcasts while smoking a cigarette. You don’t see that much anymore. In fact, you don’t see it at all as few would find it prudent to be smoking on air during a news broadcast.

Nobody thought anything about it then. People smoked everywhere, in the movies, on TV, in the bowling alley (especially in the bowling alley), in restaurants and so on. Mr. Murrow’s time was a decidedly different one.

Unfortunately, Mr. Murrow died before the invention of the Internet. Chances are really good that were he still around, he would change his apt “vast wasteland” descriptor to add the Internet to the television comment.

Oh, the Internet is a handy tool for research, but it’s also a hotbed of misinformation or inaccurate information. It isn’t information you can just take at face value. It requires some verification. The same could be said for the volumes of email one receives these days, hawking some product or service or another. In the aggregate, all these things serve to erode the credibility of the Internet and its ancillary entities like email.

And email is a relatively inexpensive way to reach millions via the Internet, but the nuisance factor is high. That’s why I was taking a few minutes to “unsubscribe” each day from unsolicited email. That is, I was doing it until I figured out it did no good. It just made me feel better thinking I had eliminated a very small percentage of those I was receiving.

It’s time once again to be thinking about nominations for the Arkansas Press Association’s (APA) annual “Special Awards” presented each year since 1983 at the SuperConvention. The nomination forms were made available on the APA Website this week. The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 25.

The awards include the:

• Golden 50 Service Award, for those who have toiled in the newspaper industry in any capacity for 50 years or more
• Arkansas Headliner of the Year Award, for the person who has brought good headlines to the State of Arkansas during the previous year or over the years. (This award has gone to couples, to a group or even to an organization.)
• Journalism Educator Award, presented to a teacher on the high school or college level who has made a significant contribution to journalism education in Arkansas
• Distinguished Service Award, give to a person who has made a significant contribution to the APA and/or the newspaper industry
• Freedom of Information Award, given to the person who has defended the Arkansas FOIA Act in some way, either for a single act or for ongoing efforts

Accompanying the nomination form is a list of previous recipients of the respective awards over the years. The list reads like a who’s who of Arkansas and specifically the Arkansas newspaper industry.

Please have a look at the nomination form and review the previous winners. The latter might actually cue you to someone who should be honored but has not been. You don’t have to nominate someone for every award. You can nominate one or more, but the important thing is to get your nominations in by the March 25 deadline.

The APA board of directors will review the nominations and select the honorees at their April 7-8 spring retreat at the Arkansas Folk Center in Mountain View.

Have a great week!

Tom
National Sunshine Week starts March 13

National Sunshine Week, the nation wide observance that annually emphasizes the importance of transparency in government and citizen access, begins Sunday, March 13 and runs through Saturday, March 19. The Arkansas Press Association (APA) is encouraging all members to participate in and help promote this important event. The APA is continually fighting an increasing number of attempts to weaken the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act and conceal more documents and meetings from the public. Sunshine Week provides an opportunity to promote transparency in government to legislators as well as readers at large, especially in this election year.

Sonny Albarado, special projects editor at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock, has been named state chairman for the 2016 observance of Sunshine Week. There are plans across the country for special news reporting, events spotlighting open government and the release of freedom of information studies. To assist newspapers and other media in helping call attention to Sunshine Week, a toolkit is being developed and some materials are already available at the official website: www.sunshineweek.org. A wealth of other information can be found there as well.

Sunshine Week is an annual initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. Sunshine Week 2016 is made possible through the support of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Bloomberg and The Gridiron Club and Foundation. National coordinators are the American Society of News Editors and the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

Participants include news media, civic groups, libraries, nonprofits, schools and others interested in the public’s right to know.

APA/AG Roadshow to go to West Memphis

The Arkansas Press Association has, for many years now, partnered with the Arkansas Attorney General to present a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Road Shows” across the state. Staff members of Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge and the Arkansas Press Association recently concluded plans to hold the round of forums again this year.

The first of the 2016 shows will be held March 9 at Arkansas State University Mid-South, Marion Berry Renewable Energy Center, Room 136 in West Memphis. The event is free and open to all, but registration is required. Those wishing to attend can sign up for the road show at ArkansasAG.gov or email to foiaroadshow@ArkansasAG.gov.

The forums are designed for elected officials and custodians of public records as well as members of the general public and the press—anyone wanting to know about his or her rights and responsibilities under the state’s open government and transparency provisions. This program has been approved for 2.0 hours of general Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit.

REMEMBRANDS AND RESOURCES

- Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.
- Gov’t/Legal Resources: Members are reminded to take advantage of APA’s online resources for newspapers, including statutes governing publication of notices and tax delinquency lists, state and federal advertising regulations, etc.
- APA Forums: The Arkansas Press Association (APA) Forums provide those working in the Arkansas newspaper business with a convenient, free, easy-to-use resource to network with others, find solutions to problems and stay connected with other APA members, all without having to step away from your desk. Visit the forums at http://onlineservices.arkansaspress.org/forums.
Megan Bailey rejoins Democrat as Ad Mgr

Megan Bailey has rejoined the staff of the Van Buren County Democrat in Clinton as advertising manager. She began her career with the Clinton newspaper as a reporter and worked her way up to the position of managing editor. Bailey is a graduate of Clinton High School and attended the University of Central Arkansas in Conway, where she studied journalism. In addition to the Van Buren County Democrat, she has also worked for the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, the Daily Siftings Herald in Arkadelphia and The Saline Courier in Benton. She currently resides in Greenbrier.

Promote your staff, your newspaper:
APA encourages members to send news of staff changes or other happenings and associated photos for inclusion in this publication to: Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org).

Weekly Word

vituperate
\vayh-TOOH-reyt, -TYOO\ 
verb (used with or without object) 
1. to use or address with harsh or abusive language; revile. 

Source: Dictionary.com

“Let all Men know thee, but no man know thee thoroughly: Men freely ford that see the shallows.”
— Benjamin Franklin

‘I love you guys’

BY ED HENNINGER

There’s a special moment in the movie Hoosiers, where Coach Norman Dale (Gene Hackman) huddles with his players just before the state championship game.

He takes a brief moment, looks them in the eyes, and says: “I love you guys.”

It’s a quiet moment. No blaring trumpets. No whirling action. Just a few seconds that bring another, higher level of meaning to the relationship between the coach and his players.

And that’s how I feel about all of you who work at community newspapers.

Many of my happiest moments during my quarter-century as a consultant are those I’ve spent in the newsrooms and conference rooms of community newspapers.

And it’s because of you. Who you are. What you believe in. What you do.

You’re committed to your community. You want to see your town do well. You’re ready to defend it when it’s threatened, by policies, by poor planning, by people who would tear it apart to advance their own agendas or promote their own profit.

You believe in something bigger than yourselves. God…yes. Church…yes. Community…yes. Schools…yes. Sports…yes. All of those. But you also believe in the people and the spirit of those you serve with your reporting and advertising efforts.

You work hard. “Work ethic” is a phrase that doesn’t apply for you because you are so far beyond that in your dedication and your efforts. You’re often the first one in and the last one out. And…you’d be happy to stay even longer and work even harder if it means putting out a better paper.

You’re learners. You’re eager to know if there’s a better/faster way of doing what you do. You want to publish a better product. You’re always on the alert for methods that will help you do that—and you’re ready to spend the time, money and effort it takes.

You’re demanding. You expect the best from yourself and from those who work with you. You want nothing but maximum focus and maximum effort. But…

You’re accepting. You understand that no one can run full-speed all the time. You know that those who work with you have families and lives away from the office—and that those carry obligations and responsibilities more important than any story or any ad.

You appreciate the efforts of your managers and staff, and you show it. A small office party here, a bonus there, tickets to a game, an expenses-paid trip to the press association banquet—all of these are ways to tell your folks: “Well done!”

You’re positive. You believe in your success and the success of those who work with you. You understand that when one door closes, another opens. You know how to keep at it, constantly striving, occasionally in the face of daunting circumstances. You succeed because failure is never an option.

You are courageous. You know when you have to take a stand—and you do it. Perhaps your editorial is the lone voice of dissent on an important issue. Still, you say what needs to be said. Perhaps you’re personally threatened by someone who wants you to keep a story out of your paper. But you know you have to run that story—and you do. That takes courage. And you understand that real courage is not the absence of fear, but the understanding that something is more important than fear.

You have a sense of humor…and balance. You’re not afraid to laugh at yourself and your mistakes. And you learn from those mistakes and go on to do better work the next time.

You’re leaders. All of the qualities I’ve mentioned (and there are probably some I’ve missed) make you a leader in your community. You’re not one of the “good ol’ boys.” You’re more than that. Whether you’re the editor, the publisher—whatever—you’re a person others can approach for guidance and support. And you’re always ready to help.

Thank you for being all those things. I love you guys.


Arkansas Publisher Weekly
Nominations for Special Awards open

Two weeks ago the Arkansas Press Association (APA) announced that it was now accepting nominations for the annual APA “Special Awards” to be presented Friday, June 24, at the SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

The special awards include:
- Golden 50 Service Award, for those who have labored at least 50 years in the newspaper industry.
- Distinguished Service Award, for those who have made a significant contribution to the APA and/or the newspaper industry.
- Headliner of the Year Award, presented to a person who has brought good headlines to the state of Arkansas during the past year and/or over the years. This could be a person, a group or even an organization.
- Journalism Educator Award, presented to a person who has made significant contributions to journalism education in Arkansas, either at the high school or the college level.
- Freedom of Information Award, given to the person who has defended the Arkansas FOI Act in some way, either in a single act or for ongoing efforts.

Nominating forms are available here: Special Awards Nominating Form. A list of past winners can be found here: List of Recipients of Special Awards. The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 25.

APA urges members to contact legislators

National Sunshine Week, the nationwide observance that annually emphasizes the importance of transparency in government and citizen access, begins Sunday, March 13 and runs through Saturday, March 19. The Arkansas Press Association (APA) is encouraging all members to participate in and help promote this important event. Additionally, APA is urging all members to use this opportunity to contact their respective legislators and candidates during this election year to drive home the importance of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the transparency it provides and the rights and protections it affords the citizens of Arkansas. Newspapers should question those in public office or seeking one about their commitment to the FOIA and ask for pledges to help protect it.

The APA is continually fighting an increasing number of attempts to weaken the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act and conceal more documents and meetings from the public. Sunshine Week provides an opportunity to promote the principles open government acts or sunshine laws embody.

Sonny Albarado, special projects editor at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock, has been named state chairman for the 2016 observance of Sunshine Week. There are plans across the country for special news reporting, events spotlighting open government and the release of freedom of information studies. To assist newspapers and other media in helping call attention to Sunshine Week, a toolkit is being developed and some materials are already available at www.sunshineweek.org.
A lot has been written and said in recent months about digital “ad blocking,” and I will admit I’m conflicted about the practice. Rather, I’m conflicted about blocking ads placed in the digital world by newspapers that have invested significant dollars in making this avenue available to their consumers.

On the one hand, I would oppose ad blockers because they deny publishers access to the digital world. On the other, I’m sick to death of having my Internet time intruded upon by unwanted and unsolicited ads popping up and blocking the site I was actually wanting to see.

There is software, I’m given to understand, that can fairly successfully block these ads. Now those who place ads in the digital world are understandably concerned about their ads being blocked from view for those they’re trying to reach. Also understandably, these folks are opposed to ad blocking of any kind.

Then, too, those of us still using computers that are a couple of years too old do not have the capability of blocking the most intrusive of these digital ads. When I do some research on how to block the things from eroding my Internet time, I learned that yeah, sure, it could be done. But I would need to upgrade my current operating system. Alas, my old computer isn’t compatible with the newer operating systems that can effectively block pop-up ads.

Dealing with these things is yet another thing we never had to deal with in the traditional newspaper business. We didn’t have to deal with hackers taking over our products, or worse hijacking our website and replacing it with porn. This actually happened to me at a newspaper I was publishing several years ago. The Internet was still in its infancy and our customer base of advertisers still didn’t know how to access it, but many wanted to do so.

So we provided them a means of doing this by both designing and hosting their websites on our servers. We actually did this for some of our biggest and best advertisers, including our largest real estate advertiser. The problem was that when our site was hijacked and replaced with porn, so were the websites of those we were hosting.

Can you imagine the embarrassment and chagrin that caused? When someone was, say, looking for a home or real estate and they called up the Web site of one of our biggest advertisers, they got a screen shot that screamed “Euro Teen Sluts,” complete with some suggestive photo images.

You may be laughing at this, but believe me it wasn’t funny at all at the time.

So okay, this doesn’t have anything to do with ad blocking or not ad blocking, but it does remind us of how vulnerable we may be or may become when we venture into the digital publishing world. It is a vulnerability with which we never had to deal in the traditional newspaper environment.

But this is a new day and a new world. Digital is going to be a part of it, and while traditional newspapers are finding their popularity growing once again as the “vast wasteland” of the digital world becomes less and less dependable for accurate and credible news and information. That’s not to say these things aren’t there, but it is to say there is so much bad information, so much incorrect information that it taints the whole batch. You may be publishing in the digital world with all of the integrity of your newspaper behind it, but you are painted with the less than desirable broad strokes because of all the bad information out there in digital space.

That’s not fair, but that’s just what it is.

Ad blocking is just another challenge with which we will have to deal in the digital advertising world, a world no longer satisfied with banner ads. Remember those? Yeah, those were the days.

For the time being I’ll deal with the pop-up ads, many of which contain video that brings to a halt any other function that might be going on in my aging computer. And I will continue to “X” out of those I can’t block for the time being, but when I upgrade my computer I’ll be blocking all of these things that I can. I will remain conflicted about it, but I’m doing it in the interest of maximizing my limited time on the Internet.

Registrations for the upcoming APA Advertising Conference March 10-11 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain continue to grow. At last report our block of sleeping rooms for the event was almost sold out.

There will still be room if you haven’t registered, but I would encourage you to register quickly. For the first time this year you can register online. Just go to the APA website at www.arkansaspaper.org and click on the appropriate link in the “APA Spotlight” section. It’s very easy and takes very little time.

The Ad Conference will begin just after lunch on Thursday, March 10 with a presentation from Mike Centorani, a veteran sales trainer who has worked with newspapers across the country and in 17 countries.

We will also have a workshop of sorts on the APA ad networks to help member newspapers maximize their opportunities that the ad networks present, and by opportunities I mean revenue opportunities.

Of course, we’ll also have the hot ideas session Friday morning when those attending share advertising and marketing ideas that have worked well for their newspaper. This is always an excellent session that produces some really good ideas to take back home and turn into revenue for your newspaper.

As is our tradition, we will also present the APA’s Better Newspaper Advertising Contest awards at the Friday luncheon, bringing to an end another ad conference.

I am confident in encouraging you to ask anyone who has attended one of these conferences in recent years that the response will be very positive. It’s a great time of learning while at the same time sharing time and space with colleagues from APA newspapers. It is well worth the effort and the expense of taking part in the advertising conference.

I hope to see you there.

Have a great week!

Tom
Nearly 60 registered for Ad Conference

A total of fifty-six are already signed up for the Arkansas Press Association’s (APA) 2016 Advertising Conference to be held March 10-11 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain. Representing almost every area of the state, they are (alphabetically, by location):

- Benton, The Saline Courier: Pat Stuckey, Amy Woods;
- Clinton, Van Buren County Democrat: Megan Bailey;
- El Dorado, El Dorado News-Times: Greta Bell, Ronnie Bell;
- Forrest City, Times-Herald: Chelsea Ball, Amy Hale;
- Harrison, Harrison Daily Times: Brandon Cane, Todd Edwards, Jim Perry, Morgan Taylor;
- Hot Springs, The Sentinel-Record: Todd Frantz, Debe Johnson, MerryLee Meeker, Garry Richards;
- Hot Springs Village, Hot Springs Village Voice: Jennifer Allen;
- Huntsville, Madison County Record: Opal Dennis, David Hoyle, Nancy Hoyle;
- Little Rock, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette: Debbie Kiser, Kristin Stewart;
- Little Rock, Arkansas Press Association: Eva Bakalekos, Terri Cobb, Tom Larimer, Neil McConnell, Rebecca McGraw, Ashley Wallace, Ashley Wimberley;
- Mena: Mena Star; Vicki Agee, Andrew Berry, Paige Henley, Brooke Yandell;
- Monticello, Advance Monticellonian: Annette Buzzell, Melissa Cason, Kristen Hodges, Vicki Kelly, Melina Long, Samantha Swisher, Tom White;
- Mountain View, Stone County Leader: Ed Coates, Lisa Coates, Neal Fraser, Rusty Fraser, Daphne Morton;
- North Little Rock, The Times: Teresa Mason;
- Pine Bluff, Pine Bluff Commercial: Margie Savage;
- Sheridan, The Sheridan Headlight; LeAnn Brown, Millie McClain;

There is still room available, but APA’s block of rooms is almost sold out. Those interested in attending are advised to sign up as soon as possible. The deadline for registering is March 7.

Research from Pew Center supports NNA study

BY MAX HEATH, NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION POSTAL CHAIR

Research from the Pew Center just released showed that in three markets of varying sizes, more than half of the readers depend primarily on the printed newspaper. Studies in Sioux City, Iowa, Macon, Ga. and Denver, Colo. also revealed:

- Among newspaper print subscribers and readers, the heaviest dependence comes from a particularly vulnerable part of our nation: people over 65, people who have not attended college, and people with an annual income under $30,000. Without the newspaper, their engagement in the community would be tenuous.

This nugget was presented in written testimony by National Newspaper Association (NNA) president Chip Hutcheson last month before a Senate committee hearing on the U.S. Postal Service, and in support of legislation NNA backs, yet again, to try to maintain service levels for community newspapers and other mailers.

Pew surveys are widely reported and followed, but they don’t always align with the needs of NNA members. Although NNA has about 230 daily newspaper members, we follow the data. And this research aligns well with NNA’s 2014 research into community newspapers, and it also indicates that if these facts are true for dailies in smaller, mid-size and large markets, they will be even more true for weeklies.

NNA’s last research revealed regular and consistent readership of 65 percent or more in smaller communities. Seventy-eight percent say they rely on the newspaper as their primary source for local news and information, indicating that when local news breaks, even nonsubscribers are picking up the paper at the newsstand or borrowing a copy from another reader.

Only about 45 percent of residents tell us they look at the newspaper website. But among those who go to websites for news, it is the newspaper website that they are most likely to use and trust.

With print as the primary medium for readership and newspaper profits, distribution becomes a critical problem. Getting into the home in our primary and secondary markets with timely delivery is critical. With most of our 2,100 member newspapers (and increasingly small dailies) using mail for newspapers averaging 3,000-5,000 circulation in primarily rural and exurban markets, the Postal Service remains our most crucial supplier.

Distant delivery of newspapers is an age-old problem that is worsening. But delivery of newspapers into secondary markets near our primary market area is more difficult than ever. The primary market for a community newspaper is usually a small town or towns and a county. When the primary town is near a county line, service into both counties can be difficult.

The secondary market usually consists of a series of small towns in a group of counties ringing the primary market. Or out west, with larger counties, it can be towns scattered through the rest of the county, but often served by what were once different “Sectional Center Facilities,” or SCFs. Many of these have closed, replaced by Hubs, which will transfer “Dock-transferred” to other post offices in the service territory without being opened and sorted. This is an important step achieved by NNA for its members.

NNA flash survey supports USPS importance

A quick 2016 Web survey of NNA members done specifically for Hutcheson’s testimony expanded upon the urgent postal delivery needs of community newspapers. It revealed:

- 92.5 percent have experienced problems reaching readers on time with their Periodicals newspaper.
- 40.3 percent report delivery problems with First Class or Priority Mail.
- 49.2 percent attribute the problems to a closed or downsized plant; 44 percent don’t know where the problem arises.
- 53 percent experienced a problem reaching core-market readers on time—either within their county or within the market but —continued on page 4
Berry joins The Mena Star as account rep

Andrew R. Berry recently joined the staff of The Mena Star as an account representative. Born in Long Beach, Calif., Berry grew up in Benton, graduating from high school there in 1993. He began college at Henderson State University in Arkadelphia and received a degree in anthropology from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in 2004. His father is a Mena native, and his grandfather, Bob Berry, wrote for The Mena Star for many years.

Newspapers need
—continued from page 3

outside the county.

• 79 percent describe the Postal Service as critical to their survival.

But in what may be a big surprise to some players inside the Beltway, when asked whether the United States Postal Service (USPS) should lower the rates under the current exigency increase, or keep service levels higher, 77 percent said “Let USPS keep the money and improve service (even though they didn’t want another increase that big again).”

Without legislation soon, the Postal Service will be forced under court rule to end the exigency assessment judged attributable to the Great Recession. And the resulting shortfall will force them to go ahead with the last round of processing plant closings that will end USPS as we knew it going into this decade.

Once again, NNA makes a “goal-line stand” against a magazine and allied printing industry wanting the postage decrease and the plant closings. They can more or less “manage” delivery by revising their drop-shipment points across the nation, whereas newspapers often depend on an “end-to-end” system that is increasingly dysfunctional.

The NNA board has approved pursuit of this course, and NNA’s governmental relations staff, led by Tonda Rush, has been pursuing a bill to help fix USPS while also maintaining service levels.

At the same time, it has achieved a long-sought goal: Measurement of rural service levels, with agreement of USPS and the Postal Regulatory Commission. We should see the first results of this study soon, and it likely won’t be pretty.

© Max Heath 2016

Max Heath, National Newspaper Association postal chair, is a postal consultant for Athlon Media Group, publisher of Parade, American Profile, Relish, Spry Living, and Athlon Sports newspaper supplements, and also for Landmark Community Newspapers LLC. Email: maxheath@lcni.com.

Ad Conference registration deadline nears

Online registration for the 2016 Arkansas Press Association (APA) Advertising Conference has now been available for weeks. It will be held March 10-11 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute at Petit Jean Mountain. The electronic registration site can be accessed by following this link: www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016AdConference. Highlights of this year’s convention can also be found there.

In addition, a registration packet with more information was mailed to all APA members last month. Details and forms are also available in the “APA Spotlight” section on the association’s website (www.arkansaspress.org). The deadline to register is March 7.

The theme of this year’s Advertising Conference is “Selling in the Real World: How to make the right sale vs. any sale.” The featured speaker is Mike Centorani, co-founder of Sales Transformation Now, Inc. He will make a presentation to attendees on Thursday afternoon titled “Selling in the Real World.”

According to event planners for the advertising forum, “an evening reception and world class steak dinner will be served in the River Rock Grill Thursday evening.”

Friday morning will feature the ever-popular “Hot Ideas” session with cash prizes for the best idea as well as a session on “Success with APA Statewide Networks” presented by Eva Bakalekos and Neil McConnell, advertising network sales consultants for Arkansas Press Services, Inc. A luncheon will follow featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Arkansas Press Association Better Newspaper Advertising Awards.

REMINDERS AND RESOURCES

• Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.

• Gov’t/Legal Resources: Members are reminded to take advantage of APA’s online resources for newspapers, including statutes governing publication of notices and tax delinquency lists, state and federal advertising regulations, etc.

• APA Forums: The Arkansas Press Association (APA) Forums provide those working in the Arkansas newspaper business with a convenient, free, easy-to-use resource to network with others.

Arkansas Publisher Weekly 4 February 25, 2016
Nat’l Sunshine Week begins in 10 days

Members urged to contact their legislators, candidates

National Sunshine Week, the nationwide observance that annually emphasizes the importance of transparency in government and citizen access, begins in just 10 days — Sunday, March 13 — and runs through Saturday, March 19. The Arkansas Press Association (APA) is encouraging all members to participate in and help promote this important event.

Additionally, APA is urging all members to use this opportunity to contact their respective legislators and candidates during this election year to drive home the importance of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the transparency it provides and the rights and protections it affords the citizens of Arkansas. Newspapers should question those in public office or seeking one about their commitment to the FOIA and ask for pledges to help protect it.

The APA is continually fighting an increasing number of attempts to weaken the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act and conceal more documents and meetings from the public. Sunshine Week provides an opportunity to promote the principles open government acts or sunshine laws embody.

Free election directories still available

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) still has a number of copies of the 2016 Election Directory provided by the Arkansas Farm Bureau. Though some persons listed were eliminated in this week’s Super Tuesday primary, the directory is still a valuable resource for contacting active campaigns. Copies may be obtained from the APA at no cost while supplies last. Interested persons may contact Kathy Edwards (phone: 501.374.1500)
It’s a shame all those doomsayers regarding the newspaper industry couldn’t have been in Austin, Texas last week for the Mega-Conference, a gathering of 700 or so newspaper industry executives from all over the country.

If there was a word to describe my observation of those attending the conference it was “optimism,” and there was a lot of it. It hasn’t always been that way.

This was the sixth or seventh Mega-Conference I’ve been fortunate enough to attend. Actually, however many it’s been is how many I’ve attended, as I haven’t missed one yet. The conference itself represents the cooperation of three newspaper associations, the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association (SNPA), Inland Press Association and the Local Media Association, the leaders of which had vision enough to see that producing one of these conferences individually could never be as strong or as successful as joining forces on one big conference.

What has resulted is what has to be the best conference in the newspaper industry in terms of relevance to its audience and quality of programming. In fairness, I don’t attend all the national newspaper conferences, but it would be hard to imagine there being one better than this.

Some national newspaper conferences in the past few years have been attended by a shrinking number of long-faced executives, many of whom were totally at a loss how to counter the negative trending or to adjust to the changing environment in which newspapers find themselves these days. Clinging to the old ways and resistant of the changes that were coming, many of them just had no clue what just happened to them and their industry.

Thank goodness that didn’t happen for all of them, and several of them took the stage last week at the Mega-Conference to talk about the brave new world of newspapers. Not all of them were on the stage, however, as I got to visit with several who were not on the program but who had a lot of very positive things to say about how things were going at their newspaper or in their part of the country.

For years now some old-school publishers have been looking for a way to return to the good old days of 30 percent profit margins newspapers enjoyed in the 90s. They were…and are…frustrated that it just isn’t happening for them.

Here’s a news flash for them: it isn’t going to happen, and certainly not by doing the same things we’ve always done and expecting different results. And we all know for which that is the definition.

Add to “optimism” the word “excited” as a descriptor of several of those I encountered at this conference. There was a time when excitement wasn’t hard to come by at these sorts of conferences. People were excited about the newspaper business and all that it had to offer.

Then the business changed rather dramatically, and it happened right before our eyes … and in a short period of time. The truth is the newspaper business is still changing. It’s evolving, actually, and faster than most of us would like, but at least now we seem to have come to terms with the fact that the business is never going to be what it was just a decade or two ago.

Still, there remains great opportunity in the newspaper business and therein, I think, lies some of the aforementioned excitement I experienced in Austin. In fairness I would have to qualify that with a reserved excitement at our awakening to the fact that the change is here and the best thing for us to do at this point is to find a way to make it work for our newspapers and us.

And that’s just what some have done and more are doing all the time. That also explains why small newspapers are the prime targets for acquisition. Once considered the country cousins of the newspaper industry, it’s the smaller newspapers operating outside the metro areas that are figuring out how best to capitalize on the new opportunities before them.

Where once these newspapers looked to the metro dailies across the country as the go-to sources for how to do things in the newspaper industry, it is the smaller dailies and non-dailies across the country that are now taking the lead. And they are prospering as a result.

There are reasons for this, and it’s not because the operators or smaller newspapers are smarter or luckier, although that is sometimes the case. For the most part, smaller newspapers are more flexible in how they go about doing things. They can react to situations faster, and to make dramatic changes to their business model faster than their behemoth cousins in the city.

I’ll be the first to admit that I don’t like all the changes we’ve had to undergo in the newspaper industry, but we also know that it is infinitely much better for the long-term well being of our industry and our newspapers if we embrace the change and make the best of it. There are those who have figured this out, and in doing so they’ve found a new optimism about the future of our industry. And just as in a lot of life’s situations, optimism is contagious.

That has to be why national newspaper conferences like last week’s Mega-Conference feel much more upbeat and positive than some of these gatherings in recent past years. And why one comes away from the conference feeling good about the future of newspapers, and that yeah, we’re going to be just fine.

It won’t come easy or without considerable effort, but it will happen. Newspapers are no different than any other business. Things often happen that are beyond our control. These external factors often bring the necessity to re-evaluate and to adjust the way we do things. It definitely takes us out of our comfort zone. It would anybody.

When you are comfortable doing something a certain way and it works for you, it’s easy to get into that “zone.” When something comes along that threatens that zone, it’s only natural to resent it, resist it, and do the best we can to ignore it.

That was a phase I think a lot of newspapers, or at least the people that run them, went through a few years ago. Those long-face producing changes that sometimes make us feel left behind are never pleasant.

Now, however, I think we’ve grown more accustomed to the change that has come and the change that will inevitably continue to come. We’re more aware of it and we’re better prepared to react to it when it comes. In fact, I think there are those who now relish the change that comes, accepting it as a challenge and finding ways to make it work for them and their newspapers.

Have a great week!

Tom
Editorial Contest entry period under way

The submission period for the Arkansas Press Association’s 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest opened on Feb. 29, and entries will be accepted through March 31. As with this year’s Advertising Contest all entries will be submitted online at the following link: http://www.newspapercontest.com/Contests/ArkansasPressAssociation.aspx.

More information, including this year’s contest rules and categories, can be found on the APA website (www.arkansaspress.org) in the “Latest News” section at the bottom of the front page.

Entries will be judged by members of the Nebraska Press Association, and contest winners will be announced at the Annual Awards Luncheon on June 25 during the 2016 Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention in Bentonville.

Nominations for Special Awards open

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) announced in early February that it was now accepting nominations for the annual APA “Special Awards” to be presented Friday, June 24, at the SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

The special awards include:
• Golden 50 Service Award, for those who have labored at least 50 years in the newspaper industry.
• Distinguished Service Award, for those who have made a significant contribution to the APA and/or the newspaper industry.
• Headliner of the Year Award, presented to a person who has brought good headlines to the state of Arkansas during the past year and/or over the years. This could be a person, a group or even an organization.
• Journalism Educator Award, presented to a person who has made significant contributions to journalism education in Arkansas, either at the high school or the college level.
• Freedom of Information Award, given to the person who has defended the Arkansas FOI Act in some way, either in a single act or for ongoing efforts.

Nominating forms are available here: Special Awards Nominating Form. A list of past winners can be found here: List of Recipients of Special Awards. The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 25.

The APA Board of Directors will select the honorees from the nominations submitted at their annual spring retreat April 7-8.

Annual Ad Conference starts next week

More than 70 registered for event atop Petit Jean Mtn.

The 2016 Arkansas Press Association (APA) Advertising Conference starts one week from today, and the registration deadline is Monday — March 7. Online registration is still available by following this link: www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016AdConference. In addition, a registration packet with more information is available in the “APA Spotlight” section on the APA website (www.arkansaspress.org). The conference will be held March 10-11 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute atop Petit Jean Mountain.

The theme of this year’s Advertising Conference is “Selling in the Real World: How to make the right sale vs. any sale.” The featured speaker is Mike Centorani, co-founder of Sales Transformation Now, Inc. He will make a presentation to attendees on Thursday afternoon titled “Selling in the Real World.”

According to event planners for the advertising forum, “an evening reception and world class steak dinner will be served in the River Rock Grill Thursday evening.”

Friday morning will feature the ever-popular “Hot Ideas” session with cash prizes for the best idea as well as a session on “Success with APA Statewide Networks” presented by Eva Bakalekos and Neil McConnell, advertising network sales consultants for Arkansas Press Services, Inc. A luncheon will follow featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Arkansas Press Association Better Newspaper Advertising Awards.

A total of 72 are already signed up for the Ad Conference. Representing every area of the state, they are (alphabetically, by location):
• Batesville, Arkansas Weekly: Stacy Fields, Rebecca Payne
• Benton, The Saline Courier: Pat Stuckey, Amy Woods
• Clinton, Van Buren County Democrat: Megan Bailey
• Conway, Log Cabin Democrat: Sarah Allen, Betsey Barham
• Dardanelle, Dardanelle Post Dispatch: Mary Fisher, Billie Taylor
• El Dorado, El Dorado News-Times: Greta Bell, Ronnie Bell
• Fayetteville, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette: Lorinda Gray
• Forrest City, Times-Herald: Chelsea Ball, Amy Hale
• Greenwood, Greenwood Democrat: Lindsey Neel
• Hampton, South Arkansas Sun: Melba Thompson
• Harrison, Harrison Daily Times: Brandon Cane, Todd Edwards, Jim Perry, Morgan Taylor
• Hot Springs, The Sentinel-Record: Todd Frantz, Debe Johnson, MerryLee Meeker, Garry Richards
• Hot Springs Village, Hot Springs Village Voice: Jennifer Allen
• Huntsville, Madison County Record: Opal Dennis, David Hoye, Nancy Hoye
• Jacksonville, The Leader: John Henderson, Susan Swift
• Little Rock, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette: Michelle Cothern, Debbie Kiser, Erin Mize, Josh Mize, Kristin Stewart
• Little Rock, Arkansas Press Association: Eva Bakalekos, Terri Cobb, Tom Larimer, Neil McConnell, Rebecca McGraw, Ashley Wallace, Ashley Wimberley
• Mena: Mena Star: Vicki Agee, Andrew Berry, Paige Henley, Brooke Yandell
• Monticello, Advance Monticelionian: Annette Buzzell, Melissa Cason, Kristen Hodges, Vicki Kelly, Melina Long, Samantha Swisher, Tom White
• Mountain View, Stone County Leader: Ed Coates, Lisa Coates, Neal Fraser, Rusty Fraser, Daphne Morton
• North Little Rock, The Times: Teresa Mason
• Pine Bluff, Pine Bluff Commercial: Margie Savage
• Sheridan, The Sheridan Headlight: LeAnn Brown, Millie McClain
• Texarkana, Texarkana Gazette: MerryLee Meeker, Debbie Coates, Leslie Coates, Neal Fraser, Rusty Fraser, Daphne Morton

Kirk Blair, Rick Meredith; and
• Walnut Ridge, The Times Dispatch: Shantelle Redden

There is still room available, but APA’s block of rooms is almost sold out. Those interested in attending are advised to sign up as soon as possible. Those wishing to register by phone can call 501.374.1500.
The Donald doesn’t understand libel law ... which surprises no one

BY DAVID CHAVERN, NAA PRESIDENT & CEO

Donald Trump said [recently], “I’m gonna open up our libel laws, so when they write purposely negative and horrible, false articles, we can sue them and win lots of money.” The specific media outlets he mentioned were the New York Times and The Washington Post.

The first thing to understand is that under the landmark Supreme Court case of New York Times vs. Sullivan, it was determined that news organizations could be found liable when they deliberately publish false information. The specific standard is “actual malice.” So if Mr. Trump wants to address media organizations that “write purposely negative and horrible, false articles” then the law is already established as to his rights to do that.

But we all know that Mr. Trump isn’t interested in legalities in this case. He is clearly just trying to intimidate news organizations and bully them in providing more positive coverage of him and his candidacy for President. He should pick a different target. Newspapers have dealt with more intimidating figures than Mr. Trump.

Newspapers, actually, have a long, long history of responsibly speaking truth in the face of great power. One could think of Watergate or the Oscar-winning movie “Spotlight” for some better-known examples. Throughout history, those in power have complained about newspaper reporting when it didn’t meet their agenda and the number of instances where the reporting has been found to be on target has vastly out-weighed any circumstances where it wasn’t. The fact is that our society relies upon the newspaper industry to be a consistent, challenging voice to the wealthy and powerful -- and newspapers have a long history of carrying out that mandate with care and a deep sense of responsibility.

Newspapers have successfully stood-up to sitting Presidents, vast religious organizations, governors, mayors and immensely powerful corporations, among many others. If Mr. Trump wants to try to bully news organizations into providing reporting that he likes, then he will have to do a whole lot better than making weak, misguided promises about changes to a law that aren’t needed in the first place.

David Chavern is the president and CEO of the Newspaper Association of America, Arlington, Va.

REMINDERS AND RESOURCES

• The 2016 APA Advertising Conference will be held March 10-11 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain. More information, including online registration is available in the “APA Spotlight” section of the APA’s website: www.arkansaspress.org.

• National Sunshine Week, the annual observance aimed at raising awareness among citizens and politicians as to the importance of Freedom of Information laws, is March 13-19: www.sunshineweek.org.

• Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest. The submission period for the annual advertising competitions held by the Arkansas Press Association is now under way, and the deadline is March 31. For more information see the “Latest News” section of the association’s website: www.arkansaspress.org.

• Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.

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• APA Forums: The Arkansas Press Association (APA) Forums provide those working in the Arkansas newspaper business with a convenient, free, easy-to-use resource to network with others, find solutions to problems and stay connected with other APA members, all without having to step away from your desk. Visit the forums at http://onlineservices.arkansaspress.org/forums.

Weekly WORD

rodomontade
\rod*-uh-mon-TEYD, -TAHD, -muh n-, roh-duh\ 

noun
1. vainglorious boasting or bragging; pretentious, blustering talk.

adjective
2. bragging.

Verb (used without object), rodomontaded, rodomontading
3. to boast; brag; talk big.

Source: Dictionary.com

“I imagine hell like this: Italian punctuality, German humour and English wine.”

—Peter Ustinov
Week hailing sunshine laws starts Sunday
Newspapers encouraged to contact public officials

National Sunshine Week, the nationwide observance that annually emphasizes the importance of transparency in government and citizen access, begins this Sunday — March 13 — and runs through Saturday, March 19. The Arkansas Press Association (APA) is encouraging all members to participate in and help promote this important event.

Additionally, APA is urging all members to use this opportunity to contact their respective legislators and candidates during this election year to drive home the importance of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the transparency it provides and the rights and protections it affords the citizens of Arkansas. Newspapers should question those in public office or seeking one about their commitment to the FOIA and ask for pledges to help protect it.

The APA is continually fighting an increasing number of attempts to weaken the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act and conceal more documents and meetings from the public. Sunshine Week provides an opportunity to promote the principles open government acts or sunshine laws embody.

Sonny Albarado, special projects editor at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock, has been named state chairman for the 2016 observance of Sunshine Week. An op-ed he wrote for the occasion can be found on page 3. There are plans across the country for special news reporting, events spotlighting open government and the release of freedom of information studies. To assist newspapers and other media in helping call attention to Sunshine Week, a toolkit has been developed, and materials are available at www.sunshineweek.org.

A wealth of other information can be found there as well.

Sunshine Week is an annual initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. Sunshine Week 2016 is made possible through the support of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Bloomberg and The Gridiron Club and Foundation. National coordinators are the American Society of News Editors and the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. Participants include news media, civic groups, libraries, nonprofit organizations, schools and others interested in the public’s right to know.

Media Directories to begin mailing Wed.

There were a few unique factors that caused delays in the production schedule of this year’s Arkansas Media Directory published by the Arkansas Press Association (APA), but a partial shipment arrived at APA headquarters Tuesday afternoon. Staff will begin preparing for distribution and will start mailing copies later this week. On Wednesday notification letters and checks will be mailed to the winners of the Cover Photo Contest, and the top vote getters will be announced in the APA Forums (in the “Photography” Forum) on Friday. The Arkansas Media Directory is the only publication of its kind in the state.

APA/Atty General show is Wednesday

The Arkansas Press Association has, for many years now, partnered with the Arkansas Attorney General to present a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Roadshows” across the state. Staff members of Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge and the Arkansas Press Association have set the sites and dates for this year’s workshops, and the first will be held Wednesday, March 9 at Arkansas State University Mid-South, Marion Berry Renewable Energy Center, Room 136 in West Memphis. The event is free and open to all, but registration is required. Those wishing to attend can sign up for the road show at ArkansasAG.gov or by emailing foiaroadshow@ArkansasAG.gov.

The forums are designed for elected officials and custodians of public records as well as members of the general public and the press—anyone wanting to know about his or her rights and responsibilities under the state’s FOIA. This program has been approved for 2.0 hours of general Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit.
As you receive this we are about to convene at the Rockefeller Institute atop Petit Jean Mountain in Central Arkansas. The occasion is, of course, the annual Arkansas Press Association (APA) Advertising and Marketing Conference, and this year’s event has attracted a big crowd.

The institute been the setting for the Ad Conference for the past few years. There’s a good reason for that. Oh sure, it’s a great facility for our size meeting, and, oh yeah, it’s got a great view off the mountain. The meeting and sleeping rooms are great.

But none of these are the real reason we have returned for the past few years after moving the conference around for several years. We come here because this is what those who attend have requested. You can bet if there had been complaints after that first year we would been venue seeking immediately. That was not the reaction at all. Everything has been positive on previous events here and I don’t expect anything but more positive things to continue on this trip back up this beautiful mountain.

We’ll be talking sales there, mostly advertising sales but that’s what’s most important to those attending. We’ll talk “hot ideas,” a great time of sharing set aside for APA members to share ideas that have really worked for them. Read that: “have generated revenue for them.” And aren’t we all looking for some of that?

This year will have a presentation on the APA Advertising Networks. The networks have been around for years and the product line has expanded dramatically in that time. There remains great opportunity of newspapers to increase ad sales and certainly revenues by upping their game in terms of selling into the networks.

You really should be participating for all of the above reasons. This conference is one of the most productive we do in terms of time spent sharing ideas and promotions that can bring revenues to newspapers. It is a topic and an effort that is near and dear to all APA members.

Inevitably each year we’ll hear a story from a newspaper representative of a successful event or promotion that worked really well for him or her, the idea for which was picked up at a previous APA Ad Conference. That’s the moment you know that this is really working for APA newspapers.

We’ll be presenting the APA advertising awards here tomorrow. There is some really good work entered in this year’s contest. It’s always interesting to see what resonates with the judges and what sorts of ads are attracting the top awards.

You really should be there for this excellent opportunity.

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Roadshow” goes back on the road Wednesday for the first time in a couple of years. This stop is in West Memphis, a first for this event, and the first with new Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge.

The event will be held at the Arkansas State University Mid-South. I headed there on Tuesday to give opening remarks and to welcome the group. I will also introduce the attorney general.

Subsequent events will be held on the campus of Arkansas Tech University in Russellville on May 12, and at the Hope campus of the University of Arkansas on Sept. 6. There could be another to be named later.

These events are designed to enlighten and inform those subject to the state’s Freedom of Information Act. That would be elected and appointed officials, law enforcement officers, custodians of public records, and so on.

APA continues to partner with the Office of the Attorney General in staging these events because it is in our best interests — that would be APA member newspapers — to have those with whom we work in obtaining information to know what their rights and responsibilities are under the law.

Likely half of the phone calls I get at the APA office or on my cell phone are calls asking how to require a public official or a group of them, or a records custodian to abide by the FOIA. These calls come from our members, but they also come from citizens at large frustrated that their local city council, school board or quorum court is failing to live up to expectations under the FOIA.

These “Roadshow” events are a great way to get yourself up to speed on the FOIA. The sessions are comprehensive and the presenters keep it entertaining as they inform. If you get a chance to check one out, you really should. More importantly, when there is a “Roadshow” in your area, make sure your local officials and records custodians know about it.

The APA’s Nominating Committee will convene Friday, March 11, also at the Rockefeller Institute where the APA’s annual Advertising Conference will be ongoing. Two nominees are needed to fill vacancies on the APA board of directors. One board vacancy was created by Gary Troutman’s resignation when he left the industry, and the other vacancy will occur when Mary Fisher, APA immediate past president, leaves the board at the end of her tenure this summer.

Mary will chair the nominating committee as one of her last official functions. The APA bylaws require the immediate past president to fill the role as chairman of the nominating committee. The bylaws also require that one other board member and two at-large members serve on the committee.

Jay Edwards of The Daily Record will be the other board member on the committee. Joining them will be at-large members Jim Perry of the Harrison Daily Times and Van Tyson of The Atkins Chronicle.

The APA board of directors, at the annual spring retreat, will validate the nominees for the vacant board positions April 7-8 at the Folk Center in Mountain View. The nominees will be published three times in The Arkansas Publisher Weekly, and the annual election will be held in May.

There will also be a two-week period for self-nominations during the three-week publication schedule. APA members in good standing may nominate themselves to appear on the ballot by providing three letters of recommendations from three other APA members in good standing.

 Newly elected board members will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the annual APA SuperConvention to be held June 23-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

Have a great week!

Tom
Nominations for Special Awards open

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) announced in early February that it was accepting nominations for the annual APA “Special Awards” to be presented Friday, June 24, at the SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

The special awards include:

- Golden 50 Service Award, for those who have labored at least 50 years in the newspaper industry.
- Distinguished Service Award, for those who have made a significant contribution to the APA and/or the newspaper industry.
- Headliner of the Year Award, presented to a person who has brought good headlines to the state of Arkansas during the past year and/or over the years. This could be a person, a group or even an organization.
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Nominating forms are available here: Special Awards Nominating Form. A list of past winners can be found here: List of Recipients of Special Awards. The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 25.

The APA Board of Directors will select the honorees from the nominations submitted at their annual spring retreat April 7-8.

Editorial Contest entry period under way

The submission period for the Arkansas Press Association’s 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest opened on Feb. 29, and entries will be accepted through March 31. As with this year’s Advertising Contest, all entries will be submitted online at the following link: http://www.newspapercontest.com/Contests/ArkansasPressAssociation.aspx.

More information, including this year’s contest rules and categories, can be found on the APA website (www.arkansaspress.org) in the “Latest News” section at the bottom of the front page.

Entries will be judged by members of the Nebraska Press Association, and contest winners will be announced at the Annual Awards Luncheon on June 25 during the 2016 Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention in Bentonville.

Let the sun shine in on Arkansas political campaigns

BY SONNY ALBARADO, 2016 ARKANSAS CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL SUNSHINE WEEK

The press performs a public service when it can tell voters before an election who donates to a candidate’s campaign.

Voters also should be able to know who donates to groups that pay for “electioneering” ads in the weeks before an election. Those ads don’t urge a vote for or against a candidate, but cleverly – and often not subtly – imply that a candidate is on the wrong side of a particular issue, thus encouraging a vote without actually asking for it.

The groups that buy the ads are nonprofits that aren’t legally required to identify donors under IRS rules. But that doesn’t mean states can’t demand those groups identify where the money for the electioneering, or “sham-issue ads,” comes from.

After the recent Arkansas Supreme Court campaigns that saw a record amount spent on such ads by out-of-state groups, state leaders are calling for fresh laws to require those groups to register with the secretary of state’s office and identify their donors.

This news is especially heartening as the 11th National Sunshine Week approaches (March 13-19). Started in 2005 by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (now the American Society of News Editors), Sunshine Week coincides with the birth date of James Madison, father of the U.S. Constitution and an advocate of the Bill of Rights.

News organizations, journalists and supporters of laws that increase access to public information use Sunshine Week to highlight the benefits of transparency in the conduct of public business, including elections.

Gov. Asa Hutchinson said the day after the March 1 elections that he supports ending the election of appellate court judges, including state Supreme Court justices, by popular vote.

But even if Arkansas moves to merit selection of Supreme Court justices followed by retention elections, “sham-issue ads” by outside groups could continue to stain our electoral process if they aren’t required to register, as political action committees and campaigns must do, and aren’t required to reveal their donors.

Arkansas’ laws — specifically those applied to identifying contributors to political campaigns, including ballot initiatives — need to be modernized to reflect the realities of political activity and political speech in the 21st century.

Contributors to politically active nonprofits and trade associations may have a right to expect anonymity when their money goes to social purposes, but when the nonprofit exists primarily to produce so-called “issue” ads shortly before an election, its contributors should be identified.

Legislators could establish sensible thresholds for reporting contributions and contributors’ names. There could even be provisions to allow donors to a group to remain anonymous by designating that their contributions not be spent on regulated political campaigns.

But all of these proposals for increased openness in state election campaigns will be pointless if our campaign finance disclosure system itself is not modernized.

The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette produced a series of stories in January about major donors to the campaigns of state Supreme Court justices.

Reporting on those stories began shortly after the November 2014 elections, but the stories couldn’t be produced quickly because state campaign rules still allow candidates to file their disclosure reports on paper.

They aren’t even required to type them or to sort the donors alphabetically or by amounts. Oftentimes, the documents are illegible in spots because of poor photocopying.

Imagine you’re a voter with a regular job and not a reporter assigned to review thousands of pages of forms to try to answer what should be a simple question: What group, industry or profession is the biggest contributor to a candidate’s campaign?

It might take you longer than the eight months it took the journalist to compile all that information on a computer so that it —continued on page 4
could be tallied and analyzed.

The public, not just reporters, deserves a campaign finance disclosure system that requires candidates and others who must report campaign spending to file electronically via computers.

The law must also require the Secretary of State’s office to put those financial disclosures into a computer database with an online interface that allows anyone interested to search contributions by amounts, by donor, by office and by candidate.

That would be real campaign finance reform for Arkansas.

**Sonny Albarado** is the special projects editor for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette in Little Rock. A long-time member of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Coalition and 2014 recipient of the Arkansas Press Association’s Freedom of Information Award, he is also a past national president of the Society of Professional Journalists.

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**Reminder**

Sunday will mark the end of Standard Time 2015-16 and the advent of a roughly eight-month-long period of Daylight Saving Time. The official time to “spring forward” or adjust clocks and other time pieces forward one hour is 2 a.m., Sunday, March 13. This is the time change that results in the loss of one hour that observers will not recoup until the Holidays and General Elections approach next November. That is when most Americans will set their clocks back an hour reverting again to around four months of Standard Time. Arizona, Hawaii and all of the United States’ insular territories do not observe Daylight Saving Time.

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**Weekly WORD**

**isonomy**

\(\text{\textcopyright 2016 Dictionary.com}\)

1. equality of political rights.

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“I want to lose weight by eating nothing but moon pies, which have significantly less gravity than earthier foods such as fruits and vegetables.”

— Jarod Kintz

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**REMINDERS AND RESOURCES**

- **National Sunshine Week**, the annual observance aimed at raising awareness among citizens and politicians as to the importance of Freedom of Information laws, is March 13-19: [www.sunshineweek.org](http://www.sunshineweek.org).
- **Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest.** The submission period for the annual advertising competitions held by the Arkansas Press Association is now under way, and the deadline is March 31. For more information see the “Latest News” section of the association’s website: [www.arkansaspress.org](http://www.arkansaspress.org).
- **Press cards and decals** are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.
- **Gov’t/Legal Resources:** Members are reminded to take advantage of APA’s online resources for newspapers, including statutes governing publication of notices and tax delinquency lists, state and federal advertising regulations, etc.
National Sunshine Week is under way
Newspapers encouraged to contact legislators, candidates

National Sunshine Week, the nationwide observance that annually emphasizes the importance of transparency in government and citizen access, is under way. It began Sunday — March 13 — and runs through Saturday, March 19. The Arkansas Press Association (APA) is encouraging all members to participate in and help promote this important event.

Additionally, APA is urging all members to use this opportunity to contact their respective legislators and candidates during this election year to drive home the importance of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the transparency it provides and the rights and protections it affords the citizens of Arkansas. Newspapers should question those in public office or seeking one about their commitment to the FOIA and ask for pledges to help protect it.

The APA is continually fighting an increasing number of attempts to weaken the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act and conceal more documents and meetings from the public. Sunshine Week provides an opportunity to promote the principles open government acts or sunshine laws embody.

Sonny Albarado, special projects editor at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock, has been named state chairman for the 2016 observance of Sunshine Week. He wrote for the occasion was forwarded to all members last week. There are plans across the country for special news reporting, events spotlighting open government and the release of freedom of information studies. To assist newspapers and other media in helping call attention to Sunshine Week, a toolkit has been developed, and materials are available at www.sunshineweek.org. A wealth of other information can be found there as well.

The 2016 Arkansas Media Directory is here

Copies of the 2016 Arkansas Media Directory have been delivered to the Arkansas Press Association headquarters, and staff began distributing them last week. All members should have their copies by now. Published annually by the Arkansas Press Association (APA), it is the only publication of its kind in the state, offering comprehensive information on all print and broadcast media in the state. Additional copies may be purchased by contacting APA or by ordering from the association’s website in the Online Store.

A contest was conducted last year to determine the photos on the book’s cover. The winners, featured prominently there, were (clockwise from top) Kris Caraway of the Batesville Daily Guard, Staci Vandagriff of The Sun in Jonesboro, Bobby Burton of The Daily Record in Little Rock and Kay Bona, also of The Daily Record. They were announced earlier this week in the APA Forums (http://onlineservices.arkansaspress.org/forums/). Photos placing in this year’s contest, as well as in previous years, can be found in the “Photography” Forum.

Editorial Contest deadline is March 31

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More information, including this year’s contest rules and categories, can be found on the APA website (www.arkansaspress.org) in the “Latest News” section at the bottom of the front page.

Entries will be judged by members of the Nebraska Press Association, and contest winners will be announced at the annual Awards Luncheon on June 25 during the 2016 Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention in Bentonville.
It was certainly appropriate timing that the first in a 2016 series of Freedom of Information (FOIA) “Roadshow” events took place last week in West Memphis, practically on the eve of National Sunshine Week.

In case you haven’t been paying attention, this is Sunshine Week and will remain so through Saturday. I hope you’ve made mention of it or at least to have run Sonny Albarado’s op-ed piece on Sunshine Week, which I might add was quite well done. The Arkansas Press Association (APA) sent Sonny’s piece to all member newspapers last week.

But even if you didn’t publish this piece, I hope you did something to observe the week. If we don’t then who will? The answer? Nobody.

So okay, Sunshine Week isn’t up there with Valentine’s Day or Labor Day Weekend, but it is just as important. This is when we call attention to the importance of transparency in government, and keeping public meetings and public records open and accessible to the public.

We just cannot over-emphasize the spreading of the word on transparency in government because there remain those who don’t see the need for it; that the public’s business is really no business of the public.

The education process must be ongoing.

Speaking of the FOI “Roadshow” in West Memphis, this was a stellar start to the series planned for this year. There were almost 70 in the room during the presentations from personnel from the Office of Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge. The General herself was there to make opening remarks before turning it over to Beth Walker and Ryan Owsley of her staff to do the heavy lifting for the presentation.

Most of the time when we venture off into the corner, or in this case the side of the state, the crowds are traditionally smaller than when we are in Central Arkansas. The exceptions to that have been the sessions held on the University of Arkansas campus in Fayetteville when the number has reached as many as 100.

So based on that, it was a pleasant surprise that this many people showed up to learn more about the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and, more importantly, their own rights and responsibilities under the law. Among those present were elected officials, public records custodians, law enforcement officers and others subject to the FOIA.

Frankly, the scheduling of this first in the series of “Roadshow” events was not intentionally scheduled to closely coincide with Sunshine Week. It wasn’t, but it was nice that it turned out that way.

It was also validating that so many showed up for the first FOIA event of the year. The more we can bring up to speed on the FOI, the better it will be for all of us. That is indeed why we continue to do it.

The 2016 APA Advertising Conference is now in the books and it turned out to be one of the best yet. Mike Centorani, the featured presenter, received high marks from those attending this afternoon session last Thursday at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain. He brought a fresh perspective to the sales process, and related it well to the 40 people in the room for the opening ad conference session.

The hot ideas session Friday morning at the ad conference proved once again to be a lively discussion of good ideas that work at Arkansas newspapers. Todd Edwards of The Harrison Daily Times was voted as having the best “hot idea,” while Teresa Mason of The Times in North Little Rock took second and Paige Henley of the Mena Star took third. Each received a cash stipend for their presentations.

Of course, most of these ideas are those that produced revenues for newspapers, and some of them were quite innovative, and some were interesting re-works of classic newspaper promotions. And, as is often the case, I heard from more than one attending the conference that this session alone more than paid for the trip to the annual Advertising Conference. If you missed this one you really should plan on being at the next one.

It’s always refreshing to see the creativity that is at work at many APA member newspapers, and that representatives of those newspapers are still so willing to freely share their success stories so that others might find a way to incorporate the approach into their own operations. Several of the “hot ideas” were definitely “outside the box” and certainly out of the mainstream of the traditional newspaper promotions. It was an excellent showcase of examples of newspapers extending their reach into non-traditional events and promotions that newspapers would not likely have involved themselves in years past.

In short, you have to look beyond the traditional revenue streams to be successful in today’s newspaper industry. There were a lot of really good examples of this at the Ad Conference. I’m sorry if you missed it. I heard from more than one person that this session alone was worth the price of the ad conference registration.

The annual Better Newspaper Advertising Contest awards were presented at the closing luncheon Friday. This event attracted a larger than normal crowd in this the first year of the transition to digital contest entry submissions. APA made the switch this year after conducting the contest manually from hard-copy tear sheets submitted by newspapers for past competitions.

For the most part those attending the Ad Conference seem to be happy with the new approach. Not all, mind you, but most. The transition in the contest, which will also be true for the Better Newspaper Editorial Contest for the first time this year, represents change, and not many of us readily adapt to that.

The Ad Contest entry folks seemed to have adapted quite well and quickly in submitting their entries in a digital platform. I’m sure the editorial types will find the same to be true with their contest, the deadline for which is March 31.

The awards for the Editorial Contest will be presented Saturday, June 25, at the closing luncheon of the annual SuperConvention to be held at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

Have a great week!

Tom

Arkansas Publisher Weekly 2 March 17, 2016
Nominations for Special Awards open

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) announced in early February that it was accepting nominations for the annual APA “Special Awards” to be presented Friday, June 24, at the SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

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Special Awards Nominating Form. A list of past winners can be found here: List of Recipients of Special Awards. The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 25.

The APA Board of Directors will select the honorees from the nominations submitted at their annual spring retreat April 7-8.

ANF Internship Program deadline extended

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), the non-profit educational arm of the Arkansas Press Association (APA), announced this week that there four host newspaper openings for the 2016 ANF Internship Program. The foundation provides four matching grants of up to $1,500.00 to host newspapers for the summer internship position. “The host newspapers are selected on a first-come, first-served basis,” explained Karen Brown, executive director of ANF. “Host newspapers may interview and select an intern from applications received through the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation, or they may select their own applicant from a local source following the same criteria.”

The deadline for host newspapers to complete an application has been extended to March 20. Applications and additional deadlines are detailed in the information posted on the Arkansas Press Association’s website at www.arkansaspress.org. The Newspaper Foundation section may be accessed by using the corresponding drop down menu and selecting the menu item, “ANF Internships.” Those interested in participating in this year’s program are encouraged to contact Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

PNRC files comments against EPA proposal

The Public Notice Resource Center (PNRC) on Feb. 29 filed comments urging the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) not to deprive the public of newspaper notices relating to the approval of permits under the Clean Air Act (CAA). EPA is considering notifying the public about CAA permits only on a government website.

PNRC was joined in the comments by the 41 other organizations representing newspapers and journalists that are listed below.

On Dec. 29 EPA announced its intention to reduce the public notice it currently provides in connection with most CAA actions by eliminating the requirement that the notices run in local newspapers near the potential sources of pollution EPA is planning to approve.

“If EPA moves forward with this proposal, it will increase the likelihood that the people who stand to feel the greatest impact from its decisions will be left in the dark until it’s too late,” said Bradley L. Thompson II, president of PNRC. “The Agency’s determination to inform citizens about its plans by posting notices in obscure corners of its website isn’t sufficiently transparent. It is especially unfortunate when pollsters tell us people are suspicious of Washington. Keeping these notices local in places where readers will find them is a good way to combat public cynicism.”

PNRC’s comments note that EPA based its proposal on the mistaken assumption that citizens affirmatively seek public notices and will regularly visit its website to learn about its plans. PNRC also notes that for over 200 years lawmakers have required public notices to be published in newspapers because they offer the best opportunity to reach local, civically engaged readers who are most likely to have a personal interest in the plans and activities described in the notices.

PNRC is a nonprofit organization that provides research and public education materials on the use of public notice in newspapers. It is supported by contributions from newspaper organizations throughout the U.S., including members of the American Court and Commercial Newspapers and most state press associations. Click here for a copy of PNRC’s comments.

Schexnayder honored at women’s dinner

Charlotte Tillar Schexnayder was recently honored at the Jimmy Lou Fisher — Lottie Shackelford Dinner held at the Clinton Presidential Center. The annual Democratic Women’s Dinner highlights issues that matter to women in Arkansas and honors women for their work in public service. Schexnayder, formerly of Dumas, was co-owner of the Dumas Clarion, a past president of the Arkansas Press Association, a former state representative to the Arkansas General Assembly and the first woman appointed to the Arkansas Board of Pardons and Parole.
Ad Libs:
Less talk can lead to more sales

BY JOHN FOUST, RALEIGH, N.C.

Andy was telling me about his dealings with media sales people. “Since I run a local business, I hear from a lot of people,” he said. “One particular meeting really stands out, because he talked himself out of a sale. As soon as he said ‘hello,’ he jumped right into his sales pitch. As he talked, everything was a blur of facts and figures. It was obvious that he was so proud of his presentation that he didn’t want anything to throw him off track. He showed no interest in my business or what we needed to accomplish with our marketing. Finally, when he pulled up a spreadsheet on his laptop, I cut him short and sent him on his way.

“It reminded me of somebody my wife and I used to know. Every time he called, he talked non-stop, without giving us a chance to say anything. We joked that we could put down the phone, make a sandwich, eat lunch, pick up the phone again to say, ‘Uh huh’ – and he wouldn’t know we’d been away.

There’s a lot of truth in the old cliché, “Lord, fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff, and shut it when I’ve said enough.” Here are some points to keep in mind:

1. This is probably not your prospect’s first advertising appointment. The longer he or she has been in business, the greater the likelihood that it has all been heard before. If they think “been there, done that,” they’ll tune you out.

2. They are giving you the gift of their time. Show respect for that generosity by making the conversation meaningful for them.

3. A dialogue is better than a monologue. The best way to encourage engagement is to ask questions – and listen carefully to the answers. Ask questions to get details about their marketing. Ask questions to find out what has worked for them in the past. Ask questions to discover needs.

There’s nothing wrong with asking, “Is this the kind of information you need?” That kind of feedback will help you. They may want a lot of factoids. Or they may be like the person who says, “Don’t give me the history of the watch. Just tell me what time it is.” It’s your job to adapt to them, not expect them to adapt to you.

“When I meet with a media sales person, it’s to help me make good marketing decisions,” Andy said. “I don’t need a long-winded sales speech.”

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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.

REMINDERS AND RESOURCES

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• Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest. The submission period for the annual news-editorial competition held by the Arkansas Press Association is now under way, and the deadline is March 31. For more information see the “APA Spotlight” section of the association’s website: www.arkansaspress.org.

• Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.
Tomorrow is Special Awards deadline

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The APA board will select the honorees from the nominations submitted at their annual spring retreat April 7-8. A list of previous winners includes four presidential candidates — Former President Bill Clinton, Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Past Supreme Allied Commander Europe of NATO Gen. Wesley Clark and Former Governor Mike Huckabee.

New Arkansas Media Directory is available

All Copies of the 2016 Arkansas Media Directory have now been delivered to the Arkansas Press Association headquarters, and staff has distributed copies to all members and subscribers. They should have their copies by now. Published annually by the Arkansas Press Association (APA), it is the only publication of its kind in the state, offering comprehensive information on all print and broadcast media in the state. Additional copies may be purchased by contacting APA at 501.374.1500 or by ordering from APA’s website (www.arkansaspress.org) in the Online Store.

A contest was conducted last year to determine the photos on the book’s cover. The winners, featured prominently there, were (in photo at right, clockwise from top) Kris Caraway of the Batesville Daily Guard, Staci Vandagriff of The Sun in Jonesboro, Bobby Burton of The Daily Record in Little Rock and Kay Bona, also of The Daily Record. They were announced earlier this week in the APA Forums (http://onlineservices.arkansaspress.org/forums/). Photos placing in this year’s contest, as well as in previous years, can be found in the “Photography” Forum.

Editorial Contest deadline is March 31

The submission period for the Arkansas Press Association’s 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest opened on Feb. 29, and entries will be accepted through March 31. As with this year’s Advertising Contest, all entries will be submitted online at the following link: http://www.newspapercontest.com/Contests/ArkansasPressAssociation.aspx.

More information, including this year’s contest rules and categories, can be found on the APA website (www.arkansaspress.org) in the “Latest News” section at the bottom of the front page.

Entries will be judged by members of the Nebraska Press Association, and contest winners will be announced at the annual Awards Luncheon on June 25 during the 2016 Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention in Bentonville.
The nomination period remains open for the Arkansas Press Association’s (APA) “Special Awards” that will be presented as always at the SuperConvention this summer in Bentonville. But time for nominations is running short.

The special awards include:
• The Golden 50 Service Award;
• The Headliner of the Year Award;
• Distinguished Service Award;
• The Freedom of Information Award; and
• The Journalism Educator of the Year Award.

Nominations will be collected until the end of March, which is one week. After that the APA board of directors will make the award selections from the nominations received.

These awards are truly special. All you need do is scan the list of past recipients of the awards over the years and see that it is comprised of a who’s who in Arkansas journalism and Arkansas public service.

Please give some thought to these nominations. If you know of someone who should be so honored but who has not as yet been, just submit the nomination to the APA office. Forms for the nominations were sent out last month and can also be found on the APA’s website (www.arkansaspress.org) — in the “Latest News” section.

In the 2016 Advertising Conference held recently at the Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain was a stellar event. No, that’s not just my (perhaps less than objective) opinion of the event. That’s what I heard from several of those attending, some of whom went out of their way to tell me how good the conference was for them.

Mike Centorani, the featured presenter for Thursday afternoon’s session, proved to be an excellent choice in his first trip to an APA event. Centorani, a resident of the Raleigh, N.C. area, brought some excellent insights into the sales process and for dealing with advertisers. He included several examples of the successful applications of the process in real world situations.

These are the kind of things that any advertising person at newspapers of any size could use successfully in dealing with their local advertisers. It was good information. Honestly, it may not have been anything new, but it was an excellent compilation of a total sales process filled with common sense solutions to helping businesses grow and prosper.

Todd Edwards and The Harrison Daily Times again won the top prize in the “Hot Ideas” session held Friday morning. The Times has “owned” this prize in recent years, as they’ve continued to be creative in their approach to involving the newspaper in the community setting. The idea that won the top prize was the “Women of Distinction” and the subsequent “Men of Distinction” events sponsored by the newspaper.

These kinds of things are great for a number of reasons. Of course, number one is that they create revenue opportunities, but at the same time they raise the newspaper’s profile in the community while recognizing some of their leading citizens.

I think that what you call a win-win situation.

Those attending the hot ideas session vote on who wins the top prizes. Second place went to Teresa Mason of the Gatehouse Central Arkansas properties, and third when to Paige Henley of The Mena Star.

The real winners were those in the room who got to benefit from the great ideas presented. I saw several taking a lot of notes. There were enough ideas to keep a newspaper advertising staff busy for a long, long time. Perhaps even maybe until the next hot ideas session at next year’s advertising conference. You should come, and be sure to bring samples of your hot idea.

Once again the Rockefeller Institute received high marks from those attending. There is little question they feed you well at this venue, an attribute that would be hard not to notice. If you like red meat you’ll love it there. They still raise it there you know? Lots of it.

And they have a culinary school with a certified chef. It shows in the edible offerings.

Chances are good we’ll be heading back there next year.

You should come.

The battle to preserve public notices in newspapers is ongoing on several fronts. The strategy of those seeking to end the traditional practice of government informing the taxpaying public of what they are doing and how they’re spending their tax dollars in the form of public notices in newspapers has become clear in recent years.

They don’t seek to abolish the publication of public notices in newspapers all at once. Instead they have chosen to nibble away at the practice by eliminating, where they can, the requirement to publish.

Not all of these are government public notices, either. Some involve protection of the public and their property from those who would wrongfully take possession of it. And yet this, too, is under attack in several states.

I’m talking about the self-storage industry which is now challenging state laws in several states that require operators to publish notice of delinquent renters of their units before entering and liquidating their property. This strategy has been successful in some states, and the battle continues in others.

Some states, like Kentucky and Florida, rejected the removing of the self-storage notices.

Arkansas does have such a law on the books, Ark. Code Ann. 18-16-407, that requires self-storage facilities in the state to publish one time in a newspaper before taking possession of property stored in their units and disposing of it.

If you haven’t seen any of these notices from your self-storage businesses, you might make some inquiries regarding this omission.

There has been no effort to date in the Arkansas legislature to change the self-storage publication requirement, but it is likely just a matter of time. That fight is ongoing in Louisiana as we speak.

There are any numbers of statutes on the books in Arkansas that lack compliance on the part of those required to publish the notices. If you haven’t already, download a copy of the Public and Legal Notices Digest, from the APA website. It lists all of the required public notices. You may find other notices required to be published by government or even non-government entities that haven’t been publishing them with you.

It’s not only perhaps some lost revenue for your newspaper, but it could lead to a juicy local news story if those required to publish are just refusing to do so.

Have a great week!
Rachel Wright joins Hope Star newsroom

Rachel Wright has joined the staff of The Hope Star as a reporter and assistant to the editor. A graduate of Jessville High School, she graduated from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) in 2015. She wrote for UALR’s student newspaper, The Forum, and was vice president of the French Club. She resided in Little Rock before relocating to Hope.

Kaley Webb named editor of Era-Enterprise

Kaley Webb was named editor of the DeWitt Era-Enterprise earlier this month. Born and raised in Arkansas County, she is a DeWitt resident and attends college at the DeWitt Campus of University of Arkansas Phillips Community College (PCCUA) for Behavioral Health.

Jones to serve as associate ed for CCN

Samantha Jones has been named associate editor for Carroll County Newspapers (CCN) headquartered in Berryville. In her new position she will be responsible for the daily news operations for the Lovely County Citizen in Eureka Springs and will contribute as a writer and editor for the Carroll County News in Berryville. Jones has served as a reporter for the Carroll County News since July 2014. A native of Texarkana, Texas, she graduated from Lyon College in Batesville in 2014 with a bachelors degree in journalism. She resides in Eureka Springs.

Internship Program deadline pushed back

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), the non-profit educational arm of the Arkansas Press Association (APA), is reminding APA members that there are four host newspaper openings for the 2016 ANF Internship Program. The foundation provides four matching grants of up to $1,500.00 to host newspapers for the summer internship position. “The host newspapers are selected on a first-come, first-served basis,” explained Karen Brown, executive director of ANF. “Host newspapers may interview and select an intern from applications received through the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation, or they may select their own applicant from a local source following the same criteria.”

NNA responds to ‘good-bad’ postal news

—from the National Newspaper Association

Community newspapers face the classic good-news-bad-news scenario in an announcement that postage prices will decline April 10.

The good news is that the First Class Mail stamp price will fall to 47 cents and mailing classes used by newspapers will decline 3 percent to 5 percent.

The bad news is that the financial relief is temporary, and the consequences could be severe to the already-worrisome service levels.

National Newspaper Association President Chip Hutcheson, publisher of The Times-Leader in Princeton, Ky., testified to a Senate committee in January that the National Newspaper Association (NNA) supported the freeze in rates contemplated by Sen. Thomas Carper’s iPOST bill, S. 2051, rather than the temporary rollback. He said a survey of NNA members indicated that more than two-thirds were concerned about harm to their businesses in declining service standards. Though postage is costly, members felt that if stable rates avoided further deterioration in service, they were willing to pay the price.

The April 10 rollback is a consequence of a long-fought battle between the mailing industries and the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) that began in 2011. The Postal Service asked for an increase more than three times current cost-of-living inflation to help it stem financial losses that it claimed resulted from the Great Recession. Mailing organizations, including NNA, argued that the losses were not solely from the recession but were from Internet disruption that the Postal Service should have foreseen and addressed.

The Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the Postal Service was allowed a price increase, but could collect the extra funds only until its coffers were replenished from the recession hits. The Postal Regulatory Commission ordered USPS to identify the day when the recession reparations were complete and then to lower postage prices. That day has now been identified. So on April 10, postage rates will go down.

“We can’t be unhappy at a rate rollback, particularly when we objected to the increase in the first place,” Hutcheson said, “but the higher rates happened and we have adjusted. Now we think a rollback is going to lead to worse pain in the future. We think the Postal Service now goes back to bleeding red ink. We had urged Congress to act quickly to prevent this pain point. I have to say, to my great regret, that Congress has failed the mailing world by not letting USPS truly reform its costs rather than just slashing service.”

“The problem we have now,” said Max Heath, NNA Postal Committee chair, “is that newspapers have already seen a loss of more than a day in handling at mail processing plants. In the national networks, the service reduction was supposed to be from one to two days to two to three days within the SCF and at least a day longer for each zone. But the reality is that the service can take a week or 10 days. Now the Postal Service is going to be pushed by the very Congress that cannot enact postal reform to start cutting costs again. More mail processing plants will be on the cutting list. Newspaper mail will get slower and our readers are the ones taking the losses.”
Greenwood Democrat

Neel joins staff of Greenwood Democrat

Lindsey Neel has taken over the sales position at the Greenwood Democrat and will be working in Greenwood as well as in Charleston for the Charleston Express. According to a spokesman for the Democrat, this will be the first time either newspaper (both owned by GateHouse Media) has had a dedicated sales representative in years. Neel is a graduate of Greenwood High School and earned an associate’s degree from the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith.

The following column by David Chavern was written to coincide with National Sunshine Week, which concluded on Saturday.

Transparency in government is essential to upholding American democracy. When citizens have access to behind-the-scenes information about local and federal administrations, politicians are held accountable. The public is educated and engaged. And our nation is strengthened.

It is popular to pledge honest and open leadership while on the campaign trail, but America does not have the best track record in keeping these promises. In fact, Pew research finds that just five percent of Americans believe the government is doing a good job of sharing key information.

Public access to information is vital in preserving the values upon which our nation was founded. It is also critical in enabling journalists to fulfill their role as the watchdogs of society. While citizens and journalists can personally obtain public records through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) system, the process is both outdated and inefficient.

Congress is now considering legislation that would update the Freedom of Information Act in time for its 50th anniversary later this year. The FOIA Improvement Act of 2015 (S. 337) takes a number of important steps to reduce the expense and time required to access key information. The new legislation writes into law the existing presumption of openness rule (agencies can only withhold information if the disclosure would cause specific harm), aims to make requests more efficient by modernizing technology tools and limits the ability of agencies to keep internal deliberations that are more than 25 years old confidential, among other improvements.

This legislation matters because access to government records often results in real change. The Flint water crisis was first uncovered when researchers at Virginia Tech University requested and researched public information. Our national conversation around veterans’ timely receipt of benefits was likewise sparked by a close study of government documents obtained through the FOIA process.

If the legislation is passed, these missteps can be exposed quicker and amended faster. It is the media’s job to shine a light – but we will continue to remain in darkness for too long unless these improvements are enacted.

There remains much to be done to instill confidence in citizens and ensure those in power are being held responsible for their actions. Amending this act and streamlining the processes by which the public can access government information is an important start.

The stakes are especially high in the midst of an election year, when candidates hold a variety of positions about political openness. But whoever the next leader of the free world is, they must understand their responsibility to remain transparent. They have a duty to the American people that cannot be taken lightly.

It is free, nationwide access to information that keeps Americans educated and ensures that our political leaders are transparent. Since this week has been designated as “Sunshine Week,” an annual national initiative that encourages openness in government and the free flow of information to the public, it is worth reflecting on the role information plays in strengthening our democracy. America can only be a strong nation when its citizens are engaged and informed. In light of Sunshine Week and for the benefit of all citizens, I encourage our leaders to push the FOIA Improvement Act forward.

REMINDERS AND RESOURCES

- Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest. The submission period for the annual news-editorial competition held by the Arkansas Press Association is now under way, and the deadline is March 31. For more information see the “APA Spotlight” section of the association’s website: www.arkansaspress.org.

- Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.

Amanda Allen

Amanda Louise Allen, 35, of Roland died Feb. 14 in her home. She was in management for the Southwest Times Record (now the Times Record) in Fort Smith. Funeral services were held in Van Buren on Feb. 22.

Sunshine Week: Encouraging Increased Transparency in Gov’t

BY DAVID CHAVERN, NAA PRESIDENT & CEO

Weekly Word

joie de vivre

\zhwaduh VEE-vruh\ , noun

1. a delight in being alive; keen, carefree enjoyment of living.

Source: Dictionary.com

“Reality continues to ruin my life.”

— Bill Watterson

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

4

March 24, 2016
2016 Arkansas Media Directory is available

All Copies of the 2016 Arkansas Media Directory have now been delivered to the Arkansas Press Association headquarters, and staff has distributed copies to all members and subscribers. They should have their copies by now. Published annually by the Arkansas Press Association (APA), it is the only publication of its kind in the state, offering comprehensive information on all print and broadcast media in the state. Additional copies may be purchased by contacting APA at 501.374.1500 or by ordering from APA’s website (www.arkansaspress.org) in the Online Store.

A contest was conducted last year to determine the photos on the book’s cover. The winners, featured prominently there, were (in photo at right, clockwise from top) Kris Caraway of the Batesville Daily Guard, Staci Vandagriff of The Sun in Jonesboro, Bobby Burton of The Daily Record in Little Rock and Kay Bona, also of The Daily Record. They were announced earlier this week in the APA Forums (http://onlineservices.arkansaspress.org/forums/). Photos placing in this year’s contest, as well as in previous years, can be found in the “Photography” Forum.

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In addition to the in depth information on Arkansas media, the book also includes listings of government officials, other press/newspaper associations and Arkansas Press Association board members and staff.

Inland announces three webinars for April

The Inland Press Association (Inland) announced a series of webinars scheduled during April. Arkansas Press Association members can register at reduced rates. The upcoming webinars are:

- Social Marketing/Social Commerce 2.0
  Wednesday April 13 | 10:30 a.m. CDT
  It will be presented by Shannon Kinney, Founder and Client Success Officer, Dream Local Digital.

- Saving Print: Highlights From 25 Ways to Improve Your Print Products in 2016
  Friday April 15 | 10:30 a.m. CDT
  The webinar presenters are Bill Ostendorf, founder and president, Creative Circle Media Solutions, and Mark Stange, MWStange LLC.
  How a small-town paper became a champion of innovation: The Forsyth County (Ga.) News story
  Monday, April 18 | 2:00pm CDT
  The webinar leader is Vince Johnson, publisher, Forsyth County News

Those interested in participating in one or more of the webinars can get more information and register by visiting Inland’s website: www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars/.

NNA for impact study of OT regs

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) this week applauded the recent introduction of the Protecting Workplace Advancement and Opportunity Act (S. 2707 and H.R. 4773). The legislation would require the Department of Labor to study the impact on small businesses, nonprofits and public employers of the agency’s plan to increase the minimum salary level for employees to qualify as exempt from overtime pay. It would also delay publication of the Labor Department’s expected regulation.

Under the Labor Department’s proposal, the minimum salary level would increase 113 percent, from $23,660 to $50,440 per year. In the 78 years since the federal overtime rules were established, the agency has set the threshold at the 10th or 20th percentile of median salaries in the U.S.; its proposal would establish the 40th percentile of median salaries in the U.S. as the new demarcation point for exempt employees.

NNA and other newspaper advocacy organizations believe an update to the salary threshold is warranted, but the size of the increase is imprudent because businesses generally cannot make such dramatic adjustments in such a short period of time. The new rule would hurt the operational and economic sustainability of NNA’s community newspapers, most of which are small family businesses. Many operate in rural areas where costs of living are lower than in urban areas.

“The Labor Department’s proposal is a one-size-fits-all solution that mandates the same minimum salary level regardless of where it is being enforced,” said NNA President Chip Hutcheson, publisher of The Times Leader in Princeton, Ky. “The new threshold may make sense in New York City or Washington, but it will hurt businesses and employees in the small towns and rural areas where most community newspapers are published.”
For you high school graduates, how’s your memory about the graduation ceremony that brought your high school years to an end and sent you on your merry way to make your way in life?

Memory is a funny thing. Often I can recall things that happened years ago, but not something that happened much more recently. Like last week or last month. There is surely an explanation for this, but at this point I’m more interested in the phenomena than the causation theories. I also know this condition is not unique to me, as I’ve heard this from many others.

Perhaps I should explain. Just last weekend I attended my high school class reunion. The occasion was the 50th anniversary of our graduation. Now, I know what you’re thinking. I couldn’t possibly be old enough to have graduated from high school 50 years ago. I know this because I can’t believe it myself.

The only explanation I have is that I was born at a very young age. But yes, there I was, a member of the Class of ’66.

So anytime you’re thrown together with a group of people with whom you shared many a formative years experience, the “do you remember when?” questions fly. Unfortunately, my answer to most of them was “no, not really.” That was particularly embarrassing, as I was a central figure in most of those happenings that were being recalled.

Then one of my sweet female classmates asked if everyone remembered with whom they walked on graduation night. You know, the graduates walk in two at a time, one boy and one girl together. Do they still do that? We didn’t get to pick with whom we walked. It was assigned.

So anyway the question was asked and directed at me. I had to confess that I did not remember with whom I had walked. That was truly unfortunate, as it turns out it was the very same sweet lady asking the question. Oops!

There are just some things that stick indelibly in the mind and in the memory banks. I played a lot of sports in high school, and I can remember many details about some basketball games in which I played. Baseball games, too, in the summer months. I remember the name of the lady who ran the school cafeteria, the school janitor and the librarians at every level of school I attended, namely elementary, junior high (back before they invented middle school) and high school.

I can name all my teachers, from first grade on up, as well as the names of the principals and certainly the superintendent. I can remember my high school locker number. I had the same locker for all three years of high school. So okay, it was number one, so that makes it a little easier to remember. I don’t recall the combination on the lock I used on my locker.

I remember vividly being in the cast of a black minstrel show we staged in junior high, the brainchild of the music teacher. I even remember the lyrics from my solo rendition of “Under the Bamboo Tree.” Never heard of it? Look it up. Politically correct it is definitely not.

The music teacher had us paint up in day-glow paint, around our lips, on our eyebrows, hands and ankles, and talk like black people when delivering our lines. She employed black lights and extinguished the house lights during the performance. It was quite a display.

Can you imagine even suggesting doing that today? I’m so thankful there were no black kids in our school to be humiliated by this display, but then again if there had been we likely wouldn’t have been doing it. At least I would hope not. We just didn’t know any better, but I do recall being uneasy about it at the time. And nobody said one thing about the political incorrectness of the whole affair. That just didn’t exist in those days.

Yes, I can remember vividly all of this. Yet I couldn’t remember with whom I walked at graduation. Obviously the sweet lady asking the question was not so challenged in the memory department. She remembered clearly and in detail. I was there, right in the middle of it all, and have no recollection.

That’s a little unsettling. But, hey, it was 50 years ago, right? There were only 40 in our graduating class at good ole Green Forest High School. There were considerably larger classes on either side of us, but for some reason there was a gap in our year when there was apparently a lull in the baby boom. That would have been around 1948.

The president of our senior class was our valedictorian. I was the vice president, but that certainly did not make me the salutatorian. The only thing that kept me out of that top spot academically were those 13 over-achievers who finished ahead of me. So yeah, ok, I do recall not being a very dedicated student.

There were 21 class members who attended the reunion last Saturday. Considering we have lost six of our class members, that’s a fairly good percentage of the ’66 graduates. We had lunch at our home in Green Forest and spent most of two hours catching up with each other. We spent the whole two hours, but it seemed more like 15 minutes. It wasn’t enough time.

We were supposed to go en masse and tour the school at 1 p.m. Our first stop was the high school library where we spent another two hours talking about the time we spent together in school, the funny things that had occurred and sometimes the not so funny. Some of those in my class have very good memories about our high school days together.

The one word that sums up gathering with people you attended school with 50 years ago is “surreal.” It was great fun, however, and all of those attending expressed interest in getting together yet again. I for one would make a concerted effort to be there.

It was an incredible experience reliving another time in my life. So much has happened since I walked in that graduation line, with Judy Collins as it turns out. Thomas Wolfe was right about not being able to “go home,” but you can re-visit those happier times and with those whom you shared them.

I can highly recommend it.

Have a great week!

Tom
Discounted access to webinars restored

Due to some miscommunication between the Arkansas Press Association (APA) and the Inland Press Association (Inland), APA members were, for a period of time, unable to gain access to Inland’s webinars at the discounted price of $15. The discounts accrue to members of the Arkansas Press Association because it is a co-sponsor of the online training forums, along with several other press groups. That access has been restored for APA members.

Those interested in participating in one or more of the webinars can get more information and register by visiting Inland’s website, www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars/, or by contacting Patty Slusher at 847.795.0380.

The Inland Press Association recently announced a series of webinars scheduled during April and May. The upcoming webinars are:

- **Social Marketing/Social Commerce 2.0**
  - Wednesday, April 13 | 10:30 a.m. CDT
  - Webinar leader is Vince Johnson, publisher, Forsyth County (Ga.) News.
  - The webinar presenters are Penny Merian, chief marketing officer of HubCiti, and Nelson Clyde, president of T.B. Butler Publishing.

- **Saving Print: Highlights From 25 Ways to Improve Your Print Products in 2016**
  - Friday, April 15 | 10:30 a.m. CDT
  - It will be presented by Shannon Kinney, founder and client success officer, Dream Local Digital.
  - The webinar presenters are Bill Ostendorf, founder and president, Creative Circle Media Solutions, and Mark Stange, MWStange LLC.

- **How a small-town paper became a champion of innovation**
  - Monday, April 18 | 2:00 pm CDT
  - The webinar leader is Mark Stange, owner and president, Local Digital.

- **Ad Revenue Through Mobile**
  - Friday, May 6 | 10:30 a.m. CDT
  - The presenters are Penny Merian, chief marketing officer of HubCiti, and Nelson Clyde, president of T.B. Butler Publishing.

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APA papers submit 1,746 Contest entries

The submission period for the Arkansas Press Association’s 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest ended last week, and a total of 1,746 entries were submitted for this year’s competition. The period during which newspaper articles, photographs, editorials and special sections could be entered into competition ran from Feb. 29 through March 31. During that time 16 daily newspapers submitted 716 entries and 34 non-daily publications submitted 1030 entries.

Entries will be judged by members of the Nebraska Press Association, and winners’ names will be released to the newspapers in mid-May. The order of placement in each category — which one took first place, second place and so on — will not be revealed until the annual Awards Luncheon. That will be held at the conclusion of the 2016 Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Batesville on Saturday June 25. The convention begins on June 22.
This is the day, the next two days actually, that the Arkansas Press Association (APA) board of directors will be convened in their annual spring retreat. This time we are meeting at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View, one of the state’s great treasures.

It is the purview of the APA president to determine just exactly where we hold these meetings, so it was no surprise when Rusty Fraser chose the Folk Center since it is literally right in his back yard in Mountain View.

We will convene Thursday afternoon and wrap up the board business around noon on Friday. There is never any shortage of policy issues for the board to address, and this meeting’s agenda is no different.

For one thing the board will be validating the nominees for the upcoming annual election of board members. There will be three nominees added to the ballot, one replacing Mary Fisher, who is in her last year on the board, and two others replacing board members who have resigned, namely Gary Troutman and David Mosesso.

Be watching next week’s Arkansas Publisher Weekly for the names of those nominees. Actually, you can be watching for the next three weeks, as the APA bylaws require the nominees to be published three times before the election.

The initial publication of the nominees opens a two-week window for at-large nominees. Those wishing to nominate themselves and appear on the APA ballot may do so under the bylaws by acquiring a letter of recommendation from three publishers of APA newspapers in good standing. The actual dates of that window of opportunity will be April 14-28.

Designated voter letters will be mailed to newspapers on April 29. This is also a bylaws requirement that lets the election administrator, that would be me, know who is authorized to vote for a newspaper. In today’s newspaper environment and multiple ownership situations, it’s not uncommon for one publisher to vote for multiple newspapers.

The ballots will be mailed on May 13, and the designated voters have two weeks to return them in the envelope provided by APA. The outside of that envelope must be signed by the designated voter for the ballot to be included in the count.

Pardon that digression, but it is something that is about to take place and about which APA members should take notice and more than a little interest. This association, like most others, has, for years, counted on the excellent council and leadership of members of our organization serving on the board. It’s not an onerous task, nor isn’t intended to be, but it is an important one — helping lead this organization, the oldest trade association in Arkansas.

Just as the newspaper business has changed, the role of the APA has certainly changed as well. We constantly look for ways to improve the lot of our member newspapers. How we go about that has certainly changed.

When situations and the current business climates dictate change, you can’t just keep on keeping on in your business model. My goodness, newspapers should know this better than anyone.

The same is true for APA. While we’d like to just keep doing what we’ve always done, doing so will no longer produce the results that will help our members grow and prosper.

My old ball coach often used to say, “When the plan you have isn’t working, you need a new plan.” That’s sort of where we are and, with the help of the APA board, we’re working through a strategic re-organization to prepare us to do just that. We’re trying some new things while mixing them with the tried and true old things. We’ll keep trying this, pouring it on with those things that produce results and dumping those that don’t in favor of new ideas and innovation.

All the while the APA board is there, working behind the scenes to facilitate what we’re doing. What they do is very important to this organization and they often go unrecognized for the service they provide.

Okay, I’ll stop there with the superlatives relating to the APA board so as not to risk being accused of pandering to the group that determines my compensation package. Still, what I’m saying is true and always has been for this organization. We’re very lucky in that respect to have had this sort of great leadership on the board for many decades.

The next time you’re at the APA building in Little Rock, and of course you’re always welcome here, take a look at the hall of presidents, the photos of all our past presidents. It’s like a who’s who in Arkansas newspaper history. By day they were but mild-mannered (well mostly) publishers of Arkansas newspapers, but in their other life they provided stellar leadership for the association. They didn’t do it as an individual, although some made significant individual contributions to the association, but they did it as a group working toward common goals. That shared goal was the improvement of the lot of Arkansas newspapers.

While I was never president of this organization, I did sit on the board for about six years before leaving the state in 1992. I worked with and learned a lot from those with whom I served during that time. I think most APA board members, past and present, will tell you that is one of the benefits of being on the board. You learn from those with whom you are sharing the experience while working to keep strong the association that serves member newspapers.

There is just a whole lot that I like about this job I have, and working with the APA board is one of the things I enjoy most. We have been so fortunate to have so many of our great leaders step up to engage in not only keeping us strong but also making us better at what we do.

So when you see the names of the new nominees for the APA board, and later when you see the ballot with the others board members, all of whom stand for re-election each year, keep in mind the sacrifices they make on behalf of all newspapers. It is something many Arkansas publishers have done over the years, and they continue the leadership that any organization needs to not only survive but to thrive.

Thanks to all those who have served, who are serving, and who will serve in the future. We couldn’t do it without you.

Have a great week!
Sonny Elliott

Elliott named editor of Baxter Bulletin

Former Baxter Bulletin sports editor Sonny Elliott has been named managing editor of the Baxter Bulletin in Mountain Home. Elliott began his journalism career with the Bulletin at the age of 17. The Twin Lakes native and graduate of Mountain Home High School was hired as a sports writer and named sports editor two years later. He held the position of sports editor for 20 years, with a one-year break, when he served as news director for a local television station, KTLO, holding that position until his return to the Bulletin as managing editor.

The announcement was made by Paul Berry, who became associated with the Baxter Bulletin in 2014 as executive director, news and engagement, a position he simultaneously holds at the Springfield (Mo.) News-Leader. Both newspapers are owned by Gannett Company, Inc. Prior to joining the Bulletin and News-Leader, Berry was digital editor/engagement editor at The Coloradoan in Fort Collins, Colo.

By Max Heath, National Newspaper Association Postal Chair

The March 16 joint seminar with the National Newspaper Association (NNA) at U.S. Postal Service (USPS) headquarters in the top-level Ben Franklin meeting room exceeded the expectations of its attendees, and the two hosts. Mailers and publishers of several hundred different newspapers were in the room from states including Iowa, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Illinois, South Carolina, Kansas, Colorado, Texas, Arizona, Missouri, Virginia and Nebraska.

Dane Coleman, manager, Paul Mitchell and others in operations integration and support were fully committed and provided a binder of useful materials plus a flash drive of the presentations. Postmaster General Megan Brennan and Chief Operating Officer David Williams spoke, and Linda-Marie Malone, vice president of network operations, spent virtually the entire day monitoring the training, listening to newspaper issues, and speaking to some of the attendees.

Postal acronyms were defined and reference materials for labeling lists, online ordering of tray labels and supply of flats trays (tubs) were provided.

An overview of the mail processing network was given, including centralized plants, the role Hubs (mostly former SCFs, or Sectional Center Facilities) can play, and the importance of using flats trays to improve service.

Postal Expressions Service notices that can result, ending the 59-cent charges for what are often multiple yellow-tag notices that come late and often in bunches.

Ten Kaizen (a Japanese term for continuous improvements) events for community newspapers were held in six of the seven postal areas in 2015. They used “lean” process tools and “Value-Stream Mapping” to follow newspaper mail from the originating newspaper or other mailer through the origin post office, then to the Hub and/or the first, and sometimes second, processing plant.

Improvement opportunities were found both in mail preparation and internal postal processing, and several of these situations were explained to the group in PowerPoint presentations.

Key findings shared

The key was the variety of learning opportunities for both sides to improve results in timely delivery.

Findings for newspaper mail prep opportunities:

• Incorrect sack/tray make up and separations within the sack that were grouped or tied together inappropriately, such as two different 5-digit bundles tied together so that both went to the 5-digit of the top bundle.

• Use of old sack/tray labels and hand-written labels, which are highly discouraged.

• Software logic that was not up to date, or not in use at all, to provide the latest postal labeling lists to sort the mail properly. Some papers were relying on a scheme given them by a local postal employee months or years ago. Papers were relying on a scheme given them by a local postal employee months or years ago.

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Findings for Postal Service improvement opportunities:

• Inconsistent adherence to the National Periodicals Standard Operating Plan.
FOIA improvement bill making headway

by Richard Karpel
—from the National Newspaper Association

In a few months, the Federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) will celebrate its 50th birthday. Truth be told, President Lyndon Baines Johnson wasn’t thrilled about signing the landmark open-government bill into law on July 4, 1966. And President Barack Obama probably isn’t feeling warm and fuzzy about the current effort in Congress to put more teeth into the legislation. Nevertheless, like LBJ, Obama will almost certainly sign the bill if it reaches his desk.

Good news: [The National Newspaper Association’s] latest effort to improve FOIA got a step closer to the President’s desk during Sunshine Week when the FOIA Improvement Act of 2015 unanimously passed the U.S. Senate.

Among other enhancements, the bill would codify the presumption that information should be disclosed when requested; limit the “internal deliberations” exemption to 25 years; require federal agencies to accept FOIA requests via email; establish a single-stop web portal for all requests; and provide the FOIA watchdog Office of Government Information Services with a greater degree of independence and authority.

The version of the bill that passed the Senate was a little different than the FOIA reform legislation that passed the House earlier this year. One of the legislative bodies must now be persuaded to accept the other’s bill, or the differences must be worked out in a conference committee.

‘Kaizen’ project’s best practices—continued from page 3

Retraining personnel and improved nationwide internal training has resulted.

• Offloads of processing for Origin Mixed ADC (OMX) or Mixed ADC (MADC) from one plant to another because of workload. The alternate plant may not be as familiar with the proper procedure.

• Transportation impacts including newspapers dropped early at the origin-entry post office, but still arriving late to the processing plant for SCF, ADC, OMX or MADC.

• Failure to cross-dock Direct containers (5-digit, Carrier-Route, or M5D mixing both) at a Hub from origin-entry to other post offices with the Hub territory. Newspapers should speak to their local postmasters about whether there is a Hub opportunity. The NNA website, www.nnavweb.org, provides a list or link to the Hub list, of the nearly 190 Hubs.

• Late trips from one processing plant to another, missing a key truck connection that would gain a day in keeping newspapers moving.

• Lack of visibility because of newspapers that are not machinable on flat-sorting machines, or that could be, but haven’t completed the shift to IMb address labels and tray/sack labels.

Key improvement actions that have been conducted by USPS:

• A national OMX webinar was held last October to improve the process of these copies that travel on First-Class truck trips. (Because First-Class flats travel in flats trays, newspapers should be sure to use these tubs and tray tags to get the speediest handling for this sort and all others not delivered to DDU offices.)

• Standard work instructions for newspapers and a revised Periodicals SOP were being developed in March 2016.

• New measurement and tracking opportunities are being developed, such as bundle tracking, to help those newspapers whose individual pieces are not machined, but the bundle can be scanned at each stop in the processing network, either by a machine or individual with a hand-held scanner.

• The national training presented in March with NNA.

Periodicals Service
Standard maps

Sample maps that are available electronically were shared. Go to this link: https://ribbs.usps.gov/modernservices-standards/ssmaps/find_map.cfm

When there, click the button on the upper left for “Periodicals,” and select the 3-digit ZIP Code of Origin through a drop-down scrollable selection in the center, in numerical order with city. Use the first three numbers of your local ZIP code. Then click “Display Map” in upper right. This can help in understanding what to expect and help your subscribers understand what to expect when calling or emailing you. © Max Heath 2016

Max Heath, National Newspaper Association postal chair, is a postal consultant for Athlon Media Group, publisher of Parade, American Profile, Relish and Spry newspaper supplements, and also for Landmark Community Newspapers LLC. E-mail: maxheath@lcni.com.
Window for at-large board noms open

The two-week window for at-large nominations to the Arkansas Press Association (APA) board of directors opens today and runs through April 28, as per the APA constitution and bylaws.

Three APA members have been selected by the nominating committee process and their names are published as required in the article at left. Election rules stipulated that their names be published three times in the Arkansas Publisher Weekly.

Those wishing to nominate themselves or someone else for an at-large nomination and to be included on the annual ballot must acquire three letters of recommendation from APA member newspapers in good standing. These letters would need to be submitted to the APA by the April 28 deadline to qualify for the election this spring.

The ballots for the annual election will be mailed May 13.

Important dates

Friday, April 15 | 10:30 a.m. CDT
Inland Press webinar “Saving Print: Highlights from 25 Ways to Improve Your Print Products in 2016”
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars

Friday, April 22 | 1-2 p.m. CDT

Thursday, April 28
Deadline for at-large nominations for open seats on APA board of directors.

Friday, April 29
Designated voter letters for 2017 board election mailed to members

Three nominated to seats on APA board

This is the first of three required publications of the names of those nominated to fill vacant seats on the board of the Arkansas Press Association (APA). The nominees were chosen by the APA nominating committee and validated by the board of directors at its annual spring retreat at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View.

The nominees are:

• Shane Allen of Heber Springs, group publisher for several GateHouse newspapers, including those in Arkadelphia, Gurdon, Heber Springs, Helena-West Helena, Hope, Prescott, Newport and White Hall.
• Sue Silliman, general manager of the Camden News and the Banner-News in Magnolia.
• Clark Smith, publisher of The Mena Star and Lancaster Management properties in De Queen, Mansfield and Waldron.

The three vacancies were created by the approaching departure of Mary Fisher, currently serving a year as immediate past president in her last term on the board. Two additional vacancies were created with the resignations from the board of Gary Troutman and David Mosesso.

The first publication of the nominees opens a two-week window for at-large nominations. A letter of recommendation from three APA newspapers in good standing is required for an at-large nomination. That period will expire on April 28.

Designated voter letters will be mailed on April 29, and the ballots for the annual APA board election will be mailed May 13.

The newly-elected APA board members will assume their respective seats at the conclusion of the annual SuperConvention June 22-25 in Bentonville.

BOARD RETREAT | The board of the Arkansas Press Association (APA) held its spring retreat at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View last week. The gathering included a visit to the Stone County Leader in Mountain View, for which current APA president Rusty Fraser (center) serves as publisher. Also visiting the Leader headquarters were board members Tom White of Monticello (left) and Rusty Turner of Fayetteville.

NEwspaper groups oppose EPA proposal

‘CLOSE TO HOME: HEALTH OF NEWSPAPERS’ BY KEVIN SLIMP

NEWSPAPER GROUPS OPPOSE EPA PROPOSAL
The deadline for entries into the Arkansas Press Association’s (APA) annual Better Newspaper Editorial Contest was March 31. As usual we had a lot of entries waiting until the very last minute on the deadline to submit entries.

I think it’s just our nature, working as we do in a deadline driven industry, to press it right up to the deadline to get things done. That apparently carries over to contest entries.

This was the first year for us to switch to the digital contest entries. We have been resisting this change for years. In truth you should probably read that as “I” have been resisting this change for years and for reasons I have given quite often here. I won’t bore you with them again, as to do so would be belaboring the point. At this point it’s pretty much academic anyway.

Suffice it to say the time had come to make this change. Many if not most of our counterpart organizations across the country have already done this, some years ago. In each with whom I discussed the transition they indicated that we should expect a drop-off in the number of entries in the first year of the digital submission process, but that it would eventually bounce back or even increase.

It was with a bit of trepidation that we entered this first year of digital entries. We really didn’t know what to expect beyond what we’d been told by others based on their experience. What we got was fewer entries than the year before, by about 100, and from three fewer newspapers.

Still, we received over 1,750 entries from 50 newspapers. I’m okay with that in the first year of this sort of change.

None of us like change. I certainly don’t. That includes not liking change in things as big and important to our members as the Editorial Contest. It’s only natural to resist change, even if it is an improvement in the old way of doing things.

That’s why I’m happy to report that we really didn’t have that large drop-off in our contest entries. I’m counting on the number of entries growing next year and hopefully every year thereafter.

As newspaper people we love our awards. There will be a room full of people on June 25 in Bentonville who will be glad they made the effort to enter the contest this year. That’s when we’ll present the annual Editorial Awards. That’s when we will recognize the best work being done at Arkansas newspapers, and who’s doing that work.

It’s a recognition we don’t often get in this business. I think that’s why the contest has remained so popular all these years. For in that one shining moment at the editorial awards luncheon Saturday at the SuperConvention, winners get to stand up and be recognized by their peers for the excellent work they do.

I know this. I’ve had the privilege and the honor of standing to receive APA Editorial Awards, although it was many years ago. I still remember how good it made me feel. It meant something to me, and it still means a lot to those filling the jobs at Arkansas newspapers, judging from the number of entries the contest continues to attract.

The names of three nominees to fill vacant seats on the APA board of directors are published on page one of this week’s Arkansas Publisher Weekly. There will be two more publications of the names per the APA constitution.

In three weeks we’ll be mailing the designated voter letters. Please be watching for these and return them as soon as possible. This will include the name of the individual designated to vote for each newspaper. In some cases that is one voter for multiple newspapers.

The designated voter will then cast the ballot for the newspaper(s) and return the ballot to APA in the envelope provided, making certain to sign the outside of the envelope in the designated spot.

Ballots returned without the signature on the outside of the envelope cannot be counted in the vote totals, as per the constitution.

Filling the three spots on the APA Board will again bring it back to its full complement of 11 members. Only seven of those board members will appear on the ballot, however. The executive committee, comprised of the president, vice president, second vice president and the immediate past president, do not stand for re-election.

I mentioned in this space last week that the APA board was meeting in its annual spring retreat at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View, home of APA president Rusty Fraser, publisher of the Stone County Leader.

Rusty had suggested he was going to arrange for some musical entertainment featuring some local musicians for our Thursday evening reception and dinner at the Folk Center restaurant. Mountain View is renowned for its music and its musicians. Rusty himself plays musical instruments.

The group he arranged for our entertainment was amazingly talented and spent the evening wowing the APA board members and spouses attending the event. It made for a delightful evening at the Folk Center.

Before leaving town the APA board members attending stopped by the newspaper offices of the Stone County Leader, where the staff had prepared some refreshments for us to enjoy before hitting the road back to our respect homes. The Leader office is located on the historic public square in Mountain View.

If you have never been to Mountain View, or if you haven’t been there in a while, you owe it to yourself to make the effort. It is truly an Arkansas gem, maintaining the great qualities that one would expect in an Ozark Mountain town filled with courteous people and surrounded by wonderful Arkansas scenery.

Like Rusty says, people driving through the square will actually stop for pedestrians crossing the street, regardless if they’re in a crosswalk. And they actually do.

The town likely looks a lot like it did a century ago, and to this day retains the image and reality of a very musical town. You don’t have to look far in Mountain View for musical entertainment. Sometimes you can find it on the courthouse lawn in the middle of the public square where there’s also a large dance floor for those moved by the music.

You don’t see that everyday.

Have a great week!

Tom
EPA blames the Internet for its proposed rule

by Richard Karpel
National Newspaper Association Public Policy

That was the extent of the justification offered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) when the agency proposed a new rule late last year that would move many of its public notices from local newspapers to its own websites.

Under current rules, the EPA and its delegate agencies are required to announce most Clean Air Act permitting actions through public notices in newspapers. EPA’s proposal would eliminate that requirement in favor of what it calls “e-notices” on EPA websites. Standing alone, the new rule wouldn’t have a significant economic impact; EPA has only been spending about $40,000 per year for public notices in local newspapers.

However, the new rule sets a bad precedent for states and other federal agencies, especially because EPA appears to have felt little reason to justify its decision. In its proposal, the agency made sweeping assumptions unsupported by evidence about the ability of “e-notices” to generate more awareness and promote greater civic engagement than public notices in newspapers. This evidence-free approach is at odds with the normal agency rulemaking process. Moreover, EPA has, or should have, data demonstrating the efficacy of “e-notice” because it has already eliminated newspaper notice for some types of CAA permitting actions.

The Public Notice Resource Center (PRNC) filed comments opposing the new rule on behalf of the newspaper industry. The National Newspaper Association joined the comments, along with 42 other newspaper groups, including the Arkansas Press Association and most state press associations. NNA hopes to convince members of Congress to require EPA to take another look at the proposal after evaluating data about its potential impact.

ANF announces two internship recipients

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF) earlier this week announced the first group of summer interns for 2016. The Foundation is the educational arm of the Arkansas Press Association (APA).

“Since the beginning of our internship program, we have had great success introducing future journalists, photographers and graphic artists to the real world of newspapers through the ANF Paid Summer Internship Program,” said Karen Brown, ANF executive director, “We are looking forward to another great summer!”

This year’s recipients of internships include Alli Davis, who will be interning with the Nashville Leader in a variety of positions. Davis is from Nashville, and she has experience with Adobe InDesign and Photoshop. She worked part-time as a staff photographer at Nashville High School.

The Arkansas Times in Little Rock has announced that Tom Coulter, a graduate from Central High in Little Rock, will be interning with them this summer. Coulter is majoring in journalism and history with a minor in Spanish. His experience includes InDesign, Word Press and Microsoft Office programs. This will be his first experience working at a newspaper publication.

Each year the ANF announces the internship program to newspapers and publications across the state as well as to Arkansas colleges and universities. There are four host newspapers that have the opportunity to locate their own intern or to select an intern from one of the submitted applications. The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation provides a matching grant to those newspapers selected as host newspapers for the paid summer internships.

Those wishing to find out more about the annual internship program and how their newspapers might participate are encouraged to contact Karen Brown at arknewspaper-foundation@gmail.com.

Closer to home: Health of newspaper depends on ownership model

by Kevin Slimp

It sounds like the beginning of a bad joke: “What do you get when you gather 760 newspaper executives and ask them how things are going at their papers?”

That’s just what I did in late January, and a few of their answers came as a surprise to me.

Continuing a practice begun in late 2014, I contacted newspaper publishers, CEOs, owners and other top management throughout the U.S. and Canada to get information about the state of their newspapers. After a week, I’ve received just shy of 800 responses. I suspect that number will increase even more by the time I finish summarizing all the information.

It’s an arduous task, compiling and going through this much data. In the time it took to write those first two paragraphs, three more publishers responded. By the time I finish writing this column, a few more will arrive.

Truth is, after about 300 responses, it is clear what the results are going to be. Answers don’t change much after that. So with nearly 800 responses, it’s safe to say we have a good idea what is happening in the industry on this day in February 2016.

Interestingly, this particular survey had the best response of any I’ve conducted. Papers of all sizes and types are represented in statistically reliable numbers. There are plenty of metro dailies, as well as tiny weeklies, and everything in between. Even a few monthly and online-only publications took part.

The most responses came from the Midwest and Southeast United States, in nearly identical numbers, which is usually the case. Very few responses came from Eastern Canada, which is also normal. It’s also interesting that newspapers in the Midwest and Southeast U.S. appear to be the healthiest, which may (or may not) be an indication of why there are more papers in those areas.

One of the most interesting aspects of conducting these surveys is the ability to break the numbers up in a variety of ways. For instance, I can tell you how advertising sales at metro papers on the West Coast compare to those at independently owned weekly papers in Texas.

It’s fascinating to speak at a newspaper association convention and share how their papers compare to newspapers in other areas. It’s even more interesting to see how different types of papers in the same area are doing, based on

—continued on page 4
Health of newspaper depends ...
—continued from page 3

their size, ownership and other variables.

I knew that newspapers were doing well overall. I just didn't know how well. As with other places I've visited recently, publishers I spoke with at the Michigan Press Association convention this past weekend shared that they were having very good years and their numbers are steady or growing. I visited with owners of paid circulation papers, free papers, community papers, collegiate newspapers, daily papers and weeklies. I spoke with several publishers who had started new papers that are doing quite well. It was inspiring to hear their stories.

I had planned to deliver an overview of this survey, so you could see for yourself how papers are doing in North America. However, I was struck by the results of one question and would like to spend the rest of this column sharing those responses with you.

The question: "Compared to three years ago, how would you describe the overall health of your primary publication(s)?"

My interest was piqued when I took screenshots of responses to that lone question, based on the types of newspapers.

By sheer coincidence, I laid out the various responses by group on my screen. The groups included:

- Independent newspapers, locally owned and operated
- Part of a small group (5 or fewer papers)
- Part of a mid-size group (6 to 20 papers), but act much like an independent paper with most of the work done locally
- Part of a mid-size group, with much of their work directed or done at a central location

- Part of a large regional group (20 or more papers in one geographical region)
- Part of a large national group, covering more than one geographical area of the country

While 26 percent of newspapers affiliated with large national groups and 21 percent of those in large regional groups indicated better health than three years ago, that number, represented by a green bar on my screen, increased as the newspapers indicated more local control:

- 26 percent: Large National Group
- 21 percent: Large Regional Group
- 33 percent: Mid-size Group with Central Control
- 36 percent: Mid-size Group with Local Control
- 40 percent: Independent, Not Part of a Group

With almost 800 responses so far, it seems that newspapers locally owned and operated are almost twice as likely to have experienced improved health over the past three years, compared to large regional groups. It seems, as the control of the newspaper gets closer to home, so do improvements in its health.

These findings are still preliminary and it's almost guaranteed that there will be plenty of surprises awaiting me as I dig through the numbers over the next few weeks.

One thing is clear: Newspapers are doing better than they were a few years ago, and most are reporting they feel good about the future. We seem to have turned a corner and attitudes and numbers indicated a solid future ahead.

So much to report. So little space.

Kevin Slimp is a sought-after speaker throughout the publishing world. He is technology director for the Tennessee Press Association in Knoxville and is director of the Institute of Newspaper Technology.

REMINDERS AND RESOURCES

- Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.
APA announces schedule for convention

The Arkansas Press Association on Wednesday announced the preliminary schedule for the 2016 SuperConvention to be held at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville. Among the highlights are:

- The annual Awards Luncheon featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest;
- A reception, dinner and tour at the world-renowned Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville.
- The Honors Banquet recognizing recipients of the Distinguished Service Award, Freedom of Information Award and Golden 50 Service Award;
- A session on community journalism by Penny Abernathy of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, author of Saving Community Journalism;
- For those arriving on the first day of the event, there will be a dinner and tour of the Museum of Native American History in Bentonville;
- A number of timely educational forms including a Question and Answer Session on legal issues for newspapers, a discussion of emerging newspaper technology and ethics in journalism and a round table discussion;
- The Annual Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Golf Tournament at Lost Springs Golf & Athletic Club in Rogers;
- A political candidates forum, details to be announced later;
- The annual Passing of the Gavel Ceremony and installation of the new president;
- And many other activities.

The SuperConvention will be held June 22-25, and those interested in attending are advised to make plans now to attend.

A downloadable schedule of SuperConvention events and more details on the host hotel will be available on the APA website later this week. Along with a link to make discounted hotel reservations, they will be located in the “APA Spotlight Section.”

Committee selects three for board seats

This is the second of three required publications of the names of those nominated to fill vacant seats on the board of the Arkansas Press Association (APA). The nominees were chosen by the APA nominating committee and validated by the board of directors at its annual spring retreat at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View.

The nominees are:

- Shane Allen of Heber Springs, group publisher for several GateHouse newspapers, including those in Arkadelphia, Gurdon, Heber Springs, Helena-West Helena, Hope, Prescott, Newport and White Hall.
- Sue Silliman, general manager of the Camden News and the Banner-News in Magnolia.
- Clark Smith, publisher of The Mena Star and Lancaster Management properties in De Queen, Mansfield and Waldron.

The three vacancies were created by the approaching departure of Mary Fisher, currently serving a year as immediate past president in her last term on the board. Two additional vacancies were created with the resignations from the board of Gary Troutman and David Mosesso.

The first publication of the nominees opens a two-week window for at-large nominations. A letter of recommendation from three APA newspapers in good standing is required for an at-large nomination. As this is the second publication of the list of nominees, the at-large nomination period is narrowing and will expire one week from today on April 28.

Designated voter letters will be mailed on April 29, and the ballots for the annual APA board election will be mailed May 13.

The newly-elected APA board members will assume their respective seats at the conclusion of the annual SuperConvention June 22-25 in Bentonville.

CRYSTAL BRIDGES | The renowned Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art will be a featured highlight of the SuperConvention. It is the site of a reception, dinner and tour to be held Thursday night, June 23.
It’s time for a topic that nobody seems to want to talk about, but I can assure you that no amount of ignoring it is going to make it go away.

I’m talking about the proposed new overtime regulations coming from the U.S. Department of Labor. The changes deal largely with long-standing “white collar” exemptions, at least one for which newspapers have for years been eligible.

To be fair, the exemption is not going away under the proposed new regs, but the criteria for qualifying for the exemption will change dramatically and therein lies the rub for newspapers. Therein lies the rub for a lot of small businesses, like newspapers, but in this case we’re just talking about newspaper.

So here’s the deal: Newspaper employees making more than $23,660 per year based on a 40-hour workweek are currently exempt from overtime regulations. That means the newspaper does not have to pay them overtime for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

This is an issue for many small newspapers with small news staffs stretched thin to cover it all needs to in order to remain relevant to its readers and to properly inform the community served by the newspaper. If overtime is injected into the picture, the newspaper will likely have little choice but to (1) reduce staff, or (2) not cover everything that needs covering in its coverage area.

Why? Well, the Department of Labor last June proposed raising the salaries qualification in the Fair Labor Standards Act from the current $23,660 to $54,440 annual salary. This would mean that anyone on a newspaper staff making less than $54,440 would be eligible for overtime pay, and the newspaper would be required to pay it.

Now you might think that the new $54,440 cap is a bit much, and that more than doubling the salary cap for the exemption test would be arbitrary and capricious and would work a huge hardship on newspapers. If you would think that, then you would be correct.

You may also be thinking that surely this won’t become a reality. Think again.

Those lobbying in Washington on behalf of newspapers over this proposed change tell us that it’s a done deal; that the salary cap is going to be raised.

There may be some wiggle room in the how high the cap is raised, and that perhaps the $54,440 might turn out to be lower, but there is absolutely no guarantee of that. The prudent thing to do at this point is to begin planning for the implementation of this change, and deciding how best to operate going forward regarding your overtime policies.

The Department of Labor (DOL) is largely to blame for this outrageous increase in the exemption threshold. Well, that’s not really true. The DOL is solely to blame because of doing a poor job of establishing the salary cap in the first place.

When the current salary cap of $23,660 was originally established in 2004 the language contained no indexing to allow for adjustments due to inflation or for any other contributing factors to this arbitrary exemption level. It just set the number and we operated under the number to qualify for the exemption ever since.

Now, that’s about to change. Just how much it may change is yet to be seen, but there is little doubt or little question that the changes brought on by this change in policy will be huge for newspapers.

Newspapers have some excellent advocates in Washington, D.C. Tonda Rush at American Pressworks, a contractor for the National Newspaper Association, and Paul Boyle at the Newspaper Association of America are very active in working to minimize the harsh affects of this proposed new policy. Both, however, are resigned to the fact that the change is going to become a reality, and newspapers are going to have to deal with it.

Our advocates are doing a great job for us. They’re paid by the newspapers who are members of their respective organizations so if you’ve been wondering what they do with your dues money, this is certainly where part of it goes. If you don’t belong to one of these organizations, it might be a good idea to pony up your fair share of enjoying the benefits of having representation in Washington, D.C. If we don’t, you can bet your last dollar that no one else will.

Those who advocate for newspapers are not arguing that the salary threshold shouldn’t be raised, but they argue that more than doubling the current base amount would add unsustainable costs on newspapers.

Beyond the obvious economic impact on newspapers would be an equally detrimental erosion in news coverage. Under the new proposals, many if not most newspapers would be forced to cut newsroom staffs even farther than they already have. That would leave fewer journalistic resources at newspapers and that translates to less content, less investigative reporting and a less well-informed community. None of these are good things.

For all the world it seems as if newspapers just cannot catch a break. If the existing and obvious economic factors at play in our current business environment weren’t enough, this proposed change just adds to the load currently being shouldered by newspapers that continue to operate in an ever-challenging business world.

Let’s be honest, for some this could be the last straw. It’s sad that if that is the case, that last straw would come from the government in the form of an arbitrary and capricious, not to mention injudicious, increase in the salary cap for newspapers to maintain current overtime exemptions.

It’s time newspapers speak out on this proposed change. Actually it’s now or never, as once the new regulations are adapted it will be too late. What can you do? Editorialize to the top of your lungs. Explain to your readers just how this would affect them. It’s not all about maintaining the economic viability of the newspaper.

Write your congressman and your senators. Make them aware of just how this change would undermine your ability to keep your community informed. They should be aware. They should be vitally interested. That doesn’t mean they will be in all cases, but they darn sure need all the facts at their disposal.

There are times when action becomes mandatory rather than an option. This is one of those times.

Have a great week!

Tom Larimer’s Potpourri

Arkansas Publisher Weekly 2 April 21, 2016
Newcomb joins staff of Carroll Co. Newspapers

Kelby Newcomb has joined the staff of Carroll County Newspapers (CCN) headquartered in Berryville as a news reporter. A native of Mountain View, Newcomb, 22, is a recent graduate of Lyon College in Batesville, where he earned bachelor’s degrees in English and Spanish. Prior to joining CCN he worked for the Northeast Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. He is a resident of Eureka Springs. CCN oversees the operations of Carroll County News in Berryville and the Lovely County Citizen in Eureka Springs.

County Farm Families of 2016 announced

County winners for the 69th Annual Arkansas Farm Family of the Year Program have been selected. Sponsors of the Farm Family of the Year program are Arkansas Farm Bureau, the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas and the three Farm Credit agencies that serve Arkansas; AgHeritage Farm Credit Services, Farm Credit of Western Arkansas and Midsouth Farm Credit. Additionally, support for the program is provided by the Arkansas Department of Career Education, Arkansas Press Association (APA), University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Rural Development. The APA has been a leading sponsor of the program since its inception in the 1940s.

The county winners are:

East Central District
- Lee – Ramey Stiles Family, Marianna
- Lonoke – Brandon & Beverly Parker Family, Carlisle
- Monroe – To be announced. Contact Monroe Co. Cooperative Extension Office
- Prairie – John & Kristel Petrus Family, Hazen
- Pulaski – Jimmy D. Jennings, Sr. Family, Sherwood
- Saline – Helmich Farms, Alexander
- St. Francis – Bobby & Lisa Jackson Family, Colt
- White – Chris & Nesha Smith Family, Rose Bud
- Woodruff – Brad & Angie Burkett Family, McCrory

North Central District
- Baxter – Ronnie & Tina Grayham Family, Henderson
- Cleburne – Rob Wilson Family, Heber Springs
- Fulton – David & Susan Carr Family, Gepp
- Independence – Fred Denison, Sr. Family, Batesville
- Izard – Brad Wheelis Family, Melbourne
- Marion – Nick & Beth Dearnmore Family, Yellville
- Searcy – Harold Hendrix Family, Marshall
- Sharp – Bart & Brandi Schulz Family, Cave City
- Stone – Brian & Brandy Stoltze, Mountain View
- Van Buren – Wade Lucas Family, Shirley

Northeast District
- Clay – Randal & Mark Coleman families, Corning
- Craighead – Josh & Melissa Cureton Family, Cash
- Crittenden – Bobby & Marianne Cupples Family, Proctor
- Cross – Bob Stacy Family, Wynne
- Greene – Jimmy Pat Blackburn Family, Paragould
- Jackson – TBA. Contact Jackson Co. Cooperative Extension Office
- Lawrence – Rickey & Virginia Goff Family, Smithville
- Mississippi – Hart Farms, Inc., Osceola
- Poinsett – Keith & Kristine Bise Family, Weiner
- Randolph – A.L.L Farm: Adam Liebhaber Family, Pocahontas

Northwest District
- Benton – Tracy Moorman Family, Gravette
- Boone – Wes Parker Family, Omaha
- Carroll – Kirk & Lacey Powell Family, Green Forest
- Crawford – Brad Hall Family, Rudy
- Franklin – To be announced. Contact Franklin Co. Cooperative Extension Office
- Johnson – Peach Pickin’ Paradise: Mark & Shay Morgan Family, Clarksville
- Madison – Troy & Kathy Cline Family, Kingston
- Newton – Joe & Genevieve Villines Family, Ponce
- Sebastian – Samantha Phanoung Family, Mansfield
- Washington – Kendall & Stephanie Pendergraft Family, Nob Hill

Southeast District
- Arkansas, N. – Taylor & Nikki Burdett Family, Stuttgart
- Arkansas, S. – Scott & Karen Place Family, Gillett
- Ashley – Four Star Partnership: Jerry, Ted & Chris Selby Family, Portland
- Chicot – Johan & Helena Loewen Family, Eudora
- Desha – Chuck & Marjorie Day Family, McGehee
- Drew – Rusty Mitchell Family, Monticello
- Jefferson – Steve Pharr Family, Pine Bluff
- Lincoln – Cody & Samantha Graham Family, Star City

—continued on page 4
APA, media groups oppose DOL plan

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) along with the two largest newspaper advocacy groups — the National Newspaper Association (NNA) and Newspaper Association of America (NAA) — are opposing the Department of Labor’s (DOL) proposed increase of a staggering 113 percent in the salary threshold for workers exempt from Fair Labor Standards Act overtime rules. Unless DOL’s plans are disrupted, the minimum annual salary for “white collar” employees to qualify as exempt will soon increase from $23,660 to $50,440. That means otherwise-exempt managers who earn less than $50,440 will be converted from salaried to hourly employees and will need to start punching a clock. In addition, their employers will be required to pay them time-and-a-half for working more than 40 hours during a workweek.

The across-the-board qualification fails to contemplate differences in pay scales in larger cities, smaller municipalities and rural areas and does not take into account the relative size of the enterprise.

It’s clear by now that the new threshold will negatively impact community newspapers and will also hurt many of the employees it’s designed to help.

NNA submitted comments opposing the sharp increase, and in doing so is joined by a coalition of other organizations, among them the APA, the Society for Human Resource Management and many other state press associations.

**County Farm Families of the Year**

—continued from page 3

- Phillips – Double H Farms: Jim & Tina Hubbard Family, Marvell
- Southwestern District
  - Bradley – Mike Harton Family, Warren
  - Calhoun – Randy & Angie Ables Family, Hampton
  - Hempstead – Mark & Mindy Lockhart Family, Hope
  - Lafayette – Stephen Allen Family, Lewisville
  - Little River – Fawcett Ranch: Brett & Teresa Fawcett Family, Ashdown
  - Miller – Wren Land & Cattle: Brandon Wren Family, Texarkana
  - Nevada – Steve & Renee Boeckman Family, Prescott
- Western District
  - Conway – Lazy G Angus Ranch: Mike & Beverly Gadberry Family, Hattieville
  - Faulkner – Michael & Kim Dickey Family, Greenbrier
  - Montgomery – Stephen Morrison Family, Story
  - Perry – James Mann Family, Bigelow
  - Polk – Joe & Jill Brinkley Family, Grannis
  - Pope – Jared & Whitney Mahoney Family, Russellville

West Central District
- Clark – Roy Gene & George Ann Britt Family, Okolona
- Cleveland – Jackson & Brooke Allison Family, Rison
- Dallas – Lamar & Judy Evans Family, Fordyce
- Garland – Tommy & Joy Sorrells Family, Royal
- Grant – Chris & Elizabeth Hale Family, Sheridan
- Hot Springs – Jay & Valerie Lee Family, Bismarck
- Howard – Whisenhunt Farms: Joel & Amanda Whisenhunt Family, Nashville
- Sevier – Phillip & Patricia Maben Family, DeQueen

The county winners will be judged June 6-8 to determine the eight district Farm Families of the Year. The district winners will be announced June 14. They will be judged again by a different set of judges July 11-14 to determine a state winner, which will be announced Dec. 8 at the Annual Farm Family of the Year Luncheon.

The Farm Family of the Year program begins each year with the selection of top farm families in each county and culminates in December with the selection of the state Farm Family of the Year who will then go on to represent Arkansas at the Swisher Sweets/Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year. All winners are judged on their farm production, efficiency, management, family life and rural/community leadership.

**APA/AG Roadshow to go to Russellville**

The Arkansas Press Association has, for many years now, partnered with the Arkansas Attorney General to present a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Road Shows” across the state. The first was held March 9 at Arkansas State University Mid-South, Marion Berry Renewable Energy Center in West Memphis. The second will be held Thursday, May 12 from 10 a.m. to noon in the Doc Bryan Student Services Center Room 242 on the campus of Arkansas Tech University in Russellville.

The event is free and open to all, but registration is required. Those wishing to attend can sign up for the road show at [ArkansasAG.gov](http://ArkansasAG.gov) or email to fiaroadshow@ArkansasAG.gov.

**REMINDERS AND RESOURCES**

- **SuperConvention**: The Arkansas Press Association (APA) SuperConvention will take place June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville. Further information, a downloadable schedule, hotel reservation details and more will soon be available at: [www.arkansaspress.org](http://www.arkansaspress.org).
Nominees set for annual APA election

This is the third and final required publication of the names of the nominees to fill vacant seats on the Arkansas Press Association (APA) board of directors, as required by the APA constitution. The nominees were chosen by the APA nominating committee and validated by the board of directors at its annual spring retreat at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View.

The nominees are:

- Shane Allen of Heber Springs, group publisher for several GateHouse newspapers, including those in Arkadelphia, Gurdon, Heber Springs, Helena-West Helena, Hope, Prescott, Newport and White Hall.
- Sue Silliman, general manager of the Camden News and the Banner-News in Magnolia.
- Clark Smith, publisher of The Mena Star and Lancaster Management properties in De Queen, Mansfield and Waldron.
- Mary Fisher of Fisher Publishing in Danville, currently serving a year as immediate past president in her last term on the board.
- Gary Troutman formerly of The Sentinel-Record in Hot Springs and David Mosesso, publisher of The Sun in Jonesboro.

The three vacancies were created by the approaching departure of Mary Fisher of Fisher Publishing in Danville, currently serving a year as immediate past president in her last term on the board. Two additional vacancies were created with the resignations from the board of Gary Troutman formerly of The Sentinel-Record in Hot Springs and David Mosesso, publisher of The Sun in Jonesboro.

Today marks the closure of the period for at-large nominations. None were received during the two weeks in which anyone can nominate themselves or another person for a spot on the ballot and on the APA board.

Designated voter letters will be mailed tomorrow, April 29, and the ballots for the annual Arkansas Press Association election will be mailed May 13.

The newly-elected APA board members will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the annual SuperConvention to be held June 22-25 in Bentonville.

APA SuperConvention info now online

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) last week announced the preliminary schedule for the 2016 SuperConvention to be held at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville. More information is now available online at the APA website (www.arkansaspress.org). Those interested can find a link to the original announcement, a downloadable schedule of events, host hotel reservations information and a link to make online reservations in the “APA Spotlight” section.

Among the highlights for the 2016 SuperConvention are:

- The annual Awards Luncheon featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest;
- A reception, dinner and tour at the world-renowned Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville.
- The Honors Banquet recognizing recipients of the Distinguished Service Award, Freedom of Information Award and Golden 50 Service Award;
- A session on community journalism by Penny Abernathy of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, author of Saving Community Journalism;
- For those arriving on the first day of the event, there will be a dinner and tour of the Museum of Native American History in Bentonville;
- A number of timely educational forums including a Question and Answer Session on legal issues for newspapers, a discussion of emerging newspaper technology and ethics in journalism and a round table discussion;
- The Annual Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Golf Tournament at Lost Springs Golf & Athletic Club in Rogers;
- A political candidates forum, details to be announced later;
- The annual Passing of the Gavel Ceremony and installation of the new president;
- And many other activities.

The SuperConvention will be held June 22-25, and those interested in attending are advised to make plans now to attend.

HOST HOTEL | The DoubleTree Suites Hotel in Bentonville will be the host hotel for the 2016 APA SuperConvention. Discounted rates are available to those who attend this year’s meeting, and a link to make reservations online is available at APA’s website (www.arkansaspress.org).
So today the two-week window for at-large nominations to the Arkansas Press Association (APA) board of directors closes, and since we received no such nominations the three announced nominees will fill the three vacancies on the board.

The three nominees are Shane Allen, Sue Silliman and Clark Smith.

The designated voter letters will be mailed to APA newspapers tomorrow. Those who are designated to vote for each APA newspaper should fill out the letters and return them to APA.

The ballots in the annual election will be mailed on Friday, May 13. Brief biographies of the APA board candidates will be printed on the back of the ballot for those who do not know them.

Voters will have two weeks to return the ballots in the envelopes provided. Designated voters are reminded that they must sign the outside of the return envelop in the space provided in order for the ballot to be valid.

The board members elected will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the SuperConvention to be held June 22-25.

Speaking of the SuperConvention, that’s coming up and will be here before you know it. This is going to be a convention filled with highlights, none of which you will want to miss.

Some top presenters have been lined up to present at the convention, including Penny Abernathy, author of Saving Community Journalism: The Path to Profitability. I’ve been pleasantly surprised at how many have told me they’ve read Penny’s book. She will bring some insights on the book and much more to back-to-back presentations Friday afternoon.

Actually, Penny’s first session will be a presentation. The second will be a “workshop.” That should be interesting.

Also featured at the convention this year will be Zach Ahrens, president and publisher of the Topeka Capital-Journal. Many will remember Zach from his days as publisher at the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway. Zach will be talking about innovation at the Capital-Journal aimed at spanning the generations and to growing audience.

Also on the agenda is Lisa Griffin of Knoxville, Tenn., making her first ever appearance at an APA convention, although she’s been a fixture at several other press gatherings for years. Lisa is also on the faculty of the Institute of Newspaper Technology, which I know several APA members have attended over the years.

Also on the program will be John Tull, who has led the APA’s “Legal Hotline” for many years and who will be talking about legal issues affecting newspapers.

Add to these the fact that both candidates have for the U.S. Senate, Republican Sen. John Boozman and Democratic challenger Connor Eldridge have been invited to speak at a Saturday morning forum, although neither are confirmed at this point.

And if that’s not enough the Center for Ethics in Journalism at the Walter J. Lemke School of Journalism at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville will do a presentation on newspaper ethics, also on Saturday morning. This promises to be an outstanding resource for journalists.

It’s a full agenda with plenty of opportunity to learn a little something and to be brought up to speed on just what’s happening in the newspaper industry, with some shared insights on just what might be coming.

I know I say this all the time, but you really do not want to miss this one.

Just so you don’t get the impression that the SuperConvention is going to be all work, we have managed to plan a couple of outstanding off-site events for your entertainment. No trip to Bentonville would be complete without a visit to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, so with that in mind we’re definitely going there.

We’ll be there Thursday evening for a reception and dinner. The museum will be open for touring that evening, so if you haven’t had a chance to see it this would be a great opportunity. Even if you have seen it, walking through this amazing facility never gets old.

You may have seen the news this week that a Picasso painting is among those pieces loaned to Crystal Bridges from the Tate Museum in London, so we will get a chance to view that exhibit as well.

Before that, on Wednesday evening, June 22, the “early bird” party will take place at the Museum of Native American History in Bentonville. We’ll have a reception and dinner there, too, and of course the exhibits will be open for browsing.

This event will take place right after the annual APA golf outing to be held this year at Lost Springs Golf and Athletic Club, located not far from the convention headquarters hotel. Regulars will recall that the last time we had a convention in this area, this is where the event was played.

Before we head for the hills, however, we have another FOIA “Roadshow” event scheduled, this one on the campus of Arkansas Tech University in Russellville Thursday, May 12, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

This is the second such “roadshow” stop on the ATU campus in recent years. The last was very well attended, and the May show is already stacking up to be the same as several have already registered their intent to attend.

APA is again partnering with the office of Attorney General Leslie Rutledge for this second installment in this important series. The first was held in early March in West Memphis and attracted over 70 people.

General Rutledge plans to attend this event, as she did the initial staging, to make some remarks before members of her staff step up to do the heavy lifting in making easy-to-understand presentations on the state’s Freedom of Information Act.

The event is free and open to the public, but reservations are recommended. Information on the event and an online registration portal can be found on the Attorney General’s website at www.arkansasag.gov/our-office/sponsored-events/foia-roadshow/.

You can also find information on the FOIA “roadshow” along with updates on other APA related events, as well as industry news, on the APA Facebook. Just go to Facebook.com and search for Arkansas Press Association, and then bookmark the address to stay up on what’s happening at APA and in the newspaper industry.

Have a great week!

Tom
APA announces SuperConvention theme

#NEWSPAPERS: Read all over!

That’s the theme for the 2016 SuperConvention scheduled for June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

The theme plays on the merging of newspaper platforms, from the traditional print to the new age digital versions. The “Read all over!” part, of course, comes from the old descriptor of a newspaper as being “black and white and read all over.”

The theme will play prominently in the marketing and promotion of the upcoming convention, and will be included as the graphic design on the T-shirts made for those registering and attending the convention as well as other convention materials.

There is more information on the 2016 SuperConvention at the Arkansas Press Association’s (APA) website. Those interested can find a link to the original announcement, an updated schedule of events, host hotel reservations information and a link to make online reservations (http://group.doubletree.com/411southvictory/ArkansasPAASuperConvention) in the “APA Spotlight” section. APA is encouraging members to mark their calendars and make plans to join their colleagues when the annual gathering convenes for the first time in Bentonville.

Among the highlights for the 2016 SuperConvention are:

• The annual Awards Luncheon featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest;
• A reception, dinner and tour at the world-renowned Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville;
• The Honors Banquet recognizing recipients of the Distinguished Service Award, Freedom of Information Award and Golden 50 Service Award;
• A session on community journalism by Penny Abernathy of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, author of Saving Community Journalism;
• For those arriving on the first day of the event, there will be a dinner and tour of the Museum of Native American History in Bentonville;
• A number of timely educational forums including a Question and Answer Session on legal issues for newspapers, a discussion of emerging newspaper technology and ethics;
• And many others.

APA setting stage for annual election

Designated voter letters were mailed last week to all members of the Arkansas Press Association (APA). Upon receipt those authorized to vote in the annual election of board members are urged to complete the enclosed form and return it as soon as possible to the APA headquarters. Only those whose name appears on the designated form are eligible to vote in the participate in the election.

APA is also stressing how important it is for designated voters to sign the outside of the ballot return envelope as well. Those returned without a signature cannot be counted under the APA’s bylaws. The ballots won’t be mailed until May 13, which coincides with the deadline for returning designated voter letters. Voters will be casting ballots for seven candidates for the APA board. The deadline for returning the ballots will be May 27, but the association is encouraging members to vote early.

The newly elected board members will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the SuperConvention, which is June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

Friday, May 6 | 10:30 a.m. CDT
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars

Monday, May 9 | 2 p.m. CDT
Inland Press webinar: “From E&P’s 10 Newspapers That Do It Right: The Record-Journal, Meriden, Conn.”
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars
Today is Cinco de Mayo, but being able to say that doesn’t really qualify any of us as bilingual if in fact that is the limit of your Spanish.

There are those, I’ve found, that believe that Cinco de Mayo is the Fourth of July in Mexico. That’s not really true on a couple of levels, but it is a common misperception. Independence Day in Mexico is actually September 16, but I’m sure that you already knew that.

So what’s up with this whole Cinco de Mayo thing? The date is special to the people of Mexico because it commemorates the Mexican army’s unlikely victory over French forces at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. Most Americans didn’t take note then, and some since, because at that time we had our own difficulties in that whole north-south unpleasantness.

However, we have managed to turn Cinco de Mayo into an occasion for revelry and for promotions of all kinds. It’s almost become like St. Patrick’s Day with a south-of-the-border flair. With our growing Hispanic population, we’re likely to see more and more of this and other promotional opportunities as the cultures merge and adopt each other’s reasons to feel good and have fun. And why not?

As they say in France, “vive la différence,” which I think means celebrate diversity because it is inevitable and with us to stay. And with that I think we’ve seen the first referencing of a French phrase in over 40 years of me writing columns.

Anyway, that’s today’s history lesson, whether you needed it or not.

The “designated voter” letters were mailed late last week so those of you who are authorized to vote for Arkansas Press Association (APA) member newspapers in the annual election should be seeing to filling out the form and returning it to APA world headquarters.

Only those whose name is on the designated voter form are eligible to vote in the election. Designated voters are also reminded to sign the outside of the ballot return envelope. Those returned unsigned on the outside cannot be counted in the vote totals. That’s per the APA bylaws, not per my quirky, obsessive-compulsive officiousness.

The ballots won’t be mailed until May 13, which interestingly is the deadline for return of the designated voter letters. Voters will be voting for seven candidates for the APA board of directors. The deadline for returning the ballots will be May 27, but you don’t have to wait that long to vote. Early voting is appreciated.

The newly elected, or re-elected, APA board members will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the SuperConvention which is June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

The next Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Roadshow” event is set for Thursday, May 12 on the campus of Arkansas Tech University in Russellville. Unfortunately this one will go off without the presence of Attorney General Leslie Rutledge who will be unable to attend.

The dates for the FOIA “Roadshow” series were selected very early this year and were specifically and purposefully selected because they were dates on which the attorney general could attend the event in person. So much for that.

If you are in the Russellville/Arkansas River Valley part of the state I would appreciate you helping us get the word out about this event. The “roadshow” events are aimed at public officials, both elected and appointed, as well as those who find themselves custodians of public records. It also aims at law enforcement personnel at all levels.

We generally get a good representation of each of these but inevitably those who really need the indoctrination into the intricacies of the FOIA are the very ones who don’t attend. I would appreciate your help in letting everyone know the benefits of attending one of these sessions if they fall into any of the above categories.

Despite the absence of the attorney general, her staff members will do their usual excellent job of explaining the law in great details, both as it pertains to open meetings as well as public records.

There will be other roadshow events coming, so please be watching and if the location of the event is near your newspaper, help us get the word out. Believe me it benefits all of us if these folks are well informed on the state’s Freedom of Information Act.

You likely saw last week that the Arkansas Supreme Court ruled that vehicle accident reports are indeed public records and should be accessible to members of the public seeking to examine them. This action upheld a Pulaski Circuit Court ruling.

You may recall the flap over a year ago, maybe even two years by now, where the state police sought to limit information they would release regarding highway accidents. Initially they wouldn’t release the names of victims involved in highway accidents unless they were fatally injured.

Then the Arkansas State Police (ASP) sought to close vehicle accident reports citing a Federal law that shields individual driving records from public scrutiny, but the Arkansas high court says that doesn’t work for them.

This, of course, is a good thing for newspapers seeking to get information on a highway accident for newsgathering purposes. The flap also served to confuse some troopers in the field who didn’t know if they were okay releasing the information, and the message they were getting from their superiors wasn’t helping the situation.

So then a circuit court ruled against the ASP in this contention and now the Arkansas Supreme Court has as well, agreeing with our contention that the vehicle accident records should be open and accessible. That decision should have cleared the murky waters surrounding whether or not we can get the reports.

This wasn’t the first time we’ve had dust-ups with the Arkansas State Police regarding what they’re going to release and what they are not, and it likely won’t be the last. It is a bit befuddling why someone, when a system is working well for all concerned goes out of their way to create stumbling blocks that lead to these protracted court fights.

This one ended, as it should with the Arkansas high court, at least in our view, making the right call. Our friends at the ASP might not necessarily agree with that, but this should settle things.

At least until the next dustup.

Have a great week!

Tom
Cyd King to head up ‘High Profile’ Section

Cyd King has been named editor of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette’s Sunday High Profile section, replacing Bobby Ampezzan. King, 51, founded and edited the Northwest Profiles section for the Democrat-Gazette’s Northwest Edition from 2000-10. A native of Dardanelle, King, left the Northwest newsroom in 2010 for a stint in public relations before returning to the Democrat-Gazette during Ampezzan’s term as editor.

Promote your staff, your newspaper:
The Arkansas Press Association encourages members to send news of staff changes or other happenings and associated photos for inclusion in this publication to: Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org).

DON’T RISK IT
...Call APA’s Legal Hotline
501.379.1700

Media groups support World Press Day

World Press Freedom Day, or simply World Press Day, was observed by newspaper organizations around the globe on Tuesday. Among them was the Newspaper Association of America (NAA). In a statement issued Monday, David Chavern, president and CEO, voiced his organization’s support for the international observance.

“We at NAA are proudly partnering with World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) and Reporters Without Borders on Tuesday, May 3, 2016 for World Press Freedom Day to protect our journalists around the globe.

“Since 1992, 1,189 journalists have been killed. This is an unacceptable toll for unearthing and disseminating the truth.”

He continued by urging the United Nations General Assembly to adopt a resolution that would create a Special Representative for the safety of journalists to be appointed by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

“We hope our members will join us in this endeavor to protect our journalists internationally, so they might work without fear,” Chavern concluded.

The United Nations General Assembly declared May 3 to be World Press Freedom Day to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of the press and remind governments of their duty to respect and uphold the right to freedom of expression under Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The day also marks the anniversary of the Declaration of Windhoek, a statement of free press principles put together by African newspaper journalists in 1991.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) marks World Press Freedom Day each year by bringing together media professionals, press freedom organizations and UN agencies to assess the state of press freedom worldwide and discuss solutions for addressing challenges.

Foundation gearing up for silent auction

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF) is working hard to gather silent auction items for this year’s charity auction held in conjunction with the Arkansas Press Association (APA) SuperConvention in June. All attendees are invited to bid on items at the silent auction as well as to enjoy social time during auction hours.

“It is the mission and goal of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation to provide services to the APA newspapers,” said Karen Brown, executive director of the foundation. “ANF provides support through paid internships, scholarships, continuing education opportunities, providing community literacy projects, as well as conference speakers and more.”

Brown is encouraging newspapers and associate members to help support the foundation by donating items for the annual auction. She has even compiled a list of “items that have been popular at our recent silent and live auctions.” The list includes:

- Lodging packages;
- Art and crafts;
- Dinner gift certificates;
- Tickets to an event;
- Golf course certificates;
- Handmade items;
- Baskets of goodies from your area;
- Autographed items;
- Razorback items;
- Indoor and/or outdoor items; and
- Golf hole sponsorship for the APA Golf Tournament that benefits the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation are $100. This year’s tournament will be held at Lost Springs Golf & Athletic Club in Rogers.

ANF will again be featuring the “Literacy is in the Bag” area at the silent auction. “We are seeking purses or bags to add to the auction display,” Brown said. “You may have someone in your newspaper circulation area that would consider donating a purse or bag to support our literacy based programming, such as serialized stories, special features, etc. The purse can be from a local celebrity, artist, mayor, craftsman, politician, famous person, influential person, a family member or member of your staff, etc. The purse can be new or previously loved, recently purchased on homemade.”

Auction items are for this year’s event held June 23-24, 2016 at the DoubleTree Suites Hotel and Convention Center in Bentonville. Proceeds will go to support the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation.

“We are so thankful for the support of the APA board and newspapers across the state! We appreciate it!” Brown exclaimed. “If you think that you’ll be able to help us gather auction items, please send me an email and I’ll be sure to add it to our list of items and to the thank you list. For more information on participating in the 2016 ANF Silent Auction, contact Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com. Or call the the Arkansas Press Association headquarters at 501.374.1500.
FOIA Roadshow heads to Russellville

The Arkansas Press Association has, for many years now, partnered with the Arkansas Attorney General to present a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Roadshows” across the state. The newest round began March 9 at Arkansas State University Mid-South, Marion Berry Renewable Energy Center in West Memphis. The second Roadshow will be held Thursday, May 12 from 10 a.m. to noon in the Doc Bryan Student Services Center, Room 242, on the campus of Arkansas Tech University in Russellville.

The event is free and open to all, but registration is required. Those wishing to attend can sign up for the road show at ArkansasAG.gov or email to foiaroadshow@ArkansasAG.gov.

The forums are designed for elected officials and custodians of public records as well as members of the general public and the press — anyone wanting to know about his or her rights and responsibilities under the state’s open government and transparency provisions. This program has been approved for 2.0 hours of general Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit.

Weekly Word

irascible

\[\text{ih-RAS-uh-buh}\], adjective

1. easily provoked to anger; very irritable.
2. characterized or produced by anger: an irascible response.

Source: Dictionary.com

“Writer's block is a fancy term made up by whiners so they can have an excuse to drink alcohol.”
—Steve Martin

‘Think different’

BY ED HENNINGER

“Think different.” It was a slogan developed in 1997 by the advertising agency working with Apple Computer, Inc. (now just Apple).

Apple dropped the slogan in 2002 when it shifted to a new advertising approach. But the slogan worked well then.

Apply that slogan to news design today and it still works.

We have to think different about news design, or we risk having no design at all.

Here are some particulars:

Some think design is about creativity. It’s not. It’s about using our creative skills to design packages that attract readers—and make sense to them.

Some think design is about typography. It’s not. It’s about using text type that’s highly legible in a format that’s highly readable. It’s about using display typography that’s clear, classic and straightforward. It’s about using type to communicate, not to “prettify.”

Some think design is about changing column widths throughout the newspaper, on some pages using a different text width in all four stories on a page. It’s not. It’s about using a text width that works well throughout the entire newspaper, giving readers a stronger sense of structure.

Some think design is about giving readers something new in every issue. It’s not. It’s about giving readers a sense of consistency, taking special care to anchor content where readers are used to finding it.

Some think design is about creating new labels, new logos, new standing elements. It’s not. It’s about creating a format for standing elements that will last for the long term—and then fitting any new standing elements to that format.

Some think design is about putting more things on the page. It’s not. It’s about taking things away.

To create newspapers that work better for our readers, we need to take a closer look at how our design is—or isn’t—working.

We need to think different.


Focus on Education

Someone thought this was creative. Nope…and it’s bad design.

REMINDErs AND RESOURCES

• SuperConvention: The Arkansas Press Association (APA) SuperConvention will take place June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville. Further information, a downloadable schedule, hotel reservation details and more are available at: www.arkansaspress.org.

• Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.

• Gov’t/Legal Resources: Members are reminded to take advantage of APA’s online resources for newspapers, including statutes governing publication of notices and tax delinquency lists, state and federal advertising regulations, etc.

• APA Forums: The Arkansas Press Association (APA) Forums provide those working in the Arkansas newspaper business with a convenient, free, easy-to-use resource to network with others, find solutions to problems and stay connected with other APA members, all without having to step away from your desk.
Annual APA election begins tomorrow

Designated voter letters were mailed last month to all members of the Arkansas Press Association (APA). Upon receipt those authorized to vote in the annual election of board members are encouraged to complete the enclosed form and return it by Friday, May 13 to the APA headquarters. That deadline is tomorrow. Only those whose names appear on designated voter forms are eligible to participate in the election.

APA is also stressing how important it is for designated voters to sign the outside of the ballot return envelope as well. Those returned without a signature cannot be counted under the APA's bylaws. The ballots will be mailed tomorrow, May 13, the same day the designated voter letters are due. Voters will be casting ballots for seven candidates for APA board positions. The deadline for returning the ballots will be May 27, but the APA is urging members to vote early.

The newly-elected board members will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the SuperConvention, which is June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

Online registration for Convention open

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) 2016 SuperConvention begins in less than six weeks at the DoubleTree Suites Hotel in Bentonville. More information is now available online at the association’s website (www.arkansaspress.org). Those interested can find a link to the original announcement, a downloadable [updated] schedule of events, host hotel reservation information and a link to make online reservations in the “APA Spotlight” section. The SuperConvention is set to run June 22-25. Online registration opens today, too, and those wishing to sign up can do so at www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016APA SuperConvention.

The theme, “#Newspapers: Read All Over!” plays on the merging of newspaper platforms, from the traditional print to the new age digital versions. The “Read all over!” part, of course, comes from the old descriptor of a newspaper as being “black and white and read all over.”

APA is encouraging members to mark their calendars and make plans to join their colleagues when the annual gathering convenes for the first time in Bentonville.

Among the highlights for the 2016 SuperConvention are:

- The annual Awards Luncheon featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest;
- A reception, dinner and tour at the world-renowned Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville.
- The Honors Banquet recognizing recipients of the Special Awards;
- A session on community journalism by Penny Abernathy of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, author of Saving Community Journalism;
- For those arriving on the first day of the event, there will be a dinner and tour of the Museum of Native American History in Bentonville;
- A number of timely educational forums including a Question and Answer Session on legal issues for newspapers, a discussion of emerging newspaper technology and ethics in journalism and a round table discussion;
- The Annual Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Golf Tournament at Lost Springs Golf & Athletic Club in Rogers;
- A political candidates forum with Arkansas’ U.S. Senate contenders, details to be announced later; and
- Many others.

Important dates

Wednesday, May 18 |10:30 a.m. CDT
Inland Press webinar: “Facebook is Your Frenemy”
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars

Wednesday, May 25 |10:30 a.m. CDT
Inland Press webinar: From E&P’s 10 Newspapers That Do It Right: Hutchinson (Kan.) News’
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars
Potpourri

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) truckster is in Russellville today on the campus of Arkansas Tech University for the second in a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Roadshow” events. This one will last from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

The APA has done these sessions around the state in cooperation with the Office of the Arkansas Attorney General for several years now, beginning in the early stages of the tenure of former AG Dustin McDaniel. This stop on the series will be the second on which APA has partnered with Attorney General Leslie Rutledge and her staff.

It’s not too late if you would like to join us at the Doc Bryan Student Services building adjacent to Tucker Coliseum.

I actually enjoy these sessions and never fail to pick up a new tidbit regarding the Freedom of Information Act. The legal staff at the AG’s office does an excellent job of discussing the law as it relates to open meetings as well as open records. To the normal person this might sound sort of boring, but the presenters make it entertaining. And it is vital information for those in this audience, namely elected and appointed officials, public records custodians, law enforcement officials, and so on.

APA is happy to continue partnering on the Roadshow events. Maintaining a strong FOIA is vital to keeping the public’s business and the public’s records open and accessible to…well…the public.

That’s sort of important, even though at every session of the General Assembly we will deal with 30 to 40 bills aiming to amend the law, and by amend I mean weaken.

Big news out of Southwest Arkansas this week when the announcement was made of the sale of Graves Publishing Company and the Nashville News to John Robert Schirmer, a partner in the Nashville Leader enterprise with former News publisher Louie Graves.

J.R. has reportedly purchased all of the assets of Graves Publishing, namely the twice-weekly Nashville News along with the newspapers in Mount Ida, Murfreesboro and Glenwood.

According to Mike Graves, publisher of the News, he and his family are extremely happy that their long-held newspapers have been purchased by John Robert, a local journalist who they are confident will carry on the journalistic legacy of the late Louis “Swampy” Graves, Louie Graves, former News publisher, and his late wife Jane Graves. Mike added that he was happy that Lawrence Graves, another Graves sibling, was also involved in the negotiation and ultimate decision to sell the family business.

Louie and Jane left the family News operation and launched the Nashville Leader in competition some 13 years ago. John Robert Schirmer, who presently carries the title of editor of the Leader, came on as an equity partner in the business shortly thereafter.

According to Mike Graves, the negotiation to sell the family newspaper business started about eight months ago. The genesis of the discussion was an offer by the News to print the competing Leader. That discussion evolved into the outright sale of all the Graves Publishing assets.

The Nashville News, the oldest continuously operating business in Howard County, will cease to exist on May 31. The new name of the newspaper will reportedly be the Nashville News-Leader.

Mike Graves says they plan a reception on their last day at the newspaper office in Nashville, from 9 to 11 a.m. to mark the occasion. He invites all interested to attend.

Mike added that his 94-year-old mother, Willa Graves, widow of the late Swampy Graves, is also happy with the decision to sell the family business. He says she plans to be there for the reception on the last day.

Selling a family business is almost always an emotional time, and Mike said this has been very trying for them but he admits being happy with the outcome. He adds he’s not sure what he will do after the closing of the sale, but he will not remain at the newspaper.

I can attest to the emotional side of selling a family business. It is gut wrenching to sell something in which the entire family has been involved with in one capacity or another for decades. The Graves Family has been identified with the Nashville newspapers for a long, long time. Louie Graves told me Tuesday that he had no immediate plans to retire, indicating that he will continue working at the merged publication.

If you haven’t checked out the APA website for information on the upcoming annual SuperConvention June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville please do so. I think you will be impressed by the content of the programming for the convention which is stacking up to be one of the best in years. Online registration opens today.

From the tee-off of the annual golf outing to raise funds for the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation to the adjournment Saturday afternoon of the editorial awards luncheon, it is a jam-packed agenda. We’ll have some fun, but we also have some excellent opportunities to stock up on the latest trends in the community newspaper industry, and how to perhaps even make a profit.

Check it out and make plans to join your colleagues in the Arkansas newspaper industry for this annual gathering. You won’t be sorry.

The ballots in the annual APA election will be mailed tomorrow. Those who have returned designated voter letters should fill out the ballot and return it in the envelope provided.

Please note that the outside of the return envelope has a place for the designated voter to sign. This space must bear the signature of the designated voter in order for the ballot to be counted.

We have received a large number of the designated voter letters returned to the APA office. I always appreciate the attention our members pay to the annual election.

The ballot this year contains only candidates for the board. There are no contested races on the ballot but we still need to hold the election because the APA constitution and by-laws are fairly specific on that regardless of contested races or ballot issues.

There are no ballot issues included this year, either. That happens when the board votes to amend the constitution, which takes a three-fourths vote of the active membership to approve. That hasn’t happened in a few years. The last such changed approved I think was the change to admit free distribution newspapers into full APA membership.

Have a great week!

Tom
FOIA Roadshow heads to Russellville today

The Arkansas Press Association has, for many years now, partnered with the Arkansas Attorney General to present a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Roadshows” across the state. The newest round began March 9 at Arkansas State University Mid-South, Marion Berry Renewable Energy Center in West Memphis. The second Roadshow will be held today at the Doc Bryan Student Services Center, Room 242, on the campus of Arkansas Tech University in Russellville.

The event is free and open to all, but registration is required. Those wishing to attend can sign up for the road show at ArkansasAG.gov or email to foiaroadshow@ArkansasAG.gov.

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Nominations open for national awards

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) is now accepting nominations for three prestigious awards, the Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award and the Amos & McKinney Awards named for Gen. James O. Amos and Emma C. McKinney.

The Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award was established by the NNA in 2007 to honor Daniel Morris “Dan” Phillips, an award-winning writer and photographer who passed away in 2005 at the age of 47. He began his career as a staff writer at The Natchez (Miss.) Democrat before taking the job of managing editor for The Russellville (Ala.) Times. He returned to his family’s newspaper, The Oxford (Miss.) Eagle, in 1983 and was an assistant publisher and stockholder. He served in several leadership positions with the National Newspaper Association, including a term as president in 1999-2000, and was appointed to a second one-year-at-large term on the NNA board for 2004-05. As president of the Mississippi Press Association in 1997-98, he was instrumental in forming the Mississippi Center for Freedom of Information, headquartered at the University of Mississippi. He was named among the “Top 40 Under 40” of state business leaders by the Mississippi Business Journal in 1998. That same year, the Ole Miss Department of Journalism recognized him as one of its top 50 alumni as part of the school’s 50th anniversary celebration.

The winner will be notified in July and the Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award will be presented at NNA’s Annual Convention in Franklin, Tenn., Sept. 22-24.

Nomination criteria are:

• The nominee must be between 23-40 years old;
• Well respected in his or her community, of good reputation and integrity;
• Provides active leadership in the newspaper industry;
• Active in his or her state press association and community;
• Nominee’s newspaper must be a member of NNA.

Nominations may be made by going to the NNA website (www.nnaweb.org/daniel-m-phillips-leadership-award) or by contacting Lynne Lance at Lynne@nna.org.

The Amos & McKinney Awards are regarded as two of the highest and most distinguished tributes in community journalism. They are presented to a working or retired newspaperman and woman who has provided distinguished service and leadership to the community press and his/her community. Winners will be notified in July, and awards are presented at NNA’s Annual Convention.

The nominations criteria are:

• The nominee must be a working or retired newspaperman or woman whose non-metropolitan newspaper is a member in good standing of the National Newspaper Association, or who, if retired, is a retired member in good standing of NNA. The letter of nomination must include the nominee’s full name, position, newspaper, mailing address, telephone number and e-mail address.
• Demonstrated professional achievement.
• Community leadership.
• Advancement of the journalism profession.

Nominations may be made by going to the NNA website (www.nnaweb.org/amos-and-mckinney-awards) or by contacting Lynne Lance at the email address listed here.
Ad Libs:
Competing for customers
BY JOHN FOUST, RALEIGH, N.C., JOHN@JOHNFOUST.COM

YEARS AGO, I HELPED JUDGE AN ADVERTISING COMPETITION FOR A LARGE AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION. BY DESIGN, ALL OF THE JUDGES WERE OUTSIDERS. WE EVALUATED EACH AD ON ITS MERITS, WITHOUT BEING INFLUENCED BY INSIDE KNOWLEDGE OF INDIVIDUAL ADVERTISERS OR PERSONALITIES.

I recently ran across a leftover scoring sheet in my files. There were five scoring areas, with points awarded in each one. Although it was an industry-specific competition, these areas easily apply to all advertising:

1. Stopping power (described on the score-sheet as “attention getting ability”): This concept of stopping power is more important than ever. In the old days, we were exposed to about 500 ads per day. But today’s number is 5,000 or higher.

2. Clarity of message (“is message understandable?”): I once heard a speech by John O’Toole, president of the famous Foote, Cone & Belding advertising agency. After his talk, I chatted with him for a minute or two and asked what he thought was the most important principle of advertising. Without hesitation, he said, “Clarity.”

3. Interest of message (“does message hold attention of audience?”): Once an ad gets attention, the task is to maintain that attention. The surest way to do that is to appeal to the target audience’s interests.

And what are we human beings interested in? Ourselves. There’s real truth in the old cliché that we all listen to radio station WII-FM – “What’s In It For Me?” Every time we encounter an advertiser’s product or service – even for a split second – we automatically run it through the self-interest filter. If it holds some appeal, we’ll give it a few more moments of our time. If not, we’ll click, tap or turn to something else.

The key is to know the audience. Marketing textbooks emphasize the value of features and benefits. Along the way, it’s smart to narrow the list to those which are most relevant. Features A,B and C may not mean anything to potential buyers, but Feature D might hit the mark.

4. Believable (“will audience believe message?”): Although advertisers realize that there is no sale without trust, some of them hurt their chances by resorting to exaggerations and unsubstantiated claims. They lose credibility when they use shallow terms like “unbelievable,” “one of a kind” and “best deals in town.”

I believe that people often exaggerate when they lack confidence in the truth. Sometimes this means the copywriter has not learned enough about the product and the audience to create a believable campaign. The remedy is to get the right information – and simply put that information into words and pictures.

5. Tone (“good taste in keeping with audience”): This is a matter of likeability. People would rather hear, “We understand you, and here’s something you’ll like” than to hear, “You’re making a big mistake if you don’t buy from us.”

At the end of the day, there’s something which can mean more to your advertisers than winning ad contests. And that’s winning customers.

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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. Email for information: john@johnfoust.com

REMININDERS AND RESOURCES

- SuperConvention: The Arkansas Press Association (APA) SuperConvention will take place June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville. Further information, a downloadable schedule, hotel reservation details and more are available at: www.arkansaspress.org.

- Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.
SuperConvention starts in five weeks

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) 2016 SuperConvention begins in less than five weeks at the DoubleTree Suites Hotel in Bentonville. More information is now available online at the association’s website (www.arkansaspress.org). Those interested can find a link to the original announcement, a downloadable [updated] schedule of events, host hotel reservation information and a link to make online reservations in the “APA Spotlight” section. The SuperConvention is set to run June 22-25. Online registration opens today, too, and those wishing to sign up can do so at www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016APA SuperConvention.

The theme, “#Newspapers: Read All Over!” plays on the merging of newspaper platforms, from the traditional print to the new age digital versions. The “Read all over!” part, of course, comes from the old descriptor of a newspaper as being “black and white and read all over.”

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Among the highlights for the 2016 SuperConvention are:
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• A reception, dinner and tour at the world-renowned Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville;
• The Honors Banquet recognizing recipients of the Special Awards;
• A session on community journalism by Penny Abernathy of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, author of Saving Community Journalism;
• A number of timely educational forums including a Question and Answer Session on legal issues for newspapers, a discussion of emerging newspaper technology and ethics in journalism and a round table discussion; and
• The Annual Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Golf Tournament at Lost Springs Golf & Athletic Club in Rogers.

APA election ballots due next week

Ballots for the annual elections for the Arkansas Press Association (APA) board of directors were mailed to all designated voters on Friday, May 13, the same day the designated voter letters were due. Those authorized to vote in the election are encouraged to complete the ballot and return it to the APA headquarters by May 27. Ballots received after that date cannot be counted.

APA is also stressing how important it is for designated voters to sign the outside of the ballot return envelope. Those returned without a signature are disqualified under the APA’s bylaws. Voters will be casting ballots for seven candidates for APA board positions.

The newly-elected board members will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the SuperConvention, which is set to run June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

important dates

Wednesday, May 25 | 10:30 a.m. CDT
Inland Press webinar: “From E&P’s 10 Newspapers That Do It Right: Hutchinson (Kan.) News”
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars

Thursday, May 26 | 2 p.m. CDT
Inland Press webinar: “Digital Services Part 2: How to Overcome Obstacles in Implementing New Digital Services”
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars

Thursday, June 2 | 10:30 a.m. CDT
Inland Press webinar: “Webinar: Facebook is Your Frenemy”
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars

FOIA ROADSHOW #2 | More than 50 were in attendance for the Freedom of Information Act “Roadshow” held last week in Russellville. The forum was co-sponsored by the Office of the Arkansas Attorney General and the Arkansas Press Association. It was the second conducted this year.
Tom Larimer’s Potpourri

The road trip over to Russellville last week for the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Roadshow” gave me an opportunity to make some newspaper visits.

The Roadshow, by the way, produced an excellent turnout. There were 58 in the room when we began, and an extra table or two had to be brought in to accommodate the crowd. The event was held at the Doc Bryan Center on the campus of Arkansas Tech University in Russellville. This is a really nice multi-purpose facility and proved to be an excellent venue for this FOIA event.

David Fisher was among those attending. He is a past president of the Arkansas Press Association (APA) (1987) and is co-owner with wife, Mary, also an APA past president (2015), of Fisher Publishing, Inc. The company newspapers in Danville, Dardanelle, Morrilton and Perryville, was among those attending.

APA partners with the Office of Attorney General (AG) Leslie Rutledge to stage these events. Two staff members from the AG’s office, Beth Walker, head of the Opinions Division, and Matt Barker, provided the heavy lifting in discussing the FOIA in detail as it pertains to public meetings and public records.

This was the second such event this year, the first being in West Memphis. A third is planned for September in Hope.

After the session I had a chance to sit down over lunch with David Meadows, publisher of The Courier in Russellville. David reports that business was good in the first quarter of the year, and, like most everyone else, they’re looking for new revenue opportunities to keep the ball rolling so to speak.

After lunch I pointed the APA truckster back toward Little Rock, but didn’t want to drive through Atkins without at least stopping by The Atkins Chronicle to say hi to the Tysons. I was fortunate to catch Van and Ginny Tyson and Beckie Tyson in the office, pretty much the entire brain trust of The Chronicle and its sister newspaper, The Dover Times. They’re gearing up for “Pickle Fest,” their annual community festival which Van says continues to bring a large crowd to town.

Van, now retired from teaching at Arkansas Tech, as is Ginny, too, was one of my journalism professors as I was matriculating through Tech back in the mid-70s.

It’s always a bit nostalgic to visit the Chronicle office largely because I worked there part-time while attending Arkansas Tech University in Russellville. The always-colorful Tommie Gillespie, past president of APA (1977), was the owner and publisher at the time, and the newspaper was still “hot metal.” Tommie, one of the great and colorful characters in APA history, set all or at least most of the type on the newspaper’s one Linotype while I did the casting and ad building, while also building some of the pages for the newspaper.

When the type was set and the pages built we all pitched in, including some local fans of the newspaper that would show up at press time, to get it printed on the newspaper’s Model E Duplex web press. That old press took a full crew to keep it going.

Producing a newspaper in those days was hot, stinky, dirty work, but some of my best memories of doing it were in that same building where The Chronicle still publishes, although the hot metal and the old press are long gone, thank goodness.

Van and Ginny say they’re planning on being in Bentonville for the APA’s annual SuperConvention. Although they’ve already paid a visit to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, where the convention will have a Thursday evening outing on June 23, they said they look forward to that aspect of the convention.

After an always-pleasant visit with the Tysons, I headed on down I-40 to Conway and stopped by the offices of The Log Cabin Democrat to meet the “new” publisher, Jeff Hartley. Jeff has been in the position since January, but this was the first opportunity to be able to stop by for the official APA welcome.

Jeff comes from Augusta, Ga., where he was working in the corporate offices of Morris Communications, owners of The Log Cabin Democrat. He says he also plans to attend the SuperConvention next month in Bentonville, so you’ll have a chance to meet and visit with Jeff at that gathering.

Speaking of the SuperConvention, for the first time this year you may register online for the convention. Check out the APA website for more information on the convention and also check out how easy it is to register via the website.

But if you were hoping to be the first to register for the SuperConvention via the Internet, you will be disappointed. Terri Leifeste was the first to take advantage of the electronic registration shortly after the site went live last Thursday.

I hope to see a lot of you in Bentonville. The good folks in Bentonville are rolling out the red carpet for our visit and are being very helpful in assisting us in making arrangements. We’ve told them and other sponsors of the event that we will have excellent representation of newspapers from across Arkansas, and I’m sure that we will.

Most of the convention events will take place at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville, except, of course, for the annual golf outing on Wednesday, June 23, the “early bird” party at the Museum of Native American History, and the Thursday evening out to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art.

There will be plenty on the convention agenda that will inform, enlighten and entertain non-stop from the opening tee shot at the golf outing Wednesday till the last editorial award is presented and the pictures taken Saturday afternoon.

Come help make APA’s first convention visit to Bentonville a big success.

I need to correct an error I made in last week’s column where I misidentified Wilton Graves as Willa, and thanks to Mike Graves for setting me straight on his mother’s correct name.

I have no idea where these things come from. I get something in my mind and, feeling certain I’ve got it right, go with it. Sometimes, unfortunately, I get it wrong and this was one of those times.

Have a great week!

Tom
New overtime rules may backfire

—from the National Newspaper Association

A new rule governing overtime pay for employees will create disruption at small newspapers and likely lead to more job cut-backs, National Newspaper Association (NNA) President Chip Hutcheson, publisher of The Times-Leader in Princeton, Ky., said today. He expressed disappointment that the U.S. Department of Labor had rejected calls by many small businesses to introduce a more modified and gradually-rising threshold that sets overtime-eligible employees apart from professional staff.

The new rule, which will go into effect Dec. 1, sets the threshold for overtime eligibility at $913 a week or $47,476 a year. The Labor Department reduced the threshold slightly from its original proposed rule last summer, which was proposed at $50,440. Employees earning an annual wage under the threshold will be required to report their time on a weekly basis and employers will be required to pay time-and-a-half for hours over 40 each week. The final rule did not change the so-called “duties test,” which spells out what sort of work employees must do to qualify as overtime-exempt.

NNA represents 2,400 members across America, primarily small-town and family-owned newspapers. Many are already under financial pressure from weak local economies, and they can’t afford to pay additional overtime. For them, the unintended consequences include lost jobs and less news coverage. For the editors and sales managers and other professionals who will be forced to begin punching a clock, the new threshold will result in less flexibility in terms of when and where they work, how they perform their jobs and less opportunity to advance their careers.

Hutcheson said he regretted that the Labor Department was forcing community newspapers and their small-town employees and customers into a bind, where employee hours will be restricted by budgetary necessity. The impact upon news coverage will be felt immediately, he said.

“NNA agreed that it was past time to adjust the salary levels,” he said. “The Labor Department failed to do its job for a decade by creating more graduated adjustments that small businesses could live with. Then it decided to try to force the small business economy to leap the whole chasm in a single bound. Its ruling fails to recognize the realities of a slow-growing business climate. It also ignores the big differences between costs of living and earnings potential in small towns and major cities. We asked the department to create a regional scale, and obviously our concerns have fallen on deaf ears.”

NNA provided comments to the Labor Department’s proposal, pointing out that newsrooms have difficulty managing a 40-hour week, and that legal barriers for private sector enterprises to offer meaningful flex time meant that news and sports staff could not take advantage of time off during slow seasons to compensate for extra hours spent on breaking news and sporting events. NNA requested consideration of a regional scale and joined the Newspaper Association of America in suggesting that thresholds should be set at a level of twice the annual earnings of a minimum wage earner. The minimum wage index would have given states and cities the ability to effectively set the overtime-eligibility standard.

Now, Hutcheson said, NNA will consider the industry’s options as it completes analysis of the new rule. It has expressed support for HR 4773, which would require the agency to carry out a more effective analysis of the effect of its rule upon small businesses, non-profits and public employers.

“In the end,” he said, “we agreed with the Labor Department’s goal of improving the income of workers. We disagreed mightily with the manner in which it is pursuing the goal, and we believe in the end it will hurt our workforce, our newspapers and newspaper readers.”

REMINDERS AND RESOURCES

• SuperConvention: The Arkansas Press Association (APA) SuperConvention will take place June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville. Further information, a downloadable schedule, hotel reservation details and more are available at: www.arkansaspress.org. Links to online registration portals for the annual convention and online reservations for the host hotel may also be found there in the “APA Spotlight” section.

• APA Forums: The Arkansas Press Association (APA) Forums provide those working in the Arkansas newspaper business with a convenient, free, easy-to-use resource to network with others, find solutions to problems and stay connected with other APA members, all without having to step away from your desk. Visit the forums at http://onlineservices.arkansaspress.org/forums.
A mayor takes issue with an editorial that criticized a city council action, calling your facts into question. Irrate parents challenge your decision — your right — to report their son didn’t dress for the basketball game because he was suspended for violating school policy. A pastor is critical of an ad you accepted for publication, saying it was in poor taste.

Hardly a week passes that a newspaper’s policies and practices aren’t called into question. Many complaints are filed in private conversation.

In other instances, though, readers want to share their opinions with a wider audience with a letter to the editor — which often spurs additional conversation both pro and con on the newspaper’s decision. The exchange soon dwindles, and the newspaper likely wins high marks for allowing readers to toss brickbats as well as bouquets.

There are cases when editors feel compelled to add a P.S. to a letter. I urge you to think twice — even three times — before doing so. Postscripts may give you a “feel good” sensation in the short term, but they can have long-term consequences in relationships with your readers, and rarely for the better.

Don’t get me wrong. Some letters warrant a response. I’m a firm believer in having a dialogue with readers. That includes writing columns to explain news decisions, especially when an issue is raised in your newspaper. But there are some important considerations.

First and foremost, don’t blindside the writer. It’s always best to have a conversation with the author. Explain your decision-making and your wish to explain your reasoning to the broader audience. Gauge the reaction; the conversation may dissuade you from writing anything. If you proceed with a column, the author deserves a heads-up. You may well view the column as an explanation; the writer will likely view it as a rebuttal. That’s all the more reason to connect.

The process is fairly straightforward when dealing with the person who feels mistreated by a newspaper decision and pens a letter. It becomes more complicated with a “third party” complaint. Consider the woman who criticized a newspaper headline: “Drug defendant dies at 19; cause unclear.” She wrote, in part, “What you did was not responsible journalism. It was callous sensationalism.”

In this case, the more important consideration in any editor’s response is the family of the youth that will be drawn into additional limelight through no fault of their own. The letter itself will likely generate more attention; you’re in a difficult position to stop additional exchange. A column also may prolong the debate, and you do have a choice in that regard. A conversation with the family, at minimum, gives you an opportunity to explain your decision in private.

Those conversations can be difficult. Individuals may refuse to talk and hang up abruptly. But the calls also might pay you dividends in the long run. I speak from experience. I made many a call to individuals when our news decisions were called in question. Some remained a private conversation; some resulted in a column. In all instances, the readers — our customers — gained a better understanding of the hows and whys behind our decisions, even if they did not agree.

If you write a column, don’t be afraid to say that, upon reflection after the crush of deadlines, you may have handled the circumstances differently — if that is the case. Deciding that you are human, too, strengthens your credibility.

Requisite to writing any column is having a conversation with the author and/or affected individuals. In contrast, many editors tack a P.S. on letters without ever connecting with the author. From the writer’s perspective, editor’s notes are just an example of the newspaper having the “last word” and diminishing the impact of the letter. Do so, and it’s a good bet the authors will be hesitant to submit another letter. They will be unafraid to express that sentiment to friends, too. In the end, you lose with the author and your readers.

Jim Pumarlo writes, speaks and provides training on community newsroom success strategies. He is author of several books on journalism, including Journalism Primer: A Guide to Community News Coverage. He can be reached at www.pumarlo.com and welcomes comments and questions at jim@pumarlo.com.
APA election ballots due tomorrow

Ballots for the annual elections for the Arkansas Press Association (APA) board of directors were mailed to all designated voters on Friday, May 13, the same day the designated voter letters were due. Those authorized to vote in the election are encouraged to complete the ballot and return it to the APA headquarters by May 27, that being tomorrow. Ballots received after that date cannot be counted.

APA is also stressing how important it is for designated voters to sign the outside of the ballot return envelope. Those returned without a signature are disqualified under the APA’s bylaws. Voters will be casting ballots for seven candidates for APA board positions.

The newly-elected board members will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the SuperConvention, which is June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville.

important dates
Thursday, May 26 | 2 p.m. CDT
Inland Press webinar: “Digital Services Part 2: How to Overcome Obstacles in Implementing New Digital Services”
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars
Monday, May 30
Memorial Day. Arkansas Press Association headquarters closed
Thursday, June 2 | 10:30 a.m. CDT
Inland Press webinar: “Webinar: Facebook is Your Frenemy”
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars
June 22-25
Arkansas Press Association’s 2016 Super-Convention, Bentonville

Convention packets mailed to members

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) on Friday mailed 2016 Convention Packets to all members. They include a schedule of events for this year’s SuperConvention, hotel information for the Doubletree Suites in Bentonville, information on the dinners and tours at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and the Museum of Native American History and the annual Golf Tournament. Registration forms, speaker biographies and flyers on other convention offerings are also included. The Convention can be downloaded from the APA website (www.arkansaspress.org) in the “APA Spotlight” section.

The annual gathering begins in less than four weeks, running June 22-25, and those interested in attending are urged to act now. They can find host hotel reservation information on the website, too, and a link to make online reservations. Online registration opened last week, and those wishing to sign up can do so at APA’s website. In the same “APA Spotlight” section is a link to the online convention registration form.

The theme, “#Newspapers: Read All Over!” plays on the merging of newspaper platforms, from the traditional print to the new age digital versions. The “Read all over!” part, of course, comes from the old descriptor of a newspaper as being “black and white and read all over.”

APA is encouraging members to mark their calendars and make plans to join their colleagues when the annual gathering convenes for the first time in Bentonville.

Among the other highlights for the 2016 SuperConvention are:
• The annual Awards Luncheon featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest;
• The Honors Banquet recognizing recipients of the Special Awards; and
• A number of timely educational forums including a Question and Answer Session on legal issues for newspapers, a discussion of emerging newspaper technology and ethics in journalism and a round table discussion.

FISHER AT THE ‘ROADSHOW’ | David Fisher, center, past Arkansas Press Association (APA) president, joins over 50 others attending the May 12 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Roadshow” at Arkansas Tech University in Russellville. Co-sponsored the APA, it was the second of the year.
Dear Skip,

I’m writing this because I never got a chance to tell you how much I appreciated your company, your conversation and your support during a very difficult time for both of us. I wanted you to know how much I enjoyed passing the evenings debating the merits of the Vietnam War, the protesters back home, and the lost generation we shared; a generation divided by a war and by philosophy. It’s odd that all that took place in the combat zone of the Tonkin Gulf.

I also wanted you to know how much I admired your consistently pleasant demeanor. Your pleasant smile was an oasis in a sea of hairy-faced scowls. It was not a pleasant time we shared aboard the USS Midway. The stress levels were horrendous. The daily flight schedules, the constant aircraft maintenance, the relentless paperwork, the sagging morale of those around us all took their toll.

Yet, through it all somehow you managed to maintain a positive outlook and a contagious sense of humor. I don’t remember ever seeing you frown, and I know I never heard you utter a cross word.

When we lost one of our airplanes and two crew members, you were like a rock as we packed up their personal belongings, dispatched the volumes of attending paperwork, and took care of the myriad details associated with losing an airplane – and with losing lives.

I marveled at how you could recall minute details about James Anderson, the pilot we lost in the crash. It occurred to me that while I had been working closely with James, I really didn’t know him because I hadn’t taken the time. It was obvious that you had, and I got the feeling you knew about as much about me as you did about James.

Your strength got me through that task, and countless others as we went about our daily activities in our little corner of the war. I didn’t realize at the time how much I depended on you for strength and support. I should have said something then, but at the time I just couldn’t bring myself to do that.

The truth is that I probably wouldn’t have admitted to it at the time. To have suggested that I appreciated your presence and your assistance would have violated that code of conduct of young warriors. That’s a pity. That’s also why I write this now.

I can admit to things now that I couldn’t have four decades ago. In those days I was ten feet tall and bullet proof. I was fairly confident of my immortality. I didn’t need anyone.

But now, 44 years after the last time I saw you, I can admit how much I appreciated you, even though I couldn’t say it at the time. I regret now that I didn’t, because I know you’ll never see this.

As I packed your belongings to send home to your family, I thought about the day we performed this same task for James Anderson; how we talked about why bad things happen to good, young people.

And I asked myself those same questions as I packed up your few possessions. I thought about your family, how they would have the same difficulty with closure because there was nothing left of you to mourn. Since nothing was found of you that could be identified as being you, we had nothing to send home to your family except for these few possessions you had neatly stored in your stateroom.

As I packed your things, it occurred to me that I really didn’t know you all that well. I feel like I have come to know you better in the years since you died in an airplane crash than I did before. I know I appreciated you more in death than I could or would admit to in life.

For that I am sorry. I wish there was some way I could have told you at the time, before you died, that I appreciated you, that I enjoyed knowing you, and that I missed you very much once you were gone.

I think of you and James, and Alan Poe, and Bobby Cobb, and Ned Rasmussen, and Detlev Heinz von Pritchens – the others of our circle who did not survive that frustrating and senseless war.

I know somewhere your family has erected a memorial to you. I also know I will likely never see it. I will still remember you and the others on Memorial Day, and many other days during the year.

I know somewhere there is an inscription in stone that preserves your name for eternity. I am so confident of that I can see it in my mind’s eye. Who knows? Perhaps someday I will see it in person:

“Skip Perlman, 1946-1972, Rest in Peace.”

And rest assured, you are not forgotten.

Your friend,

Tom Larimer

Memorial Day ceremonies of observance seem to have waned over the years. I hope there is one in your community and even better if the newspaper is behind its organization. There are far worse things to which a newspaper can lend its name and support than to encourage remembrance of those who died in service to their country.

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) office will be closed Monday in observance of Memorial Day.

Have a great holiday and a great week.

Tom
Baxter Bulletin has more staffing news

The Baxter Bulletin in Mountain Home recently announced more staff changes. Springfield native Allen Jones has been named president of the Springfield News-Leader and the Bulletin, and Scott Liles has joined the Mountain Home newspaper as a reporter.

Jones, 34, has been with Gannett, which owns both newspapers, since 2005. He began with the company in advertising sales in Visalia, Calif., before moving back to the Springfield area in 2008 where he led automotive, real estate and retail teams. He was named News-Leader Manager of the Year twice during his time in that role. Most recently Jones worked with Gannett’s corporate office as the director of automotive advertising for the company’s West/Central Group. He hails from Pleasant Hope, Mo. and graduated from high school there. He is also a graduate of Missouri State University in Springfield. He is a resident of Ash Grove, Mo., which is part of the Springfield Metropolitan Area.

Liles joined the Baxter Bulletin this month to take on the city-county government and economics beats. An Arkansas native, he is a 1995 graduate of Rose Bud High School and attended the University of Central Arkansas (UCA) in Conway where he majored in journalism and minored in history. While still in college, Liles began his journalism career, writing for both the UCA newspaper, The Echo, and the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette in Little Rock. After graduating Liles continued with the Democrat-Gazette until 2004 when he moved to Harrison as an assistant editor of the Harrison Daily Times.

Convention registrations keep coming

With the 2016 Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention less than four weeks off, more registrations are coming in both via traditional forms and online registration: www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016APA SuperConvention. So far the following 37 people are heading to Bentonville for the annual meeting (listed alphabetically by location):

- Benton: Amanda Freudensprung, Beth Freudensprung, Kelly Freudensprung, Beth Reed, Collin Reed, The Saline Courier;
- Berrien Springs, Mich.: Chris Freeman, Interlink;
- Branson, Mo.: Tamra Corbin, Branson Convention & Visitors Bureau;
- Chapel Hill, N.C.: Penny Abernathy, University of North Carolina;
- El Dorado: Greta Bell, Ronnie Bell, El Dorado News-Times;
- Harrison: Jim Holland, Tammy Holland, Jim Perry, Lisa Perry, Harrison Daily Times;
- Jefferson City, Mo.: Alvin Leifeste, Terri Leifeste, WEHCO Media;
- Knoxville, Tenn.: Lisa Griffin, University of Tennessee;
- Little Rock: Terri Cobb, Pam Larimer, Tom Larimer, Kathy Edwards,
- Ashley Wallace, Ashley Wimberley, Arkansas Press Association (APA);
- Little Rock: Jay Edwards, The Daily Record;
- Little Rock: Rob Roedel, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas;
- Little Rock: Ramanda Cody, Andrea Peel, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences;
- Little Rock: Nat Lea, Neal Lea, WEHCO Media;
- Mena: Clark Smith, Irina Smith, Mena Newspapers;
- Nashville: John Schirmer, Nashville News-Leader;
- North Little Rock, Whitney Greer, Arkansas Department of Emergency Management;
- Pea Ridge, Annette Beard, The Times of Northeast Benton County;
- Pine Bluff: Byron Tate, Pat Tate, Pine Bluff Commercial; and

The APA is encouraging those interested in joining them to make plans as soon as possible and is reminding them that the deadline for special rates at the host hotel, the DoubleTree Suites, is June 8. The deadline for registering for the SuperConvention is June 17.

Newspaper groups oppose DOL rules

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) and other newspaper advocacy groups, including the Arkansas Press Association (APA), continue to raise objections to the Department of Labor’s (DOL) final rule to increase the salary threshold for mandatory overtime pay from $23,660 to $47,476. That is an improvement over the previously announced floor of $50,440, but still too steep a one-time increase for many smaller newspapers to absorb, the coalition argues. The final threshold still amounts to a 100% increase from the current level. The final rule was announced on May 18.

The rule provides that the new salary threshold will be implemented December 1, 2016. The Department's proposed rule called for an automatic annual update to the salary threshold. In the Final Rule, the Department stated that the salaries test will be updated every three years and will be tied to the 40th percentile of salaried workers in the lowest-wage region (likely to remain the Southeast).

For the first time, the new standard would permit employers to count nondiscretionary bonuses, incentives and commissions toward the salaries test will be updated every three years and will be tied to the 40th percentile of salaried workers in the lowest-wage region (likely to remain the Southeast). For the first time, the new standard would permit employers to count nondiscretionary bonuses, incentives and commissions toward the standard exemption, as long as those amounts are paid on a quarterly (or more frequently) basis.

In any given quarter — if an employee does not earn enough in nondiscretionary or incentive pay, the Final Rule permits employers to make a “catch-up” payment.

REMINDERS AND RESOURCES

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Promote your staff, your newspaper:
The Arkansas Press Association encourages members to send news of staff changes or other happenings and associated photos for inclusion in this publication to: Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org).
ANF touts sponsors for annual Golf Tourney

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) will hold its Annual Golf Tournament this year on June 22, 2016 at Lost Springs Golf and Racquet Club in Rogers. The tournament is held in conjunction with the APA SuperConvention, which runs June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Suites in Bentonville. Proceeds from the tournament benefit the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF).

Karen Brown, executive director of the ANF, announced the hole sponsors for this year’s tournament on Tuesday and expressed her gratitude. This year’s sponsors (with corresponding hole numbers) are:

- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) — #1
- Ashley and Neal Wimberley — #2
- CJRW — #3
- Ron and Nancy Kemp — #6
- Mary and David Fisher — #7
- Jay and Patsy Jackson — #8
- TownNews — #9
- AT&T Arkansas — #10
- University of Arkansas Lemke Department of Journalism — #12
- Byron Tate, Pine Bluff Commercial — #14
- Roy and Pat Ockert — #15
- Tom and Pam Larimer — #16
- Arvest Bank — #17
- Nat Lea, WEHCO Media, Inc — #18

“If you or your company are interested in sponsoring a hole at this year’s golf tournament,” said Brown, “please contact Terri Cobb at the APA Office (501.374.1500) or email me at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.”

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**You might be losing more than pages with lower page counts**

**By Kevin Slimp, Institute of Newspaper Technology**

There is a rule of thumb which almost always proves to be true at newspaper conventions: attendance drops drastically on Saturday morning. There are plenty of theories on the subject from “too much fun on Friday night” to “heading home to be with the kids.”

Whatever the cause, you can imagine my surprise when I walked into a room in Des Moines, Iowa, recently and realized it would be necessary to add chairs. Honestly, I didn’t expect many folks to show up for a Saturday morning session where we would primarily be looking at numbers, but show up they did.

The topic was “What’s Really Going on in the Newspaper Industry.” My plan was to discuss results from my most recent survey, completed only days before the Des Moines conference. It was obvious the attendees really wanted to know my thoughts on that topic.

After completing a major survey, I attempt to discuss one or two findings in each of my subsequent columns for newspaper industry readers until we have covered the most relevant findings. As with previous studies, there is enough information to write books about the state of the industry, but I will stick to the most interesting discoveries.

Perhaps the most thought-provoking discussion in Des Moines revolved around newspaper ownership. Before sharing survey results, I gave the group a little quiz. Their mission was to guess how North American newspaper publishers responded to the survey. Not to answer the questions in the survey as they related to their own newspapers.

When asked to guess the percentage of newspapers that are independent, not related to any group or other newspapers, most of the attendees guessed the number would be pretty low. They were surprised to learn that 53 percent of newspapers in the U.S. and Canada are independent, without any relationship to even a small group.

I found that most interesting because most of the folks in the room were from independent publications, not part of a larger group. Yet they assume that most of their brethren are from large newspaper groups. And as I discussed in a previous column, independent papers reported better health and more growth than those that are part of a group.

There were several other questions where most publishers guessed their papers were different from most others. When the numbers are broken down, however, we find that ownership plays a bigger role than anything else in determining how newspapers respond. Most independent papers respond very similarly to most questions, as do most small, mid-sized and large group newspapers.

Today, I would like to focus on one interesting correlation: page count vs. newspaper health. Most newspapers, 53 percent, responded their page count was relatively unchanged from three years ago. That is 20 percent higher than the number which reduced the number of pages over the past three years. While 33 percent reported fewer pages, 12 percent answered that they have increased the number of pages.

We could argue all day whether newspapers are healthier as a result of having more pages, or whether healthier papers produce more pages because they are in better shape. I would guess that, as in most topics of disagreement, the truth is somewhere in the middle.

There is, however, no doubt newspapers that report a higher page count than three years ago also report significantly increased health over those same years. An astounding 81 percent of newspapers that increased the number of pages report better overall health than three years ago.

This figure is even more amazing when compared to newspapers with decreased page counts over those same years. Of those, only 17 percent reported improved health over the same period.

Among the largest group, made up of papers which report the same number of pages as three years ago, 38 percent indicate improved health since 2013.

This discussion could easily turn into a “Which came first, the chicken or the egg?” conversation. I would suggest there are enough responses to persuade me that one of the indicators of newspaper health is page count as compared to previous years.

For some newspapers, decreasing the number of pages and staff members is a sure way to improve the bottom line. But if these 859 publishers and other newspaper executives can be believed, decreasing the number of pages has a high chance of leading to diminished health, rather than increased profits.
SuperConvention starts in just 3 weeks

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) has mailed 2016 Convention Packets to all members. They include a schedule of events for this year’s SuperConvention, hotel information for the Doubletree Suites in Bentonville, information on the dinners and tours at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and the Museum of Native American History and the annual Golf Tournament. Registration forms, speaker biographies and flyers on other convention offerings are also included. The Convention can be downloaded from the association’s website (www.arkansaspaper.org) in the “APA Spotlight” section.

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The theme, “#Newspapers: Read All Over!” plays on the merging of newspaper platforms, from the traditional print to the new age digital versions. The “Read all over!” part, of course, comes from the old riddle asking, “What is black and white and read all over?”

APA is encouraging members to mark their calendars and make plans to join their colleagues when the annual gathering convenes for the first time in Bentonville.

Among the other highlights for the 2016 SuperConvention are:

- The annual Awards Luncheon featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest;
- The Honors Banquet recognizing recipients of the Special Awards;
- A number of timely educational forums including a Question and Answer Session on legal issues for newspapers, a discussion of emerging newspaper technology and ethics in journalism and a round table discussion;
- The Annual Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Golf Tournament at Lost Springs Golf & Athletic Club in Rogers; and
- The annual Passing of the Gavel Ceremony and installation of the new APA president.

SPJ Arkansas Pro Chapter to meet

The Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) will hold its annual meeting Wednesday, June 8. “You don’t have to be an SPJ member to attend, but we’ll have a laptop there in case you would like to sign up,” said Kelly Kissel of the Associated Press, current president of the chapter.

The Club 109 & Co. at 109 S. Main St. in Little Rock will have drink specials for attendees at 6 p.m. The business portion of the gathering will start at 7 p.m. The group will elect officers for 2016-17 and discuss things to accomplish in the upcoming year.

“We jump-started the chapter last July and conducted five formal programs over the last 11 months,” said Kissel. “I’ll have details from our annual report at the meeting. Our monthly meetings have been a hoot, too, and you’re always welcome to join us. They’re typically the second Wednesday of each month.

“I’ll send some reminders out via Twitter (you can follow me through @kisselAP or the SPJ account through @ArkansasSPJ).”

#NEWSPAPERS
Read All Over!
The National Newspaper Association (NNA) last week released a statement of concern over the proposed new overtime rules coming out of the U.S. Department of Labor, rules that would work a considerable hardship on thousands of small businesses, including newspapers.

Okay yeah, this has been a topic here before, but I think that is indicative of just how serious these new rules will be and how difficult the challenge will be to operate a newsroom under the new regulations.

The new rules, which will go into effect December 1, will raise the threshold for overtime eligibility to $913 per week or $47,476 per year. That means that if you have someone working in your newsroom that makes less than that, they will no longer be exempt from overtime, meaning you will have to pay them overtime for anything over 40 hours worked in a week.

Newspapers will have the option of raising those making less than $913 per week, or paying overtime pay.

The threshold was heretofore $23,600 per year, so yeah, that income limit is doubled. And yet it could be worse. The threshold in the initial release of the proposed new overtime regulations set the limit at $54,440, a number that was reduced after much discussion.

If you’re reading this thinking it really doesn’t apply to you because of the long-standing 4,000-and-below circulation exemption, you may be mistaken. That exemption is uncertain at best depending on which interpretation of the exemption you choose to follow, and it varies from district to district across the country.

If you are a small newspaper publisher with 4,000-circulation or less, you “may” be exempt under the new overtime regulations. If you are part of a group of newspapers with a total of more than 4,000 in circulation you are NOT exempt.

As is apparent, there are still some questions unanswered.

So why the changes now and why so much? The geniuses in Washington suggest that requiring small business to pay their employees more will put more money into the economy. It’s a sort of pay-more-spend-more approach that smacks of artificial manipulation, which historically has seldom produced the desired results.

NNA expresses concern that newsroom jobs will be lost as a result of the new regulations. Of that there is little doubt, but there seems to be no concern by the decision makers on the long-term affects the new overtime rules will have on small businesses, and specifically not for newspapers.

The NNA statement cites a corresponding loss of coverage with the loss of newsroom positions. While this is indeed worthy of concern for those of us laboring in the industry, I’m thinking this is an incentive for some of those promoting the new regulations that will make it happen. Loss of news coverage just doesn’t register on the concern meter of those in positions to affect such drastic changes.

Of course, it is a concern, and it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to figure that one out. An informed citizenry has always been a mainstay in sustaining the republic. An informed citizenry makes sound decisions in the voting booth if they are accurately informed of the issues at hand.

That has always been the case, but the need to keep the citizenry informed either no longer remains a priority in Washington, or perhaps keeping the public in the dark appeals to some who would prefer that the public just butt out of their own business.

Either way, Americans lose. Either way the public gets less information; less coverage. This is true from the city government level, to the state level and beyond. Newspapers, already operating on thin profit margins, are just not going to be able under these new regulations to continue in their present newsroom configurations. What do you think will be the result of that?

And when the formerly well-informed citizenry turns to their community newspapers and asks, “Why didn’t you tell us about this?” the answer will be “because we could no longer afford to do our jobs.”

There are those who will argue that our opposition to the new overtime regulations is because we don’t want to have to pay our people more money. The response to that is that you can’t pay what you don’t have, and taking this approach to getting employees more money puts undue stress on already strapped newspapers.

Personally, I’ve never been in a position of determining salaries at a newspaper when I didn’t pay them every dime I could and still remain profitable. When you talk about newspapers you’re really talking about people because it is the newspaper staff that creates the product that informs, enlightens and entertains readers. Without them you can’t produce much of a product, and without them readers don’t have much of a reason to continue reading the newspaper.

The same argument could be made for a lot of small businesses. Perhaps it could be made for all of them, but newspapers are what’s near and dear to our hearts, to my heart, and I know what the issues and the hardships these new overtime regulations will foist upon newspapers. It’s not going to be pretty.

Honestly, the overtime regulations were long overdue for an overhaul. They should have been updated all along by indexing the threshold totals to correspond with a growing economy and inflation of the dollar. The problem is that those writing the new regulations tried to make up for all those years of not keeping the regulations up to date by doing it all at once, and it’s just too much.

There is an effort in congress to require the Department of Labor to do more analysis of the new overtime regulations before putting them into effect. There is perhaps hope that the threshold limits could be lowered again, or at least implemented in stages over a period of years.

That would sure seem to be the common sense approach to updating the regulations. Whether that will register with enough in congress or at the Department of Labor remains to be seen.

My advice to community newspapers is to be taking a look at what the new regulations are going to do to you and your news operations, because the change is likely inevitable. Even if the threshold is lowered it’s still going to be considerably more than it was, and the salary expense for producing a newspaper is going to go up.

Have a great week!
Baxter Bulletin continues staffing changes

The Baxter Bulletin in Mountain Home is adding a third reporter to its newsroom. Billy Jean Louis has joined the staff to cover health and education. Jean Louis, of Miami, was born in Haiti and moved to south Florida when he was 17. He is a 2010 graduate of Hallandale High School in Hallandale Beach, Fla. He went on to earn a bachelor’s of science degree in journalism from the University of Florida in Gainesville. Prior to joining the Baxter Bulletin, Jean Louis worked for the Odessa (Texas) American. While in college he was a web editor/reporter for WUFT News in Gainesville, Fla. and interned for the Independent Florida Alligator, and for the student news and entertainment blog, Examiner.com.

Wiggins marks 40 years with The Paris Express

Vickey Wiggins, publisher of the Paris Express, and Booneville Democrat, recently celebrated 40 years in the newspaper industry. Wiggins started at The Paris Express in 1976, typing copy and working in the print shop. She later worked in advertising sales before being named publisher of the newspaper in 1996. In 2001 she also assumed the publisher position with the Booneville Democrat. Both newspapers are owned by GateHouse Media.

Promote your staff, your newspaper:
The Arkansas Press Association encourages members to send news of staff changes or other happenings and associated photos for inclusion in this publication to: Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org).

Right at 50 now registered for SC

With the 2016 Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention less than four weeks off, more registrations are coming in both via traditional forms and online registration: www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016APA SuperConvention. So far the following 48 people are heading to Bentonville for the annual meeting (listed alphabetically by location):

- Benton: Amanda Freudensprung, Beth Freudensprung, Beth Reed, Collin Reed, The Saline Courier;
- Berrien Springs, Mich.: Chris Freeman, Interlink;
- Berryville: Bob Moore, Carroll County News;
- Branson, Mo.: Tamra Corbin, Branson Convention & Visitors Bureau;
- Chapel Hill, N.C.: Penny Abernathy, University of North Carolina;
- El Dorado: Greta Bell, Ronnie Bell, El Dorado News-Times;
- Harrison: Jim Holland, Tammy Holland, Jim Perry, Lisa Perry, Harrison Daily Times;
- Harrison: Jane Christenson, Jeff Christenson, Lee Dunlap, Karen Lair;
- Hot Springs, Ark.: Todd Frantz, The Sentinel-Record;
- Jefferson City, Mo.: Alvin Leifeste, Terri Leifeste, WEHCO Media;
- Knoxville, Tenn.: Lisa Griffin, University of Tennessee;
- Little Rock: Terri Cobb, Pam Larimer, Tom Larimer, Kathy Edwards, Ashley Wallace, Ashley Wimberley, Arkansas Press Association (APA);
- Little Rock: Jay Edwards, The Daily Record;
- Little Rock: Rob Roedel, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas;
- Little Rock: Jeff Jeffus, Nat Lea, Neal Lea, WEHCO Media;
- Malvern: Gretchen Ritchey, Malvern Daily Record;
- Mena: Clark Smith, Irida Smith, Mena Newspapers;
- Nashville: Louie Graves, John Schirmer, Nashville News-Leader;
- North Little Rock, Whitney Greer, Arkansas Department of Emergency Management;
- Pea Ridge, Annette Beard, The Times of Northeast Benton County;
- Pine Bluff: Byron Tate, Pat Tate, Pine Bluff Commercial;
- Searcy: Steve Watts, The Daily Citizen;

The APA is encouraging those interested in joining them to make plans as soon as possible and is reminding them that the deadline for special rates at the host hotel, the DoubleTree Suites, is June 8. The deadline for registering for the SuperConvention is June 17.

Q & A from the NNA ‘mail prep’ webinar

BY MAX HEATH, NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION POSTAL CHAIR

More than 50 newspapers/plants were represented on the National Newspaper Association’s Pub Aux Live webinar conducted by Brad Hill and me April 7, 2016. Several questions arose that deserve answering to a wider audience. Here they are:

Q: What about changes in the marked copy rule?
A: Although we reported some months ago that the marked copy Periodical requirement might be eliminated except on request, that did not yet happen. Business Mail Acceptance wanted to exact too high a price for that change, so it was withdrawn by majority of Periodicals publishers on the Periodicals Advisory Group, where NNA is represented.

There were some good changes in the process, one on a request from NNA.
1. The marked copy can be submitted to either an original entry or additional entry office, but does not have to go to both.
2. Only one marked copy of the main edition (read that as the ROP newspaper) has to be submitted. You do not have to submit a sepa-

—continued on page 4
ANF updates list of
golf tourney sponsors
The Arkansas Press Association (APA) is holding its Annual Golf Tournament this year on June 22, 2016 at Lost Springs Golf and Racquet Club in Rogers. The tournament is held in conjunction with the APA SuperConvention, which runs June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Suites in Bentonville. Proceeds from the tournament benefit the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF).

Karen Brown, executive director of the ANF, announced the hole sponsors for this year’s tournament last week and provided an updated roster this week. This year’s sponsors (with corresponding hole numbers) are:

University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) — #1
Ashley and Neal Wimberley — #2
CJRW — #3
Ron and Nancy Kemp — #6
Mary and David Fisher — #7
Jay and Patsy Jackson — #8
TownNews — #9
AT&T Arkansas — #10
The Family of Cone and Betty Magie — #11
University of Arkansas Lemke Department of Journalism — #12
Little Shaneyfelt Marshall Co. — #13
Byron Tate, Pine Bluff Commercial — #14
Roy and Pat Ockert — #15
Tom and Pam Larimer — #16
Arvest Bank — #17
Nat Lea, WEHCO Media, Inc. — #18

A few holes are still available. Those wanting to sponsor one should contact Terri Cobb at the APA Office (501.374.1500) or email Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

Q&A from NNA ‘mail prep’ webinar
—continued from page 3
rate marked copy for each different version (edition) with various advertising preprint combinations. See italics below in Domestic Mail Manual passage:

DMM 207.16.2 Filing Marked Copy:
“The publisher must file a copy (marked by the publisher) of each issue, so the advertising content may be verified, with the postmaster of either the original entry office or an additional entry office. If there is more than one edition for an issue, the publisher must submit the main or most prominent edition of the issue and must have all other editions available for review upon request by the USPS. On the first page of each marked copy, the publisher must show the total units and percentage of space devoted to advertising and nonadvertising in the copy.”

Q: How can I order flats trays (tubs) with green lids, pallets, etc. from USPS?
A: Although many newspapers get enough supply through their local postmaster or from a Sectional Center Facility, newspapers that have established use of electronic documentation have an account in the Business Customer Gateway.

Once logged in to the Gateway, click “Other Services” and then the “Mail Transport Equipment (METEOR)” link to place an order. Be sure that you and your post office can handle pallets, because equipment is delivered that way.

Q: How can I get help in setting up my Business Customer Gateway account and deal with questions and problems that may arise?
A: The PostalOne!” Help Desk is available by phone at 800.522.9085, or by e-mail: postalone@usps.gov.

Q: What is CAPS?
A: Central Account Processing System, with information available at https://caps.usps.gov/. This allows a newspaper to have postage deducted once the postage statement has been entered in the PostalOne!” System for each issue of a newspaper or shopper via an electronic deduction from your bank account, just like a debit card. It is valuable in that the publisher no longer has to maintain deposit accounts at their entry office for Periodicals and Standard Mail. That means no hustling to see that checks arrive in time to be on deposit before mailing, which saves your business the cost of “float” or money tied up in those advance deposit accounts. The costs of writing multiple and frequent checks, especially for a group with payments from a central office, and the postage to mail or even overnight those checks, are also saved.

Q: Does the in-county rule require fewer than 10,000 copies mail or total circulation?
A: There are two parts to the in-county eligibility rule: Either mail more than 50 percent of your circulation within the county of original entry, or distribute fewer than 10,000 paid copies (by all methods, not just mail). The DMM language is pasted below for clarification.

DMM 207.11.3.1 Subscriber or Requester Copies
“In-county prices apply to subscriber or requester copies of a Periodicals publication entered within the county in which the Post Office of original entry is located for delivery to addressees within that county, if one of the following standards is met:

“a. The total paid or requested circulation of such issue is less than 10,000 copies.

“b. The number of paid or requested copies of such issue distributed within the county of publication is more than 50 percent of the total paid or requested circulation of such issue.”

Q: How do I track my mail delivery these days?
A: There is only one good option left within the U.S. Postal Service. Full-Service IMb—Intelligent Mail barcode.

The electronic ePubwatch system is no longer available after a cyber intrusion of some USPS systems a couple of years ago. It was becoming less effective anyway with smaller staffs in post offices yielding less time for supervisors to log in to the Delivery Unit Computer and report the receipt of a newspaper. Likewise, the paper version, Publication Watch PS Form 3721, has never been effective, and it has been eliminated.

A newspaper will need a Business Customer Gateway account used for eDoc and operating in Full-Service mode via your software vendor. See https://gateway.usps.com. From there, you can click on Mailing Reports, and then the Dashboard with Job ID or Mailing Group ID. Full-Service reports are listed. Select the one stating “Informed Visibility.” More details on this are contained in an archived webinar file on www.nnaweb.org.

Although newspapers may not get piece scanning, there is an increasing amount of tray tag and bundle scanning. © Max Heath 2016.

Max Heath, NNA postal chair, is a postal consultant for Athlon Media Group, publisher of Parade, American Profile, Relish and Spry newspaper supplements, and also for Landmark Community Newspapers LLC. E-mail maxheath@lcni.com.
Newspaper groups file ad blocking suit

The Newspaper Association of America (NAA) today filed a Complaint and Request for Investigation with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) alleging that certain ad blocking technologies and related services violate Section 5 of the FTC Act as unfair and deceptive trade practices. NAA is requesting that the FTC investigate ad blockers that (1) offer “paid whitelisting,” (2) substitute ad blockers’ own advertising for blocked ads, (3) claim that subscription services prevent publisher harm and (4) facilitate the evasion of metered subscription systems.

“Newspapers recognize that ad blocking technology is responding to a consumer demand, and publishers are working diligently to improve the ad experience for consumers. However, some ad blocking firms have implemented ad blocking business models that deceive consumers. These practices undercut our members’ ability to provide a satisfying customer experience because the consumer is not receiving the whole truth,” said NAA President & CEO David Chavern.

The complaint calls on the FTC to investigate Eyeo’s practice of using paid whitelisting that misleads the consumer into believing the “acceptable” advertisement is based on quality, when in fact advertisements are passed along to consumers if advertisers pay a fee. The complaint brings attention to other ad blocking technologies that replace existing advertising.

Two weeks to APA’s SuperConvention

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) has mailed 2016 Convention Packets to all members. They include a schedule of events for this year’s SuperConvention, information on the dinners and tours at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and the Museum of Native American History and the annual Golf Tournament. Registration forms, speaker biographies and flyers on other convention offerings are also included. The Convention Packet can be downloaded from the association’s website (www.arkansaspress.org) in the “APA Spotlight” section.

The annual gathering begins in less than two weeks, running June 22-25, and those interested in attending are urged to act now. Online registration is available, and those wishing to sign up can do so at APA’s website. In “APA Spotlight” section is a link to the online convention registration form.

The theme, “#Newspapers: Read All Over!” plays on the merging of newspaper platforms, from the traditional print to the new age digital versions. The “Read all over!” part, of course, comes from the old riddle asking, “What is black and white and read all over?”

APA is encouraging members to mark their calendars and make plans to join their colleagues when the annual gathering convenes for the first time in Bentonville. Nearly 90 “APAers” have already registered (see page 3).

Among the other highlights for the 2016 SuperConvention are:

• The annual Awards Luncheon featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest;
• The Honors Banquet recognizing recipients of the Special Awards;
• A number of timely educational forums including a Question and Answer Session on legal issues for newspapers, a discussion of emerging newspaper technology and ethics in journalism and a round table discussion;
• The Annual Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Golf Tournament at Lost Springs Golf & Athletic Club in Rogers
• The Silent Auction benefitting the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation;
• The Press Camp for Kids; and
• The annual Passing of the Gavel Ceremony and installation of the new APA president.

Tuesday, June 14 | 2 p.m. CDT
Inland Press webinar: “What would Google do?: Innovation and Disruption in the Media”
www.inlandpress.org/training/webinars
The calendar has clicked over to June already, and that means that the annual SuperConvention can’t be far away. And, of course, it isn’t. Arkansas Press Association (APA) members, associate members and friends will gather June 22-25 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville for the annual convention where we’ll find opportunity to learn, to recreate, and re-connect with members of our unique fraternity of die-hard newspaper people. There will be large portions of each at this year’s convention, with a couple of extra twists added in to keep things interesting.

Registrations for the convention are already stacking up, and it’s looking like we will have a really good representation of the Arkansas newspaper industry once again. Several of those registering are taking advantage of the online registration process offered by APA for the first time this year. It is very convenient as well as quick and easy to navigate.

Among the firsts at the SuperConventon this year will be a presentation by Lisa Griffin, a newspaper technology trainer who has been in the business for many years. This will be Lisa’s first visit to an APA convention, although she has been a fixture at several others for years.

Some, at least those who have attended the Institute of Newspaper Technology, will know Lisa, as she’s been on the faculty of that annual event for years.

Also making a return visit to the APA convention, but the first to make a presentation, is Zach Ahrens, publisher of the Topeka (Kan.) Capital-Journal. Many will remember Zach from his stint as publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway.

Zach will be up at 9 a.m. Friday morning at the convention talking about “Building Next Generation Loyalty.”

Making a return visit to the convention this year will be long-time Legal Hotline attorney John Tull of the Quattlebaum, Grooms and Tull law firm in Little Rock. John will be talking about legal issues of particular interest to newspaper people and will also answer questions of a legal nature from the audience.

I know many of you have talked to John on the phone when calling the “hotline,” and this will be a great opportunity to meet him in person.

The new University of Arkansas at Fayetteville Chancellor Joseph Steinmetz will make a brief presentation at the Friday luncheon at the convention. I had an opportunity to meet and have a brief visit with Dr. Steinmetz recently and enjoyed the experience, just as I know those attending the APA convention will enjoy meeting him as well.

Penny Abernathy, author of the book Saving Community Journalism: The Path to Profitability, will be another first-time presenter at the APA convention. Penny will discuss some of the topics from her book, and follow that up with a second session workshop, both Friday afternoon.

Also, a limited number of Penny’s books will be available for sale at the convention registration desk. The cost of the books will be $25 and there will be ample opportunity to ask the author to sign your copy for you.

We will be presenting the traditional APA Special Achievement Awards at the Friday evening honors banquet again this year. We have six awards to present Friday evening, and, as is most often the case, they will go to some stalwart newspaper editors, publishers, and educators.

This is always a fun evening as we pause to recognize those in our newspaper community who have excelled in their chosen field.

Among the many highlights of the 2016 APA convention will be the Thursday evening outing to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the showcase of the art collection of Alice Walton, daughter of the late Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton, and the 2012 recipient of the APA’s “Headliner of the Year” award. (For the record, Sam Walton was the 1985 recipient of the APA’s “Headliner” award. Both Waltons came in person to accept the honor.)

If you have not had a chance to visit Crystal Bridges, this will be a great opportunity. We’ll have a reception and dinner there, and of course the museum will be open for touring. This should be a really fun evening and a great chance to familiarize yourself with one of the great tourist destinations in the state.

Buses will begin departing for Crystal Bridges at 5 p.m. Thursday. Of course, you can drive yourself if you wish, but there will be plenty of room on the bus. We’ve even arranged for the bus to bring you back to the hotel.

Crystal Bridges won’t be the only museum we visit on this convention stop. The annual and traditional “early bird” party for those arriving on Wednesday will be held at the Museum of Native American History located very near the convention headquarters hotel. I have not had a chance to visit this museum, but those who have tell me it is excellent, so I certainly look forward to it.

Golfers will tee it up in the traditional APA golf outing Wednesday, June 22, at the Lost Springs Golf Club in nearby Rogers, just a few blocks from the convention hotel actually. Lunch will be served to the golfers beginning at 11 a.m. followed by a shotgun start at noon.

The APA golf event several years ago became a scramble making it a fun event for golfers of all skill levels. You can either sign up as an individual and we’ll assign you to a team, or sign up a team and go for it.

Proceeds from the golf outing go to the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation. Trophies will be presented to the winners at the Friday luncheon back at the DoubleTree.

Sponsors of the APA golf outing again this year, as have been for the past many years, AT&T Arkansas and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). Representatives from those organizations will be on hand to help out and also to distribute beverages on the golf course.

Whatever your interest, I think you’ll find several things to make your trip to Bentonville for the annual SuperConvention worthwhile. There will be opportunities to learn a little something while being entertained. Also very important in my view is the opportunity to mix and mingle with so many others who do what you do on a daily basis. The networking that goes on at conventions has always been one of the major positives for making it a must for APA members.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Have a great week!

Tom
Opposition to overtime rule picks up steam

The Department of Labor (DOL) issued a rule last month that will double the threshold for salaried workers who qualify for overtime pay, from $23,660 to $47,476. If the new rule takes effect as planned on Dec. 1, it will require most employees who otherwise qualify for the white-collar exemption from the overtime rules, but earn less than $47,476, to begin punching a clock. In addition to their regular salary, employers will be required to pay them time-and-a-half for the hours they work that exceed 40 in a workweek.

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) and Arkansas Press Association (APA) have agreed that the threshold needed to be raised, but argue that doubling it is a mistake.

Community newspapers and their small-town employees will be unfairly penalized by DOL’s one-size-fits-all scheme.

Companion bills have been introduced in the House and Senate (S. 2707/H.R. 4773) that would nullify the rule and require the agency to carry out a more effective analysis of its impact on small businesses, nonprofits and public employers. Support for the bills has increased in recent days.

The House bill (H.R. 4773) now has 174 co-sponsors, and the Senate bill (S. 2707) has 42 co-sponsors. All four of Arkansas’ Representatives have signed on as co-sponsors. APA is asking newspapers to consider contacting their House member to express their appreciation.

The House Education and Workforce Committee has scheduled a hearing on the new rule on Thursday, June 9.

Convention registrations reach 90

With the 2016 Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention less than two weeks off, more registrations are coming in both via traditional forms and online registration: www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016APA SuperConvention. So far the following 90 people are heading to Bentonville for the annual meeting (listed alphabetically by location):

- Arvada, Colo.: James Clarke, Associated Press;
- Batesville: Bob Qualls, Sandy Qualls;
- Benton: Amanda Freudensprung, Beth Freudensprung, Kelly Freudensprung, Beth Reed, Collin Reed, The Saline Courier;
- Berrien Springs, Mich.: Chris Freeman, Interlink;
- Berryville: Bob Moore, Carroll County News;
- Branson, Mo.: Tamra Corbin, Branson Convention & Visitors Bureau;
- Camden: James Lee Silliman, Sue Silliman, Camden News;
- Chapel Hill, N.C.: Penny Abernathy, University of North Carolina;
- Conway: Eric Anderton, Jeanette Anderton, Log Cabin Democrat;
- El Dorado: Greta Bell, Ronnie Bell, El Dorado News-Times;
- Fayetteville: Cody Bottoms, Devin Bottoms, Marley Hudspeth, Staci Hudspeth, Wil Hudspeth, Rob Qualls, Sara Qualls;
- Fayetteville: Todd Nelson, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette;
- Gulf Shores, Ala.: Lewis Floyd, W.B. Grimes & Co.;
- Harrison: Jim Holland, Tammy Holland, Jim Perry, Lisa Perry, Harrison Daily Times;
- Harrison: Jane Christenson, Jeff Christenson, Lee Dunlap, Karen Lair;
- Hot Springs, Ark.: Todd Frantz, The Sentinel-Record;
- Jefferson City, Mo.: Alvin Leifeste, Terri Leifeste, WEHCO Media;
- Knoxville, Tenn.: Lisa Griffin, University of Tennessee;
- Little Rock: Steve Eddington, Arkansas Farm Bureau;
- Little Rock: Terri Cobb, Pam Larimer, Tom Larimer, Kathy Edwards, Ashley Wallace, Ashley Wilmeredy, Arkansas Press Association (APA);
- Little Rock: Frank Fellone, Kay Fellone, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette;
- Little Rock: Jay Edwards, The Daily Record;
- Little Rock: Rob Roedel, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas;
- Little Rock: Ramanda Cody, Andrea Peel, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences;
- Little Rock: Jeff Jeffus, Nat Lea, Neal Lea, WEHCO Media;
- Malvern: Gretchen Ritchey, Malvern Daily Record;
- Mena: Clark Smith, Irina Smith, Mena Newspapers;
- Monticello: Cameron Cason, Gavin Cason, Jimmy Cason, Jordan Cason, Melissa Cändig, Harold Coggins, Tom White, Advance Monticellomian;
- Mountain View: Neal Fraser, Rusty Fraser, Lori Freeze, Andrew Mason, Lana Mason, Edie Sutterfield, Stone County Leader;
- Nashville: Louie Graves, John Schirmer, Nashville News-Leader;
- North Little Rock, Whitney Green, Arkansas Department of Emergency Management;
- Rison: Britt Talent, Karen Talent, Cleveland County Herald;
- Pea Ridge, Annette Beard, The Times of Northeast Benton County;
- Pine Bluff: Byron Tate, Pat Tate, Pine Bluff Commercial;
- Rogers: Janan Foster, Jay Jackson, Patsy Jackson, Susan Keller;
- Searcy: Bruce Guthrie, Dana Guthrie, Wendy Jones, Steve Watts, The Daily Citizen;

The APA is encouraging those interested in joining them to make plans as soon as possible and is reminding them that the deadline for registering for the SuperConvention is June 17.
**Weekly Word**

**BIB-lee-uh-tahf, -tahf**, **noun**

1. A person who caches or hoards books.

*Source: Dictionary.com*

“Substitute ‘damn’ every time you’re inclined to write ‘very’; your editor will delete it and the writing will be just as it should be.” — Mark Twain
ANF releases list of auction items

Karen Brown, executive director of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), this week announced the items that would be included in the live and silent auctions and the drawing that will take place during next week’s Arkansas Press Association (APA) SuperConvention. The auctions are an annual feature of the meeting, and proceeds go to fund the foundation’s Internship Program and Continuing Education Grants. The auction items for 2016 are:

Live Auction:
- Framed Norman Rockwell “The Country Editor” Print;
- Sunday Afternoon of your choice “Private Party for 10” on the Arkansas/Missouri Railroad, including lunch; and
- Branson Get-Away Package

Drawing:
- “One-of-a-Kind” Handmade Razorback Quilt

Silent Auction:
- Live laugh love old window;
- Ice bucket and wine glasses garden party;
- Decorative pot for plants;
- Gazette board game;
- Watermelon slicer and watermelon;
- Tripod and camera bag;
- Heron framed print;
- Tools in basket;
- Basket of Kimberley-Clark items;
- Bird feeder, fire ant bait and white trellis;
- Lawn sprinkler, fire ant bait and black trellis;
- “Mr. Handyman!” Tools with Toolbox and Set of Ratchet Straps;
- Candles;
- Hot Pink headphones and speaker;
- Neon blue headphones and speaker;

SC starts next week, deadline is Friday

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The annual gathering begins on Wednesday, running June 22-25, and those interested in attending are urged to act now. Online registration is available, and those wishing to sign up can do so at APA’s website. In “APA Spotlight” section is a link to the online convention registration form.

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- The Press Camp for Kids; and
- The annual Passing of the Gavel Ceremony and installation of the new APA president.

—continued on page 4
Where’s Mickey Spillane when you need him?

Well, actually Mick died in 2006, but this case screams for his crime novel literary attention approach. I guess you could call this one the “Case of the Vanishing Journalist.”

So where did they go, these journalists upon whom we once depended for so long to keep us informed of government malfeasance and to point out bad actors in government at all levels?

Well, of course, they didn’t go anywhere really. They’re still with us. Thank goodness, and God bless’em. It’s just that there aren’t nearly as many of them as there once was and eventually, at this rate, there won’t be enough.

So many colleges and universities have dropped their journalism programs and no longer offer degrees in journalism. They may still offer some of the courses previously required for journalism majors, but the colleges are now called “mass media” or “mass comm” or some such, and they’re not really training journalists so much as they are training publicists or public relations trainees.

Perhaps that’s because we now have so many “citizen journalists” who populate the internet publishing “news” that many no longer see the need to train journalists. They are already journalists. They’ll tell you so.

Citizen journalists. Indeed.

This is not an indictment of colleges and universities. They’ve got to market what’s marketable and if there’s no market for journalism majors. Well, pretty soon there won’t be any. That’s pretty much where we are now.

The sad thing in all of this ... well, one sad thing, is that so many will never know or be able to find out just how fun and rewarding being a journalist can be. It should be rewarding in some way because it is not rewarding financially. You never hear the life story of a wealthy person that includes that he or she made their fortune practicing journalism.

Living on the cheap is also a trait of journalists. They can get by on less than most people and continue to do that thing that is the thing that journalists do day in and day out, conducting research, conducting interviews, and writing. Oh, do they write.

The challenge of putting together a thoroughly researched and attributed story for publication is so compelling for these people ... these journalists. And so often we know that the product of our endeavors is often not read or appreciated by all that many. That doesn’t really matter.

It’s the attention to detail, the uncovering of the minutiae of the story and relating it in a way that makes it interesting as well as informative that fires up a true journalist. It’s what they live for and it’s what keeps them doing what they do.

I’ve been thinking about this for a while, but Sunday when I was reading several newspapers as I often do on Sunday, I found myself really enjoying the reading of stories that obviously took some journalist somewhere weeks, maybe months to pull together. One was about corruption in state government in a distant state, and another was about the plight of foster children. These were not local stories but they held a lot of local interest for me and I suspect, or at least I hope, several other readers who know that while these stories might originate in a newspaper in a distant city or state, they are things we may be and likely are experiencing here. It’s just that a journalist hasn’t gotten around to telling us this particular “local” story.

My question is: who is going to tell these stories when we no longer train journalists to do that thing they do?

We’re slowly but surely losing something that, whether we know it or not or whether we’ll admit it or not, is truly important to us. Somebody has to tell these stories to the public. Somebody has to be there for us to keep us informed on things that we often are not aware of but certainly should be.

When I look back on my career in newspapers I can recall a handful of journalists who worked for me that I would consider quintessential. You know these people. They’re the ones who can go out and find stories where no one else can. They can get information that nobody else can seem to get, and they can get people to go on record when seemingly nobody else can.

And they can relate a story in terms that everyone who reads it has a much better grasp of the reality that surrounds them. Frankly, I don’t think any of these became what they became because they were trained at a college or university. Honestly, I think some were just born to do this sort of thing.

Most of them I’ve known who have worked for me over the years weren’t so concerned that they barely made a living wage because that wasn’t what was important to them. They couldn’t imagine doing anything else.

I really enjoy hanging out with these people, these journalists. They look at things so differently than most people, and with a more jaded eye. That’s an unfortunate side affect of this thing journalists do. It’s easy to become jaded, and not becoming cynical is almost impossible.

I worked with one who, on more than one occasion, I had to help him find where he’d left his car, so focused was he on what he was doing. Once he drove to an interview a couple of miles from the newspaper, and walked back, forgetting he had driven. Like I said, it happened more than once.

Another often wore severely miss-matched clothing, or socks or shoes. What he wore wasn’t a high priority for him, obviously, and the result was often hilarious.

But the thing that drives journalists to do this thing they do and do it for what they do it for is the quality that cannot be taught out of a book. So often it’s learned by covering life stories and relating for readers what’s happened in a way they’ll completely understand. It is a burning curiosity, a sensitivity to the human condition, and an understanding of the moving parts of our life, our times and our society.

And it’s true they are vanishing right before our eyes, and that makes me sad.

Have a great week!
APA SuperConvention registrations near 160

With the 2016 Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention starting next week, more registrations are coming in both via traditional forms and online registration: www.arkansaspress.org/event/2016APASuperConvention. So far the following 159 people are heading to Bentonville for the annual meeting (listed alphabetically by location):

- Arvada, Colo.: James Clarke, Associated Press;
- Atkins: Beckie Tyson, Ginnie Tyson, Van Tyson, The Atkins Chronicle;
- Batesville: Bob Qualls, Sandy Qualls;
- Bella Vista: Kent Marts, Laura Marts, Natalie Marts, Northwest Arkansas Newspapers;
- Benton: Amanda Freudensprung, Beth Freudensprung, Kelly Freudensprung, Beth Reed, Collin Reed, The Saline Courier;
- Bentonville: Karen Brown, Mike Brown, Arkansas Newspaper Foundation;
- Berrien Springs, Mich.: Chris Freeman, Interlink;
- Berryville: David Bell, Samantha Jones, Scott Loftis, Bob Moore, Linda Moore, Kelby Newcomb, Carroll County News;
- Branson, Mo.: Tamra Corbin, Branson Convention & Visitors Bureau;
- Camden: James Lee Silliman, Sue Silliman, Camden News;
- Chapel Hill, N.C.: Penny Abernathy, University of North Carolina;
- Conway: Eric Anderton, Jeanette Anderton, Log Cabin Democrat;
- Danville: David Fisher, Mary Fisher, Yell County Record;
- Dover: Liz Leavell, Steve Leavell, The Dover Times;
- El Dorado: Greta Bell, Ronnie Bell, El Dorado News-Times;
- Fayetteville: Cody Bottoms, Devin Bottoms, Marley Hudspeth, Staci Hudspeth, Wil Hudspeth, Rob Qualls, Sara Qualls;
- Fayetteville: Jack Rash, Arkansas Journalism Hall of Fame;
- Fayetteville: Jesse Holland, Bobbie Foster, Ray McCaffrey, Christi Welter, Center for Ethics in Journalism;
- Fayetteville: Brenda Bernet, Matt Bernet, Ashton Eley, Melissa Gute, Greg Hariton, Monica Hooper, Todd Nelson, Dave Perozek, Hicham Raache, April Robinson, Christie Swanson, Chris Swindle, Doug Thompson, Lisa Thompson, Anita Turner, Rusty Turner, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette;
- Greenwood: Christy Graham, Dustin Graham, Greenwood Democrat;
- Gulf Shores, Ala.: Lewis Floyd, W.B. Grimes & Co.;
- Harrison: Jim Holland, Tammy Holland, Jim Perry, Lisa Perry, Harrison Daily Times;
- Harrison: Jane Christenson, Jeff Christenson, Lee Dunlap, Karen Lair;
- Heber Springs: Will Gilbert, Sun-Times;
- Hope: Shane Allen, GateHouse Media;
- Hot Springs, Ark.: Todd Frantz, The Sentinel-Record;
- Jefferson City, Mo.: Alvin Leifeste, Terri Leifeste, WEHCO Media;
- Jonesboro: Osa’ Aamiyel, Arkansas State University;
- Knoxville, Tenn.: Lisa Griffin, University of Tennessee;
- Little Rock: Tim Yarbrough, Arkansas Baptist News;
- Little Rock: Steve Eddington, Arkansas Farm Bureau;
- Little Rock: Terri Cobb, Pam Larimer, Tom Larimer, Kathy Edwards, Ashley Wallace, Ashley Winmerley, Arkansas Press Association (APA);
- Little Rock: Frank Fellone, Kay Fellone, Michael Storey, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette;
- Little Rock: Melinda Faubel, Anita Smith, AT&T Arkansas;
- Little Rock: Jay Edwards, The Daily Record;
- • Little Rock: Rob Roedel, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas;
- • Little Rock: John Tull, Quattlebaum, Grooms & Tull;
- • Little Rock: Ramanda Cody, Andrea Peel, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences;
- • Little Rock: Jeff Jeffus, Nat Lea, Neal Lea, WEHCO Media;
- • Malvern: Gretchen Ritchey, Malvern Daily Record;
- • Mena: Clark Smith, Irina Smith, Mena Newspapers;
- • Monticello: Cameron Cason, Gavin Cason, Jimmy Cason, Jordan Cason, Melissa Cason, Cindy Coggins, Harold Coggins, Tom White, Advance Monticellonian;
- • Mountain Home: Sonny Elliott, The Baxter Bulletin;
- • Mountain View: Neal Fraser, Rusty Fraser, Lori Freeze, Andrew Mason, Lana Mason, Edie Sutterfield, Stone County Leader;
- • Nashville: Louie Graves, John Schirmer, Nashville News-Leader;
- • North Little Rock, Whitney Green, Arkansas Department of Emergency Management;
- • Pea Ridge, Annette Beard, The Times of Northeast Benton County;
- • Pine Bluff: Byron Tate, Pat Tate, Pine Bluff Commercial;
- • Rector: Nancy Kemp, Ron Kemp, Rust Communications;
- • Rison: Britt Talent, Karen Talent, Cleveland County Herald;
- • Rogers: Janan Foster, Jay Jackson, Patsy Jackson, Susan Keller;
- • Salem: A.K. Barnes, Kim Break, Tammy Curtis, Areawide Media;
- • Searcy: Bruce Guthrie, Dana Guthrie, Ashley Wimberley, Wendy Jones, Steve Watts, The Daily Citizen;
- • Siloam Springs: Michael Burchfiel, Adriana Jessen, Emily Jessen, Isaac Jessen, James Jessen, Janelle Jessen, Emma Thomas, Graham Thomas, Herald-Leader;
- • Topeka, Kan.: Zach Ahrens, Topeka Capital News-Journal;

The APA is encouraging those interested in joining them to make plans as soon as possible and is reminding them that the deadline for registering for the SuperConvention is June 17.

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Weekly WORD

slyboots

\ SLAY-boots \, noun

1. an engagingly sly or mischievous person.

Source: Dictionary.com

“Explanations exist; they have existed for all time; there is always a well-known solution to every human problem — neat, plausible, and wrong.” — H.L. Mencken
Auction items
—continued from page 1
• Targus speaker and charging station;
• Razorback Tailgate Kick-Off Basket;
• Stamped Letter Press Metal Side Table;
• Tools and tool belt ratchet #1;
• Photo books and frames;
• Men's Cologne set;
• Hallmark Care Package;
• Women's travel makeup bag and spa items;
• Pink parasol and Disney princess folding patio chair;
• Blue boys Disney mickey mouse folding patio chair;
• Seven-piece Scented Wax Warmer Set;
• Cutting board and 2 knives;
• Tailgate starter kit, knives, cutting board, season shakers;
• Arkansas books and bookend;
• Basket of Equate items—Deadline Buster;
• Basket of Equate items for Reporters;
• Basket of 3M and scotch guard items;
• Coffee table;
• Herman's Ribhouse Gift Card;
• Arkansas Naturals’ Family Fun Pack for four;
• Hurricane Golf Certificate;
• Nutters Chapel Golf Certificate;
• Lost Springs Golf Certificate;
• Red Apple Inn Lodging and Golf for two;
• Great Passion Play tickets, cast, and buffet for two;
• Ark./Mo. Railroad First Class Tickets;
• Arkansas State Parks Lodging Certificate;
• Inn of the Ozarks in Eureka Springs Lodging Certificate;
• Hilton Garden Inn, Bentonville Lodging Certificate;
• Hot Springs Embassy Suites Lodging Certificate;
• DoubleTree Hotel Little Rock Lodging Certificate;
• DoubleTree Hotel and Convention Center Bentonville Lodging Certificate;
• Marriott Courtyard Downtown Little Rock Lodging Certificate; and
• Winthrop Rockefeller Institute Lodging Certificate.

“Literacy is in the Bag” Auction:
• Dooney and Bourke Handbag;
• Kate Spade Handbag;
• Fossil Handbags;
• Vera Bradley Handbag;
• Razorback Game Day Handbag and accessories;
• Cappelli Straworld Handbag;
• Coach handbags;
• And more...

Dist. Farm Families of the Year named

The 69th Annual Farm Family of the Year Program, supported since its inception by the Arkansas Press Association (APA), is well under way, and the eight district winners were announced this week. The district winners will now be judged to determine a state winner to be announced Dec. 8 at the Farm Family of the Year Luncheon at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel in North Little Rock.

The district winners are:

**Arkansas Farm Family of the Year named:**

- **Chris and Nesha Smith** of Searcy (White County) in the East Central District. The Smiths raise registered Brauvinh and Angus cattle and grow Bermuda and Tifton 44 hay on 2,386 acres. They have one daughter, Jalyn.

- **Fred and Dorothy Sue Denison** of Batesville (Independence County) in the North Central District. The Denisons have a cow-calf operation and grow hay on 460 acres. They have two children, Fred Denison Jr. and Bobby Denison, and three grandchildren, Katie, Adam and Kori.

- **Stacy Family Farms** of Wynne (Cross County) in the Northeast District. Bob and Annette, alongside their children, farm soybeans and rice on 2,200 acres. Bob and Annette have three children, Jake, Sam and Jessica, and four grandchildren, John, Caroline, Audrey and Henry.

- **Peach Pickin’ Paradise** of Clarksville (Johnson County) in the Northwest District. Mark and Shay Morgan raise beef cattle and grow peaches, nectarines and hay on 423 acres. They have one daughter, Kate.

- **Jim and Dina Hubbard** of Marvell (Phillips County) in the Southeast District. Jim and Dina farm rice, soybeans, corn and wheat on 2,850 acres. They also have a seed business where they sell certified rice and soybeans. Jim and Dina have one daughter, Brittany.

- **Stephen and April Allen** of Lewisville (Lafayette County) in the Southwest District. The Allens raise poultry, cattle, timber, wheat and hay on 660 acres. They also own a lawn care business and construction business. They have three children, Geordan, Josiah and Garrett.

- **Joe and Jill Brinkley** of Grannis (Polk County) in the Western District. The Brinkleys raise broilers, cattle and hay on 645 acres. Additionally, they have a land-clearing and poultry litter service. They have three children, Carrie, Brent and J.D.

- **Joel and Amanda Whisenhunt** of Fayetteville (Washington County) in the West Central District. The Whisenhunts raise poultry, cattle and hay on 368 acres. They also raise and train pure-bred Border Collies for working cattle. They have three children, Hayden, Lauren and Caleb.

““What a great reflection on the bounty of Arkansas agriculture,” said Randy Veach of Manila, president of the Arkansas Farm Bureau. “This program is a fantastic way to shine a spotlight on the great farm families that are far-too-often overlooked.”

The Farm Family of the Year program begins each year with selection of top farm families in each county and culminates with the selection of the state Farm Family of the Year who will then go on to represent Arkansas at the Swisher Sweets/Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year. All winners are judged on their farm production, efficiency, management, family life and rural/community leadership.

Sponsors of the Farm Family of the Year program are Arkansas Farm Bureau, the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas and the three Farm Credit agencies that serve Arkansas: AgHeritage Farm Credit Services, Farm Credit of Western Arkansas and Midsouth Farm Credit. Additionally, support for the program is provided by the Arkansas Department of Career Education, Arkansas Press Association, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture and the USDA’s Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Rural Development. The Program was established by the APA and other organizations in 1947.
Thanks to All Our Sponsors!
Free webinar on new OT laws coming

The Online Media Campus (OMC), a joint venture of the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association (SNPA) and the Iowa Newspaper Foundation, will be offering a free webinar on new overtime regulations announced by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) last month.

On May 18, 2016, DOL released the final changes to the regulations that govern the “White Collar” overtime exemptions under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The new rules impose an unprecedented increase in the salary threshold at which employers must pay time-and-a-half to employees. The implementation date is set for Dec. 1, 2016.

For that reason the OMC is making an online presentation on the topic available at no cost. It will take place Thursday, July 14, 1-2 p.m. CDT. The registration deadline is July 14. Online registration is now open and can be accessed at www.onlinemediacampus.com/webinars. Those who register will receive instructions for logging on to the webinar upon completing their registration.

The webinar is presented by Michael Zinser, a past columnist for this publication, who has more than 40 years of experience in labor and employment law. He is an attorney for more than 250 newspaper clients nationwide.

Convention under way in Bentonville

More than 200 participating in the APA’s annual meeting

The 2016 SuperConvention of the Arkansas Press Association (APA) got under way yesterday with two event that have become fixtures of the annual meeting for a number of years now — the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Golf Tournament and the Early Bird Outing. The golf tournament was held at Lost Springs Athletic Club in Rogers, and the outing featured a dinner and tour of the Museum of Native History in Bentonville.

At last count 207 had registered to participate in all or part of the annual meeting. There will be full coverage of the SuperConvention here over the coming weeks as well as in APA’s quarterly magazine, The Arkansas Publisher. During the meeting, photos of various events will be posted to the Arkansas Press Association Facebook page as well (https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arkansas-Press-Association/218467510595?ref=ts).

Today’s agenda is packed with educational forums for all newspaper people. There is a two-part session on Newspaper Technology, a subject increasingly integral to all publications and a Round Table Luncheon. And tonight conventioners will make an excursion to Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art where they will be treated to a reception, dinner and tour of the collection housed there.

Upcoming highlights of the convention include:
• The annual Awards Luncheon featuring the announcement of the winners of the 2016 Better Newspaper News-Editorial Contest;
• The Honors Banquet recognizing recipients of the Special Awards;
• More educational sessions;
• The Silent Auction benefitting the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation;
• The Press Camp for Kids; and
• The annual Passing of the Gavel Ceremony.

EARLY BIRDS | The annual Early Bird Outing was held last night on the first day of the 2016 SuperConvention. It featured a dinner and tour of the Museum of Native American History in Bentonville.
The memories of APA conventions past remain vivid in my mind, and, of course, virtually all of those memories involved people, many of who are still active in the business. It’s great re-living some of those memories with them when we have opportunity to gather.

My first APA convention was in the mid-1950’s, although I don’t remember the exact year. Of course, I was quite young at the time. My parents took me to a convention outing at Lake Leatherwood when the convention was held in Eureka Springs.

The adults drank cold canned beer iced down in number two wash-tubs. There were hamburgers and hot dogs grilled, and, of course, there were soft drinks for us kids. That was a real treat at the time, as we never had soft drinks at our house when I was growing up. We only got them on special occasions such as when we were at a press convention. No wonder my memories of such events from those early days are good ones.

I remember meeting a lot of nice people on that first convention visit, some of who are still with us and some of whose newspapers are now being operated by their children or other family members. After that initial convention visit I wanted to go to every one of them, and I did get to accompany my parents to many of them over the years as I was growing up. Of course, there were more opportunities then, too, since there were two conventions per year, in the summer and in the winter.

Those gatherings were like reunions, and those attending became almost like family. They would do anything for each other, and they would share openly and without hesitation those things that worked well for them in their newspaper operations, and those things that did not work so well.

My dad was a machinist before he got into the newspaper business right after World War II, and the skills he possessed served him well in keeping the old newspaper equipment going over the years. The Linotype, which was a fixture at every newspaper in the state, was a nightmare of moving parts, some of which would break from time to time. Dad could make the parts to repair the machines, and I recall going on road trips with him to a distant newspaper that needed help with machine repairs.

Some of those old machines were sophisticated but cantankerous in their operation. There were some repairmen who would travel when called upon in those days to come fix your ailing machine, but for the most part when you lived in the sticks you had to figure out how to fix things yourself.

Most newspapers, especially those in the country, only had one Linotype because one was likely all they could afford. If it went down it was a serious problem. The first calls would go to neighboring newspapers to either help with the repair or to utilize their machines to set the type to get a newspaper out that week.

That was the sort of things newspaper people did for each other in those days, and likely would do today if called upon. It does happen, but somehow I don’t think it does with the frequency it once did.

Of course, these days if Linotypes were still in widespread use, which they most certainly are not, there would be a YouTube video demonstrating how to fix the machine. We didn’t have that luxury back then. We just had each other. That’s what makes it a little easier to understand the closeness we felt to others in the business.

We were truly all in “this” together. That remains true in many ways today. Newspaper people still go out of their way when asked for help or advice from another newspaper.

There is always some of that still going on at APA conventions, too. You’ll hear it in several conversations when newspaper people gather. It never fails to occur.

I’m sure there’ll be some of that and more at this 2016 SuperConvention taking place this week in Bentonville, continuing a long tradition at these gatherings that began long before any of us were breathing in and out.

Such great traditions are they that hopefully they’ll continue long after we’re gone.

These opportunities don’t come around every day. You owe it to yourself to be a part of it. It’s not too late. Like I said, we’ll be here till Saturday afternoon.

Have a great week!

Tom
Lea named president, three added to board

The Arkansas Press Association’s 2016 SuperConvention also featured an annual tradition and function of the meeting: the “Passing of the Gavel” Ceremony and the installation of the new president of the statewide professional association.

Nat Lea was elected president of the Arkansas Press Association (APA). Lea is the president and CEO of WEHCO Media in Little Rock which owns the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette in Little Rock and five other daily newspapers in Arkansas.

Lea’s election elevates Byron Tate of GateHouse Media’s Central Arkansas Newspapers and the Sheridan Headlight to vice president/president-elect. Also advancing to a new position on the board is Tom White of the Advance Monticellonian in Monticello, who is now second vice president.

Other returning board members are Rusty Fraser of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View, who will serve as immediate past president; Jay Edwards of The Daily Record in Little Rock; John Bland of The Times Dispatch in Walnut Ridge; Rusty Turner of the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville; and Ellen Kreth of the Madison County Record in Huntsville.

Saturday morning’s member business meeting also saw the election of three new board members to fill vacancies created by the departure of Mary Fisher and resignations of David Mosseso and Gary Troutman. The new members of the APA board of directors are Shane Allen, group publisher of eight of GateHouse Media’s Arkansas newspapers; Sue Stillman, general manager of the Camden News and Banner-News in Magnolia; and Clark Smith, publisher of The Mena Star and three other Lancaster Management properties in western Arkansas. This marks the second time that Smith has been elected to the board.

Convention wraps, contest winners named

The 2016 SuperConvention of the Arkansas Press Association (APA) was held last week in Bentonville and concluded on June 25 to rave reviews. More than 200 participated in all or part of the annual meeting.

There will be full coverage of the SuperConvention here over the coming weeks as well as in APA’s quarterly magazine, The Arkansas Publisher. During the meeting, photos of various events were posted to the Arkansas Press Association Facebook page as well, and they can be viewed there (https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arkansas-Press-Association/218467510595?ref=ts).

Among the highlights of the convention was the annual Awards Luncheon during which the results of APA’s 2016 Better Newspaper Editorial Contest were announced. The winners will be featured in this and other APA publications, including Arkansas Press Services’ AdNews. A complete list of winners is available at the association’s website in the “APA Spotlight” section (www.arkansaspress.org).

The annual meeting was packed with educational forums for all newspaper people. There was a two-part session on Newspaper Technology, a subject increasingly integral to all publications, and a Round Table Luncheon. Conventioneers were also treated to excursions to Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art where they enjoyed a reception, dinner and tour of the collection housed there, and the Museum of Native American History, also including a dinner and tour. There was also the Honors Banquet recognizing recipients of the Special Awards and much more.

GENERAL EXCELLENCE

The results of the Arkansas Press Association’s (APA) Better Newspaper Editorial Contest were announced June 25 during the association’s 2016 SuperConvention. Representatives of the newspapers taking home awards in the General Excellence Category are pictured above (from left): Kent Marts of the Washington County Enterprise-Leader in Farmington; Brandon Howard, The Weekly Vista, Bella Vista; Christy Hendricks, The Leader, Jacksonville; Beth Reed, The Saline Courier, Benton; Angelia Roberts, Batesville Daily Guard; and Michael Storey, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock.
Arkansas Publisher Weekly 2 June 30, 2016

Wow!

I’ve been bowled over by all the positive comments regarding the 2016 Arkansas Press Association (APA) convention held last week at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bentonville. Over the years I have attended a lot of these types of conventions, and for the past several years I have participated in organizing and planning such events.

This one, however, went off about as perfect as it possibly could. We had been saying it was going to be excellent, but as former APA President Britt Talent once said, “That’s just Tom hype.” So yeah, okay, maybe a little of it was. After all we were trying to entice APA members to make the drive to Bentonville; that such an effort would be rewarded with excellent convention programming and off-site events.

As it turned out, it was exactly that. From the opening tee shot at the APA’s annual golf outing Wednesday afternoon to the presentation of the last Better Newspaper Editorial Contest Award Saturday afternoon, this convention went off like clockwork.

Thanks to everyone who had a hand in making the 2016 SuperConvention such a huge success. It was great fun with plenty of opportunities to learn a thing or two, and to network with those with whom we share this great industry.

If you missed this convention it was certainly your loss, but you’ll have another opportunity next July when we will convene the annual APA gathering at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock. We’ll have to work hard to top this latest convention, but that’s always our challenge here at APA world headquarters, to make each convention better than the last.

We’ll begin working on that immediately, right up until it all comes together July 5-8, 2017. And just like the 2016 version, it’s going to be a convention you will not want to miss.

I had written a column a couple of weeks ago to appear in this space this week, and lo and behold in that span of time it became obsolete. The topic was drones and that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) was working on regulations for the operation of drones. Well, last week the FAA released those regulations for drones weighing 55 pounds or less.

Parts of that column read like the following, although some of it has been edited to update things in light of the new regulations.

You’ve heard that old saw that contends that, “anything worth doing is worth over-doing.”

That could be the mantra for many Americans. That’s hardly a new development. We’ve seen over time many great examples of this approach being carried out.

There are many examples to illustrate what I’m talking about, and likely you could think of a few (or several) yourself. One that springs to my mind, which may give some insight to the demented inner-workings there-in, is Agent Orange. Do you remember that name? It was a defoliant that proved particularly proficient in removing the foliage from the jungles of Vietnam, thereby hopefully exposing the enemy and their encampments.

The problem with Agent Orange is that it proved to also be a powerful causer of cancer, nerve system disorders, birth defects, etc. in those exposed to it. There were explicit instructions on how to handle and apply the chemical, but, of course, many thought that if a little would do a little good, a lot would do a lot of good.

The chemical was sprayed indiscriminately over the jungles and along the riverbanks of South Vietnam, illustrating for us once again that anything worth doing is worth over-doing. Some estimates indicate that the U.S. sprayed over 20 million gallons of one of the most toxic agents known to man over Southeast Asia. Most of us didn’t have a problem feeding a dioxin sandwich to the enemy, but unfortunately we fed it our own people, too.

Many of our servicemen, not to mention a lot of the enemy, exposed to the chemical were later afflicted with nasty cancers in the ensuing years as a result of that exposure. It took years for the U.S. government to admit that, yeah okay, Agent Orange was the carcinogen behind the cancers, even with medical science saying, “No duh!” or words to that effect.

Okay, that was not meant to be the topic of this diatribe, but just an example of how sometimes we’re drawn to too much of a good thing.

Take the current consideration at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) over the use of drones, a seemingly innocent toy for hobbyists. But no, it’s far more than that. We couldn’t as a society let these inviting toys remain in the “innocent” realm. Once again, our tendency to over-do things is the potential threat.

Right now drones are not much of a threat, at least those sold at toy and hobby stores, but can you imagine how things would be with thousands of these things buzzing around our neighborhoods doing who knows what? Cameras are easily mounted to these things, bringing into play all manner of privacy issues.

And, of course, if you can attach cameras to drones you can also attach weapons or explosives. All of these are concerns of the FAA as it attempts to write regulations for the operation of drones in the U.S.

Law enforcement is going to want these things, too. Can you imagine how handy…and how much safer…it would be to fly these things over suspected illegal marijuana patches. That is, while such things are still illegal. You could imagine any number of other scenarios where the drones might come in handy for law enforcement.

Drones are of interest to the news community because of their potential to bring us up close and personal to the scene of tragedy from which many times the media is banned and often for good reason. The aerial devastation of tornado damage right here at home is a classic example of the use of drones for capturing the scene for a voracious news-devouring public.

It not difficult to see the small drone becoming an everyday tool for the journalist covering a story. Well, maybe not everyday but often. As more and more newspaper coverage of events migrates to the digital side, the drone could be a very handy resource for the news gatherer as it can gather video that can be moved quickly to the newspaper’s web presence.

Unfortunately, there are those who see the hobbyists drone for all manner of nefarious uses up to and including the taking of lives, which might give an indication as to why the FAA took its sweet time in creating regulations regarding the operation of drones. That, and like anything else with the government, it grinds slowly but sometimes surely to some sort of cohesive plan. Not always mind you, but sometimes.

Have a great week!

Tom
Jerry Dupy

Gerald “Jerry” Dupy, 70, died June 15 in Urbanette. He began his journalism career in 1963 with the Memphis Press-Scimitar, where he eventually rose to the position of assistant city editor. After relocating to Arkansas, Dupy served as editor of the Yellville Mountain Echo before moving to Carroll Country to take the position of executive editor of the Carroll County News in Berryville in 1977. He left the newspaper business in 1980 to become a partner at Wheeler Printing in Eureka Springs before spinning off a graphics design business, Penguin Graphics, in 1984. He returned to the Carroll County News in 2000. Bob Moore, publisher of Carroll County Newspapers (CCN), said Dupy was instrumental in consolidating the individual publication — the Green Forest Tribune, the Star-Progress in Berryville and the Eureka Springs Times-Echo into what is now CCN. In 2010 Dupy retired from CCN to his farm in Urbanette.

Cutrer joins Chicot Co. newspapers as GM/Ed

The Chicot County Spectator in Lake Village and the Eudora Enterprise, both properties of Chicot County Newspapers, LLC, have a new general manager and editor. Angela H. Cutrer joined the newspapers on June 1. A native of Baton Rouge, La., she grew up in LaPlace, La. and Magnolia, Miss. but considers Osyka, Miss. her family home. Cutrer, 55, previously held a lecturing position at Mississippi State University in Starkville, where she taught journalism and communications courses. Before that she had worked as a reporter, columnist, page designer and managing editor for newspapers in Missouri, Louisiana and Mississippi and in public relations positions at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg and River Parishes Community College in Gonzales, La. The announcement was made by Barney White, publisher of both newspapers.

Full contest results online. A complete list of winners of the Arkansas Press Association’s 2016 Better Newspaper Editorial Contest is online. Copies can be downloaded in the Spotlight Section on the front page of the APA’s website: www.arkansaspress.org.

Scenes from the SuperConvention

TEE TIME | As has become tradition, the inaugural event of this year’s Arkansas Press Association (APA) SuperConvention was the Golf Tournament benefitting the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation. The 2016 outing was held at Lost Springs Golf & Athletic Club in Rogers. Two participants were (from left) Clark Smith of The Mena Star, a new APA board member, and Rusty Fraser of the Stone County Leader, 2015-16 president of the association.

COMMUNITY JOURNALISM | A session and following workshop on Friday afternoon focused on “Community Journalism.” Both were conducted by Penny Abernathy (above, center), Knight Chair in Journalism and Digital Media Economics at the University of North Carolina School of Media and Journalism in Chapel Hill. She is also the author of Saving Community Journalism: The Path to Profitability.
Stallbaumer leaving Times-Record

After nearly 31 years in the newspaper business, Tom Stallbaumer, publisher of the Times Record in Fort Smith, announced that he is leaving the business. He has accepted an executive position with a public relations firm, inVeritas, in Rogers. Stallbaumer had been with the Times Record since May 2013, when he replaced retired publisher Gene Kincy. He was publisher of The Morning News in Rogers from 1994-2010 and then the Ames Tribune in Iowa. He then served as director of sales and marketing for Stephens Media in Las Vegas, Nev., where he was also publisher of Las Vegas CityLife and Best of Las Vegas. He is a graduate of Kansas State University in Manhattan, where he earned a bachelor's degree in journalism/mass communications.

Ad Libs: An alternative to spec ads

BY JOHN FOUST, RALEIGH, N.C., JOHN@JOHNFOUST.COM

G us is an advertiser who has dealt with ad representatives from a variety of media firms. “One thing that a lot of them have in common is that they like to present new ad ideas in the beginning,” he said. “It’s nice that they make the effort to create spec ads, but most of those ideas are way off target. When I point out the reasons why certain ads are not right for me, they seem to lose enthusiasm.

“On the other hand” he said, “one person really stood out from the crowd. Instead of focusing on a spec idea, he put a couple of my recent ads on the table and built his presentation around that. It was a good way to learn about my business and my advertising objectives. He wasn’t judgmental, and he didn’t have a know-it-all attitude. Instead of trying to talk me into buying an idea, he simply helped me see some things that could be done differently. Needless to say, I placed a lot of advertising in his paper.”

That is an interesting alternative, isn’t it? Instead of presenting spec ads which haven’t run yet, why not focus on ads which have already appeared? It can be an effective way to gain information and as we all know, knowledge is power.

If you try this technique, here are some open-ended questions you can ask:

1. Who were you trying to reach in this ad? This can lead to a discussion about target audiences and buying styles. Does the ad focus on a specific audience, or does it try to appeal to everyone?

2. What was your main message? This question can help you understand the advertiser’s products and services – and the relevant features and benefits. Does the objective match the message?

3. What was the thought process in choosing this particular picture? Is it a stock photograph of a generic group of people? A cutaway diagram of a new product? A photo of the founder of the company? The answer can reveal where the advertiser turns for new ideas.

4. I notice this ad features a sale. What kind of results did you get? This opens the door to a discussion about expectations. Along the way, you can ask how they decided to feature that particular deal. Was it based on market research or a hunch?

5. What kinds of special offers have you made in other ads? Sometimes the best way to develop a new strategy is to analyze old strategies. For example, have they relied on sales? Do they use coupons? Are the offers seasonal or year-round?

6. How long have you run this particular campaign? This can reveal the advertiser’s willingness to explore change.

7. What kind of help did you have with this ad? This is a good way to hear about the advertiser’s influencers. You may learn that a different decision maker should be included in future meetings.

Yes, sometimes current ads can create better conversations – and more sales – than spec ads.

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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. Email for information: john@johnfoust.com

Weekly Word: 

**automagical**

\[aw-toh-MAJ-i-kuh l\], adjective

1. (of a usually complicated technical or computer process) done, operating, or happening in a way that is hidden from or not understood by the user, and in that sense, apparently “magical.”

Source: Dictionary.com

“I took a speed-reading course and read War and Peace in twenty minutes. It involves Russia.”

— Woody Allen

REMINdERS AND RESOURCES

- Press cards and decals are available for APA members. Two free cards are available for the publisher and editor. Cards for other members may be obtained for $5 per card. Decals are free while supplies last. Contact Tres Williams (tres@arkansaspress.org) for more information. Or, call 501.374.1500.

- Gov’t/Legal Resources: Members are reminded to take advantage of APA’s online resources for newspapers, including statutes governing publication of notices and tax delinquency lists, state and federal advertising regulations, etc.

- APA Forums: The Arkansas Press Association (APA) Forums provide those working in the Arkansas newspaper business with a convenient, free, easy-to-use resource to network with others, find solutions to problems and stay connected with other APA members, all without having to step away from your desk. Visit the forums at http://onlineservices.arkansaspress.org/forums.

Time to ‘Save the Date’ for ArkLaMiss Conference

If you haven’t already, now would be a good time to mark your calendar and begin making plans to attend the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference set for Thursday and Friday, November 10-11, at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss., site for the conference for the past several years.

To be included in the ArkLaMiss agenda again this year is the managers’ roundtable that takes place Thursday morning before the start of the ArkLaMiss right after lunch. Newspaper department level managers from all newspaper departments are invited to attend and discuss mutual challenges and solutions.

“The managers’ roundtable was added to the ArkLaMiss three years ago and has proven to be a very popular event,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “Anytime you can get newspaper managers from three states in a room together, there’s always some good and helpful information exchanged.”

The ArkLaMiss conference is a joint venture of the Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi Press Associations. It annually attracts 50 to 70 attendees from the tri-state area for the fast-paced conference agenda that includes a featured presenter, a trade show and a lively hot ideas exchange.

Be watching for more information on the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference in the near future.
Some of my so-called friends delight in occasionally asking, “who reads newspapers anymore?”
They’re just trying to get a rise out of me, but frankly I’m well past that. People just do this stuff to you, for whatever reason. It’s just like people who’ve never visited Arkansas making fun of the state and its inhabitants. This happened a lot to me when I was in the military and when people with whom I was serving would find out I was born and raised in The Natural State.

You’ve got a couple of options here: you can bow up and give them an earful, or just let them have their fun and take solace in their obvious ignorance. Most often those making fun had never stepped foot in Arkansas and have no idea of which they speak. That seems to happen a lot these days.

There is a parallel here among those who delight in pointing out the obvious evolution of the newspaper industry. The thing that escapes me most often is why they delight so much in suggested that newspapers are going the way of the buggy whip.

Really, there’s not much you can say about the newspaper industry that you can’t say about a whole raft of other small businesses across the country. Changes in the business climate, changes most often driven by technology, have brought sweeping changes to a lot of businesses, newspapers certainly included.

Rarely, however, do you hear those suggesting the demise of newspapers doing the same for other businesses. There’s a deep-seated resentment against newspapers in some it seems. We can speculate from whence that may come, but it’s likely a general impression that for too long newspapers have had it too good; that we’ve lorded it over people about whom we write and publish stories on occasions, stories about when they are powerless to keep us from publishing.

So at long last some find delight in observing and commenting on the plight of our industry. For those of us in the industry, however, especially for those of us who have spent our entire adult life and career in the business, it’s hurtful to see and hear these gross generalizations applied to the business we dearly love.

Then, on occasion we see newspapers doing things that transcend any snarky comments. It’s when newspapers do what it is that they do best. There were some great examples of that type of work recognized at the recent APA editorial awards. Despite what we might hear people say about our industry, there is still much to be said for the great work that is still ongoing on newspapers across our state and indeed across the country.

Then just last week we saw yet another example of what exactly it is that newspapers do. This time it was in the state of Illinois where several newspapers across that state in front page editorials pressed the Democrat-controlled legislature and the Republican governor to get it all together in creating a budget for the state.

Apparently there hasn’t been one in a couple of years, and so fierce is the infighting over the issue the prospects for getting one anytime soon are none too rosy.

Political strife is nothing new in the Land of Lincoln, but apparently this latest and ongoing rift over a state budget has most people at the end of their rope. At least that’s apparently the case with the newspapers of the state that have banded together in unison to hold state politicians accountable. Now there’s a novel concept.

I heard about this last week when my counterpart in Illinois, Dennis DeRossett, sent out an email blast regarding the effort by a large group of his newspapers. It started me thinking. I’m sure you could smell the sawdust burning from there.

This is exactly the sort of thing that newspapers do and which they do very well. At least they always have. I suspect that hasn’t changed. In fact, I know that it hasn’t changed.

The acid test will be to see what response may come of it, and if the newspapers do not relent in their insistence that something be done to improve the lot of the good people of Illinois.

It’s been a long time since we’ve seen a concerted effort such as this on the part of a host of newspapers not necessarily tied to the same newspaper management company. In fact I don’t recall when I’ve seen this sort of action. Perhaps that’s what makes it unique.

Newspapers can, do and have exerted encouragement for social and political change in their respective communities since their inception. Some still do, but others have taken a road thankfully less traveled by modern newspapers, a road that aims to offend nobody at any cost. This could also be called profit preservation.

If a newspaper is going to do its job, however, this is the sort of thing that leads to that happening.

The first rule of writing an editorial is not just to complain or to criticize, but also to offer a solution. The examples I’ve seen from the Illinois effort do a good job of balancing the criticism with suggestions for moving things along fiscally.

There are so many great examples of newspapers doing the things they are meant to do week in and week out, day in and day out. I see them every week when I peruse newspapers from across Arkansas but also from across the country. It makes me proud to see so much good work being done to expose that, which should be exposed to the light of day.

So who is to do this if newspapers go the way of buggy whip? Likely those who insist that newspapers are on their way out haven’t given this much thought, nor likely do they care. There’s not much we can do about that, but what we can do is care ourselves; to continue to do what it is newspapers do so well.

But by far the best counter to the suggestion that newspapers are on the way out is to endure, to survive and to thrive. Newspapers, or rather those who operate them, are good at that, too.

Have a great week!

Tom
Ronald E. Meyer

Ronald E. Meyer, 77, a fixture in Saline County journalism for a half-century and mentor to many aspiring journalists, died July 3 at the CHI St. Vincent hospice facility in Little Rock following an extended illness.

Born October 18, 1938, Meyer was a veteran, having served as a mortar gunner in the United States Marine Corps from 1956 to 1962.

Following his service, he was a graphic artist for several Little Rock firms, including the Little Rock Department Store Gus Blass Company, LaFever Ad Agency and the old Arkansas Democrat as a commercial artist.

Former Benton Courier owner and publisher Sam Hodges hired Ron in the early 1960s as manager of advertising, later becoming general manager. During his tenure there Meyer's editorial cartoons and columns not only won local acclaim for him and the newspaper, but also state and national recognition.

— 30 —

Tommy Wayne White

Tommy Wayne White, 58, of Crossett died June 24. Born August 12, 1957, White was employed at The Ashley News Observer at the time of his death. He had also worked for the Laurel Leader Call, the Wayne County News, the Jasper County News and the Stone County News, all in Mississippi.

He had spent most of his life as a radio commentator and disc jockey.

Graveside services were Sunday, June 26, at the Heidelberg Cemetery in Heidelberg, Miss.

Deadline nears for mentor program apps

There are just a few days left to nominate your “rising star” to participate in the 2016-17 SNPA NEX-GEN Mentor program.

This yearlong program offers newspaper professionals with executive potential the opportunity to develop their industry knowledge, analytical skills and aptitude for innovation.

Each of the eight selected protégés is paired one-on-one with one of the brightest talents in the newspaper industry.

The rising executives who are chosen to participate will meet for the first time with their mentors at SNPA’s News Industry Summit in Sarasota, Sept. 14-16. The 2016-17 NEX GEN experience will culminate with a presentation at SNPA’s 2017 News Industry Summit in Colorado Springs.

The SNPA Foundation will subsidize most of the costs of participation by the selected executives, including their conference fees, hotel rooms, meals and up to $300 for airfare to attend each of the two meetings.

This is an excellent opportunity to nominate the best and the brightest from your newspaper.

The payback for your nominee and your newspaper is significant.

Scenes from SuperConvention

HONORS BANQUET | Doug Thompson, Kelly Kissel and Gerald Jordan (from left) share a laugh after the Friday night Honors Banquet.

TRADE SHOW | Leslie Taylor and Andrea Peel with University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) visit with a trade show attendee on Friday during the convention.
Harrison Daily Times was one of the featured front pages at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., joining selected front pages from across the country for display on the sidewalk showcase on Pennsylvania Avenue and on the Newseum online display.

Through a special agreement with more than 2,000+ newspapers worldwide, the Newseum displays several front pages of newspapers each day. A portion of the front pages the Newseum receives each morning is included in their Front Pages exhibit at the Newseum. While only a portion end up in the street side exhibit, all 800 can be found on the Newseum online exhibit for that day.

The Harrison Daily Times featured edition was the July 5th edition front page with coverage of their Independence Day activities in the community.

### NNA Announces Contest Winners

Judging results have been processed and winners of the National Newspaper Association 2016 Better Newspaper Editorial Contest and Better Newspaper Advertising Contest have been posted online at [www.nnaweb.org/better-newspaper-contest](http://www.nnaweb.org/better-newspaper-contest).

Winners will be recognized at the award breakfast to be held Saturday, Sept. 24, during NNA's 130th Annual Convention & Trade Show at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs in Franklin, TN. Visit NNA's convention webpage to register online for the convention or to purchase breakfast tickets: [www.nnaweb.org/convention](http://www.nnaweb.org/convention).

There were 1,436 entries in the Better Newspaper Editorial Contest and 316 entries in the Better Newspaper Advertising Contest for a total of 1,752 entries. A total of 470 awards were won by 151 member newspapers in 39 states.

California had the most combined BNEC/BNAC wins with 66, followed by Texas with 50 and Wyoming with 39.

2016 NNA Better Newspaper Advertising Contest
Award-winning Newspaper

It is no secret that we don’t like ad blockers. Last week, eMarketer estimated that nearly 87 million internet users will be blocking ads in the United States in 2017—that’s 33 percent of internet users. In particular, deceiving the consumer into buying into a whitelisted, “quality” ad experience, as AdBlock Plus does, is not acceptable. Nor is Brave Software’s business model of selling its own, “better” advertising to appear on publishers’ pages instead of our own. And allowing consumers to bypass our advertisers and access quality news content for free has dangerous implications for our democracy.

This is why, at NAA, we have taken a very aggressive stance against ad blocking technology. A few weeks ago, we filed a complaint and request for investigation with the FTC, asking that they look into the many deceptive business practices of leading ad blockers. In April, we filed a cease-and-desist letter against Brave Software. The letter was signed by 17 of our member companies—representing more than 1,700 newspapers—and put the company on notice that its plan to substitute our advertising with its own is blatantly illegal.

But the rise of ad blocking is also a symptom of a problem that everyone in the digital media business needs to address: namely, lots of digital advertising stinks. It is too often disruptive, ineffective and not at all creative. It is almost always derivative of print or TV advertising perspectives without any acknowledgement of how the digital experience might be unique. We don’t run print ads on TV, or TV ads on the radio, but we insist on running banner ads and 15-second TV commercials in the digital environment? Where are the 7-second—or 2-minute—video brand spots; or the interactive graphic spots?

Lubomira Rochet, L’Oréal’s chief digital officer, told the Financial Times last week that ad blocking “is pointing to a classical advertising fatigue.”

We can do better. And I believe that news media companies have the unique skills and perspectives needed to create strong and effective advertising. We understand what constitutes a story—and what doesn’t. We know how to create content that captivates, engages and tells the consumer what they really need to know.

The good news is that news media are already doing this. Last week, Deseret Digital Media, owner of The Deseret News, formally launched a native advertising studio to help local media produce high-quality branded content. The studio professionals train the staff of other news outlets and work with them to produce specific campaigns for local advertisers. The studio, BrandForge, has the resources to experiment and push the creative bounds of digital advertising, and the result is that everyone benefits. Local news outlets offer high-quality, immersive branded content that fits the needs of both the advertiser and the consumer.

Or consider “Backwater,” one of two original VR dramas that The New York Times’ T Brand Studio created for Mini. A product demo in virtual reality may have been interesting and unusual enough, but the studio opted to tell a dynamic, immersive story of a diamond heist where the Mini Connected system played a key role. It comes as no surprise that The Times has just earned a Grand Prix at the 2016 Cannes festival for these sponsored VR spots. Its work was even called “a Wright Brothers moment for mobile” by Malcolm Poynton, the mobile jury president and Global Chief Creative Officer at Cheil Worldwide.

This is the type of advertising that consumers will remember. The Backwater story is something viewers have sought out, not avoided. And the same can be said for the engaging, informative advertising produced by members such as The Deseret News.

The industry is realizing that to succeed, advertising must resonate with the consumer and their needs. News media have the opportunity to lead this evolution, because we already understand how to engage audiences and provide the valuable information.
Best practices in public notices conference topics

The Public Notice Resource Center (PNRC) will identify best practices and share tips on how to secure the public’s right to know at its first-ever symposium on Best Practices in Public Notice on Sept. 22. The conference will be held in conjunction with the National Newspaper Association’s 130th Annual Convention & Trade Show at the Marriott Cool Springs in Franklin, Tenn.

The half-day conference is scheduled to begin at 11:30 a.m. and conclude at 4:15 p.m., immediately prior to the welcome reception that opens the NNA convention.

The symposium will feature a series of presentations and panel discussions based on the official Best Practices in Public Notices recently adopted by the PNRC Board of Directors. The program will help newspapers understand how to increase readership of public notices and to provide the kind of customer service to their clients that will support industry efforts to keep them in print.

The symposium will also focus on ad design, legislative strategies and the role of digital notices in furthering the public interest.

More information on the program and how to register is available here.
Arkansas Publisher Weekly

Tom Larimer’s
Potpourri

*Harrison Daily Times* Publisher Jim Perry shared with me a front page story in a recent edition of his newspaper that featured the Dunlap family, four of whom have received Golden 50 Service Awards from the Arkansas Press Association.

The latest family member to receive the honor is Lee Dunlap, staff photographer at the *Daily Times* for many years. The recognition of his 50 years in the business rounded out the family experience in the newspaper business at 200 years.

The first of the family members to receive the award was J.E. Dunlap, Jr., the long time owner and publisher of the *Daily Times*. That was in 1992. A few years later, in 1998, Sammy Dunlap, wife of J.E., received the honor.

Fast forward to 2013. That’s when Jane Dunlap Christenson received her Golden 50 Service Award, and now Lee in 2016.

It doesn’t take a math whiz to see that that adds up to 200 years. Looking at the list of past recipients of the award, I can see no other newspaper family that comes close to that total number of years in the business.

J.E. served the APA as president in 1953. Jane was president in 1991, and husband Jeff Christenson was APA president in 2005. Nobody can say this family hasn’t done their part.

The above-the-fold feature story in the *Times*, written by staff writer James L. White, was an excellent account of a family’s dedication to the newspaper business. Those who toil in our industry for 50 years are becoming a rare breed, and here’s a family that has four members recognized for doing just that.

Yeah, I think that rates an above-the-fold feature. It’s just pretty darned amazing.

You don’t often see the newspaper industry getting an assist from federal government, or government at any level for that matter.

But in Morocco the government is doing what it can to help newspapers thrive. In a recently passed law in Morocco, citizens of the country are no longer allowed to share newspapers in public.

Huh?

That’s right. It means if you patronize a Starbucks (there are actually three Starbucks in Morocco) and find a copy of the local newspaper lying about, you cannot pick it up and read it. You have to buy your own.

Well I guess you could pick it up but to do so would be a violation of law.

The Moroccan Federation of Newspaper Publishers reports that sharing newspapers in public spaces leads to lost revenue of $150 million annually.

Seriously? Dang, that’s a lot of sharing.

The government has also banned the lending of newspapers as well to encourage people to subscribe to their own. The federation says that only 20 percent of Moroccans are active newspaper readers.

The sharing of newspapers has been around about as long as newspapers. Well, not even about. It has been around since the birth of newspapers. The industry has for years used a readership of each copy of the newspaper anywhere from 2.3 to 3 readers per copy. I’m not sure requiring citizens to buy their owned copy of the newspaper is going to make the situation any better. It’ll just make outlaws of those who have practiced sharing for years and have no intention of stopping now.

Neighbors share the newspaper. Family members share the newspaper. It happens and it always has happened. I can only surmise that the Moroccan Federation of Newspaper Publishers has a rigorous lobbying presence because I can’t imagine any government doing this without someone with some clout encouraging them to do so.

Apparently, at least in Morocco, newspapers still have some standing.

We, meaning the staff at APA, are continuing to come down from our convention “high,” which is a combination of adrenalin, nervous energy and anxiety. So much time and energy is put into making the convention a meaningful and relevant experience to our members, it is understandable that we want everything to go off as planned.

Not to beat a dead horse, but the convention frankly couldn’t have been much better. But as relieved as we are that it did prove a worthwhile venture, we now turn our attention to the next big thing we do and that is the ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing Conference Nov. 10-11 in Vicksburg, Miss.

November may seem a long time off but it will be here before you know it. I’m hoping we can attract several APA members to attend once again. I don’t recall ever hearing one of our members who did attend saying that it wasn’t worth their time and expense. It is. We put as much effort into making sure it is worthwhile because we know how important it is that any investment in training has value. And the ArkLaMiss certainly does.

Please mark your calendar now and be making plans to attend this fast-paced and information-filled conference. You won’t be sorry.

The Arkansas Publisher Weekly, that would be the publication you are reading right now, is posted each week to the APA website under the “Publications” tab. Email notifications are sent out to let you know when the APW is posted.

If you are not receiving this email notification and would like to receive this notification, please let us know via email to info@arkansaspress.org and we’ll get you started.

One of the most popular features of the APW, at least that’s what we’re told, are the “Members in the News” items. We post these as we become aware of them, but I’m confident we post only a small percentage of those that actually transpire.

If you have an addition to your newspaper staff, promotions, recognitions or other news of the newspaper or its staff, please send them along to info@arkansaspress.org and we’ll get them into the APW for all to see.

Of course, we also post obituaries of newspaper staff or former staff when we receive them, but only, of course, when we’re made aware of them. Please remember to copy APA, too, on these items so we can post them in the Arkansas Publisher Weekly.

Have a great week!

Tom

Arkansas Publisher Weekly 2  July 14, 2016
Ed Gray

William Edward Gray, 69 better known as Ed Gray, died July 2. He was born Nov. 28, 1946, in Pottsville, the ninth of 10 children.

Ed had worked at the Arkansas Gazette and later at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette as a copy editor and later as the book editor.

His friends will recall his compassion for stray animals as he adopted several of them over the years. They also recall that he never see a homeless person he didn’t attempt to help with food and drink.

Tamara Hodge

Tamara “Tami” Hodge, 49, of Morrilton, died Monday, July 4. She was the daughter of the late Eddy and Charlotte Hodge, long-time associates at the Petit Jean Country Headlight in Morrilton.

Tami was born August 12, 1966 in Morrilton. She worked as a cook for several local convenience stores and managed Charlotte’s Corner for several years.

Her parents both preceded her in death.

Entries open for SPJ Diamond Awards

The new Diamond Journalism Awards seek to honor journalism excellence in Arkansas and bordering media markets in West Tennessee, East Oklahoma, South Missouri and North Louisiana.

The awards are sponsored by the Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, and will recognize outstanding journalism by professionals and students regardless of format.

In order to be eligible for this first contest work must have been published or broadcast between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016. Entries opened on July 5 and the deadline for entries will be 11 p.m. CDT August 5.

For more info on rules, go here http://wp.me/P1lreS-7s.

For contest categories, go here http://wp.me/P1lreS-7v.

Deadline nears for mentor program apps

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This is an excellent opportunity to nominate the best and the brightest from your newspaper.

The payback for your nominee and your newspaper is significant.
THE WAY I SEE IT, the word “design” is synonymous with the word “plan.” If you have no plan, you have no design.

And the word “plan” implies that you’ve given the look of your front page some forethought.

That’s not quite true at some newspapers, is it?

Too many editors/designers “wing it.” Oh, they may have a vague idea of what they want to put on the front, but that idea goes out the window as soon as they get a story that’s too long. Or…they don’t get that photo they expected.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, during World War II, said: “Plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.”

He was right. We need to have a plan for the page, but we also need to be flexible. If that story is too long, what do you do: Do you cut it, jump it or run it longer? If you were planning on a vertical picture but get one that’s much better—and horizontal—which do you run?

Flexibility is important, of course, but it just doesn’t work if you don’t have a plan to flex from.

Some points to consider:

HOW MUCH: How many story/photo packages am I going to put on the page? Do I have all the visuals I need? Are five/six stories too many? Are three/four stories too few?

BANNER: Is there one package that demands to be placed across the top of the page? What’s the visual to go with it? How long is it gonna be? Should I jump it?

LEAD VISUAL: Do I have one? Does it go with a story or does it stand alone? How big can I make it so it has impact? Where do I place it on the page?

OTHER VISUALS: Do I have a visual element with every package on the front? If not, how do I get that to happen? If I do have those elements, where do I place them so they don’t fight each other for attention?

JUMPS: How many is too many? Where do they go?

MODULES: No doglegs or odd-shaped packages. Each has to be designed into a rectangular module.

ADS: Do I have only banner ads? If so, they’re not a concern. But what if there has to be a two-column-by-four-inch ad in the bottom right corner of the front? How do I design with that and still keep the page modular?

HEADLINE SIZE: Am I using good headline hierarchy? Am I avoiding the use of a teeny headline at the bottom of the page? How big is too big on the lead headline?

TYPE WIDTH: Am I following the grid? Should I take one of the stories and give it an odd measure, to help it stand out a bit?

All of these need to be part of your thinking when you begin work on your front page. Remember: it’s a plan. And plans should be flexible. But if you want to do “design”, then you need to do “plan.”
GOLF TOURNAMENT WINNERS | The team of Clark Smith, Kelly Freudensprung, Bob Moore, publisher of Carroll County News, and Rusty Fraser, outgoing Arkansas Press Association (APA) president, won the 2016 APA golf scramble with a score of six under par earning them the trophies they are holding. Melinda Faubel and Anita Smith of AT&T Arkansas, and Andrea Peel and Leslie Taylor of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), sponsors of the annual event to benefit the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), join them. Foundation Director Karen Brown can be seen in the background.

Ten questions for journos going live on facebook

Facebook Live came of age recently in the way that radio did in World War II, TV did when John Kennedy was killed, cable TV did during the first Gulf War and Twitter did in the Arab Spring, according to Al Tompkins of the Poynter Institute.

Journalists will look back on this week years from now and remember a time when only TV and radio stations had the quick capacity to “go live” from anywhere. In the last few days we have watched in horror as Diamond Reynolds went live from the front seat of her car while her boyfriend, Philando Castile, was slumped dying beside her. A day later, Dallas newsrooms were streaming coverage of police under attack from a sniper. Protestors from coast to coast live streamed their marches. And in little more than a week, two solid weeks of tension will begin unfolding at national political conventions.

Since 2014, a series of videos posted on social media have shaped the national conversation about how and when police use deadly force. The videos sparked protest, occasional violence and, importantly, new police procedures. But now, the videos are not just recordings, we are watching them unfold live from the point of view of the people most closely involved.

It would be smart for newsrooms and anyone else practicing journalism to think about the following questions before going live.

1. Beyond competitive factors, what are your

POTPOURRI

By Tom Larimer

GUEST COLUMN
Postal tips to save you $$$, improve delivery

By Max Heath

N.C. Bill exempts police camera recordings

Police body and dashboard cameras will no longer be open and accessible under the North Carolina open government laws. The move runs counter to the majority of states who still require release of such videos, according to the Charlotte News-Observer.

The bill to make the change in the North Carolina legislature not surprisingly generated a lot of controversy, but Governor Pat McCrory signed the legislation into law anyway over the objection of the ACLU and others interested in government transparency that labeled the new law “shameful.”

The Republican governor is quoted as saying, “… the law will strike a balance between improving public trust in the police and respecting the rights of officers.”

However, opponents had a decidedly different view.

“Body cameras should be a tool to make law enforcement more transparent and accountable to the communities they serve, but this shameful law will make it nearly impossible to achieve those goals,” Susanna Birdsong, policy counsel for the ACLU of North Carolina, said in a statement.

Continued on page 3
Tom Larimer’s
Potpourri

(Portions of this column appeared years ago, likely right after a particularly embarrassing gaffe in print. It is intended to illustrate what can happen when you commit words to paper, and in no way is intended to ridicule. Well, maybe a little.)

Anybody who has ever put words on paper knows the pitfalls that can sometimes entrap even the best of intentions.

Despite the best efforts of diligent reporters and dedicated editors, every once in a while what we may say in print may not necessarily be what we meant.

This can easily happen when processing thousands of words a day as most newspapers do. In some cases, it’s hundreds of thousands of words, and with each one comes new opportunity for shooting ourselves in the foot, so to speak.

While the Arkansas Publisher Weekly, the publication in which you are reading this, is certainly not immune to this malady, you will note none of the following examples comes from the APW. It is much more fun to enjoy the mistakes of someone else than to revisit our own.

Take for instance, the classified ad that appeared in the Cheboygan (Mich.) Tribune a few years ago which read: “For Sale: Police dog. Will eat anything. Fond of children.”

Likely, what they meant was the dog was not particular about what he had to eat, and he likes to play with children. Just to be on the safe side, I hope no parents of small children responded to this ad.

Or this news brief published in the Minneapolis Tribune: She was expecting her third child in four months.”

I don’t think so. These new fertility drugs are doing wonders for formerly childless couples, but I don’t think the drug has been invented that will produce three children in four months.

And I don’t think too many mothers would want that either.

How about this one from the Savannah (Ga.) Morning News: “The huge crowd, sitting on soft drinks and doughnuts, relaxed during the early part of the meeting to gospel songs.”

Now, maybe it’s just me, but it would seem much more relaxing to sit on lawn chairs or maybe even a chaise lounge, than on soft drinks and doughnuts. Then again we are talking about Savannah here. They do things a little differently down there.

Or this one from the Colorado Springs (Co.) Gazette-Telegraph: “His last visit to Singapore is still fondly remembered by many girls who are now mothers.”

What a guy! In this case, however, I think they were talking about the Pope. What they actually meant is anybody’s guess.

Then there is this one from the San Francisco Chronicle: “He was identified from police photographs.”

Thank goodness they weren’t rude photos. They might not have recognized him. I think they meant “police” photos. Do ya think?

The Indianapolis Star ran this one: “Hagan ran his fingers through his hair and took out a cigar.”

Kind of makes you wonder how many more cigars he had in there. Or what else he might have had.

The Sarasota (Fla.) Journal ran this classified ad: “Two bedroom house. Blonds and drapes go with the price.”

I bet you had to call for an appointment to see this house – and to meet the blondes.

Then there was this from the Dallas Morning News: “During the conference, Luci flipped aside her shoulder-length hair and rearranged her baby for photographers.”

Poor kid.

Do you sort of get the idea of how just one word, even one letter, can completely change the intent of what we may intend to say? This is what newspapers and others who process a lot of words every day have to contend, and to guard against. Some slip through.

None of us are perfect. In fact, most of us are not even close.

Perhaps nowhere is the mining for gaffes more fertile than in church bulletins, and you don’t have to look far to find them. Most of these were well-intentioned statements made by well-meaning people who got caught in that trap newspaper people know oh so well.

Some of these are simple typos, while others are just poorly chosen words. Well, see for yourself. Here’s a sampling of what I’m talking about, taken from actual church bulletins:

“The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind, and they can be seen in the church basement Friday afternoon.”

“This afternoon there will be a meeting in the south and north end of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends.”

“For those of you who have children and don’t know it, we have a nursery downstairs.”

“The Rev. Merriwether spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience.”

“The pastor will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing, ‘Break Forth Into Joy.’”

“This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. White to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.”

“Due to the Rector’s illness, Wednesday’s healing services will be discontinued until further notice.”

“Tuesday at 5 p.m. there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk please come early.”

“Don’t let worry kill you—let the church help.”

“A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.”

“The associate pastor unveiled the church’s new tithing campaign slogan: ‘I upped my pledge—up yours.’”

“Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B.S. is done.”

Lest you get the impression that we’re making fun of someone or anyone, rest assured we are not. I’ve made my share of these silly gaffes over the years. I am happy to report that none of the above is mine, and I certainly hope karma doesn’t see that such reveal anytime in the foreseeable future.

That seems to be the thing about these printed bloopers, we can remember mistakes of someone else than to revisit our own.

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That seems to be the thing about these printed bloopers, we can remember those of others so much more than we can recall our own. Still, they are there, in print somewhere for all eternity. Perhaps someone is using one of ours to entertain their own audience as we speak.

Have a great week!

Tom
Crystal Costa has been named publisher at the Fort Smith Times-Record, replacing Tom Stallbaumer who recently left for another opportunity. The Times-Record is a Gatehouse Media property.

Costa is the former advertising and marketing director for the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, and worked for several years at the Democrat-Gazette in Little Rock. She had also been deputy managing editor at The Leader in Jacksonville.

Most recently Costa had been marketing director for McClarty Daniel automotive in Bentonville.

Going live on facebook

Continued from page 1

motivations for going live? Why do your viewers need to know about this story before journalists have the opportunity to filter the information offline? What verification processes are you willing to give up in order to get information to viewers quickly? How would instantly available live information help the public to stay safe and minimize chaos and quell rumors?

2. Am I speculating about fatalities, injuries, weapons, motivations and descriptions? It can be tempting to “fill time” while you are live and no new information is coming in. Don’t trust eyewitness descriptions or even your own eyewitness view as being the whole truth. Keep asking what you are not seeing, what you don’t know and what you need to know to fully understand the events.

3. When, if ever, would you link to or share a live feed that comes from the person who is at the center of the story? We have already seen cases of shooters who are streaming their grievances live on social media. How willing are you to give that person a live unfiltered public platform?

4. Would you publish or air whatever you are streaming live? Your social media feed should not have a lower standard for truth telling and reliability. When journalists moved from regularly scheduled broadcasts and print publishing schedules to nonstop online reporting, they adjusted to the responsibility that demands quick and thoughtful responses. Now, they must adapt again to the new ethical demands of live video reporting.

5. Are you prepared to broadcast the worst possible outcome that could result from this unfolding story, such as a person killing themselves or someone else during live coverage? What outcomes are you unwilling to post? Why? How do you know the worst possible outcome will not occur?

6. How do you know the information you’re relaying live is true? How many sources have confirmed the information? How do the sources you are quoting know what they say is true? Is your source reliable? How willing is the source to be quoted?

7. What are the consequences, short-term and long-term, of “going live” with the information? What are the consequences of waiting for additional confirmation?

8. What is the tone of the coverage? Can you raise awareness of a significant event while minimizing unnecessary hype and fear? Who in your newsroom is responsible for monitoring the tone of what is being streamed?

9. Have you considered adopting any safety nets that could minimize harm? These measures can give you a contingency plan to stop broadcasting if the situation turns graphic, violent or compromises the safety of others.

10. How clearly does the newsroom understand standards for graphic content? How well are guidelines understood by everyone from online editors, reporters, photojournalists, web producers or others who might have to make an editorial call when the formal decision-maker is not available?
Postal tips to save you $$, improve delivery
By Max Heath, Postal Consultant at Athlon Media Group

Community newspapers have options to save money and improve delivery times under price and rule changes during the past decade, notably in 2007 with the last postal reform bill. From time to time, I like to review these for newcomers to the business or others who may have missed them. Updates to DMM citations and changes are made as well as percentage changes.

IN-COUNTY PRICE DISCOUNTS

1. In-county eligibility ... DMM 207.11.3.1: Periodicals circulating under 10,000 total paid copies, or with more than 50 percent of total paid circulation within the county of original entry, can mail at lower in-county prices. There are no advertising pound prices paid on in-county mail, just a DDU discount and non-DDU pound price, based on no postal transportation costs for DDU (lines A1/A2, 3541 Postage Statement).

2. Requester Periodicals that meet the same qualifications above can mail at in-county rates under a provision of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA), effective Aug. 30, 2007. Current price savings run from 30 percent to 52 percent, depending on weight, to move from Periodicals Saturation Regular Price to in-county, and 64 percent if a Standard Mail publication can qualify for in-county Saturation (25 percent non-advertising in 75 percent of issues and 24-page minimum, 50 percent +1 requesters). The lower the weight, the higher the percentage. DDU is assumed in all scenarios. In-county rates are only granted to the copies for which valid requesters exist, plus 10 percent non-subscriber copies.

NOTE: CSR PS-054 revised in April 2011 to allow faxed and e-mail requests with signature, address.

3. In-county definition expanded ... DMM 207.11.3.2(d). Another provision of PAEA, effective Aug. 30, 2007, expanded in-county price eligibility to copies originating inside the county but delivered outside the county of original entry. These so-called “wandering-out route” pieces were excluded under the old statute definition.

4. Wandering-in pieces count too ... DMM 207.11.3.2(b) Another provision, widely overlooked, allows in-county price eligibility for any carrier-route copies delivered to an address inside the county when entered at a delivery office in an adjoining county and wandering back in-county. (BME interpretation that this only applies to mail entered at the outside-county DDU.)

5. Walk-sequence carrier-route sorted mail. (DMM 207.13.3b) Periodicals qualify for High-Density prices (line A14) at 125 pieces per route, saving 1.7 cents per copy (26 percent in-county and 3.4 cents per copy (17 percent) outside-county (line C32). In-county mail gets a bonus under a rule that allows High-Density price for 25 percent of Active Possible Deliveries per route ... DMM 207.13.3.4(c). When routes, such as rural routes covering wide areas with low housing density, fall below 500 active deliveries, the 25 percent threshold pays off for carrier-route mailers. Walk-sequence can be obtained via Delivery Sequence File processing from software vendors, or Computerized Delivery Sequencing qualification that is updated monthly, or even weekly (DMM 207.23.8.4). Requester publications saturating In-County routes (line A15) can save 5.7 cents off Basic carrier-route price, or 28 percent, on the part that pays outside-county prices (line C33). CDS is essential in this situation.

6. Limited Circulation Preferred Price Discount (5 percent) on the middle of Page 1 of PS Form 3541 applies to a Periodical with at least one in-county copy and under 5,000 outside-county copies. Effective May 2008, and defined in DMM 207.1.1.4. Software should add line B19 and parts C, D, E totals times .05 and deduct automatically. This discount applies to the entire issue and not just a version by weight that includes in-county copies.

The National Newspaper Association had a hand in all these changes for its members, saving hundreds or even thousands of dollars a year in postage.

DROP SHIPPING

1. DDU entry: Local/regional publications can maximize savings and get faster delivery by entering mail at delivery post offices (Delivery Units). See DMM 207.29.6. There are three ways to earn DU prices: Additional Entry, authorized simply by notification of your original-entry office, and no fee, requires postage payment at that office, See DMM 207.38. (Plant-Verified Drop Shipment postage Payment System) requires mail acceptance at the office of original entry, at a designated office, or Detached Mail Unit within a printing plant, then delivery to other offices. Form 8125, PVDS Drop Shipment Verification and Clearance, must accompany the copies taken to DDU. See DMM 705.17.2.9, Exceptional Dispatch (see No. 5 below). This is likely the best method for local/regional publications.

2. In-county price eligible Periodicals save 4.7 cents per pound (24 percent) and 0.8 cent per piece for DDU entry (lines A1/A17). The DDU discounts apply only to carrier-route sorted copies in Line-Of-Travel or Walk-Sequence order.

3. Outside-County price Periodicals save 8.8 cents per non-adv. pound (44 percent) and 9.2 cents per adv. pound (43 percent) for DDU versus non-DDU entry (zones 1 & 2 price), with no piece discount. This is a very helpful discount for nearby offices outside your county (lines B1 and B14).

4. DDU-entered carrier-route copies, whether in-county or outside-county, will not be upcharged to 5-digit prices if failing the “flimsy flats” deflection test, as of Oct. 3, 2010, thanks to NNA. See DMM 201.4.6 & Exhibit 201.4.6a. Carrier-route copies going through postal processing can be upcharged.

5. Exceptional Dispatch (DMM 207.28.3) allows local/regional Periodicals mailers to claim DDU prices with request letter to origin-entry postmaster. A 2001 rule change also expanded DU-entry to drops within zones 1-2, including the SCF zone. Neither Additional Entry nor Plant-Verified Drop Shipment Form 8125 is required. Eligibility is for Periodicals, which mail 25,000-under copies. USPS said, “waivers would be considered on a case-by-case basis.” SCF entry can be done under Exceptional Dispatch to improve service so long as only mail for that SCF is dropped at the SCF. DMM 707.28.3.4 Mail dropped at an SCF for “the world” would require Additional Entry and postage payment at the SCF.

MAX HEATH, NNA postal chair, is a postal consultant for AMG | Parade, publisher of Parade, American Profile, Relish and Spry newspaper supplements, and also for Landmark Community Newspapers LLC. E-mail maxheath@lcni.com.
NNA endorses new overtime bill approval

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) recently applauded a proposal by four House Democrats to phase in an increase in the threshold salary requirements for overtime-exempt employees.

A bill by Reps. Kurt Schrader, Oregon; Jim Cooper, Tennessee; Henry Cuellar, Texas; and Collin Peterson, Minnesota, would help small businesses to comply with a new rule by the U.S. Department of Labor that will increase the salary threshold by about 100 percent in one leap on Dec. 1, 2016. The Overtime Reform and Enhancement Act would instead impose a 50 percent increase in December and then phase out the remainder over 4 years.

NNA President Chip Hutcheson, publisher of The Times Leader in Princeton, KY, said, "NNA appreciates the work of these four congressmen, who appreciate the bind small businesses in their states were put in by the Labor Department rule. They understand that neither we nor the Labor Department have any idea where the money would come from to impose 100 percent increases on salary levels across an entire work force, particularly in small towns where costs of living are lower than in urban areas. This bill accomplishes much of what the government wanted to do without strangling the small businesses in the process.

“For us, news does not happen on a time clock. Covering the news requires flexibility and creativity that rigid work rules do not allow. Our concern has been that, with our budgets constrained by the slow economy, we would have no choice but to cut back on news coverage and cut jobs, in order to keep everyone within the rules. Rep. Schrader recognizes, as we do, that the increase is needed and he wants to create a schedule that enhances jobs rather than squeezing them out of small businesses. NNA hopes members of Congress see the wisdom of this approach.”

The overtime threshold sets a floor for the annual salaries of executives considered exempt under the Wage and Hour Act. Today’s threshold is $23,660. It is to be raised to $47,446 on Dec. 1 under a rule imposed upon businesses by the Department of Labor. It will go into effect unless Congress adopts a more moderate rule. Many small businesses, including many non-profits, restaurant owners, homebuilders and NNA, have said the steep increase would cripple their abilities to support their workforces and carry out their missions.

E&P seeking nominations for Publisher honor

Nominations are now open for the 2016 “Publisher of the Year” honor bestowed annually by Editor & Publisher magazine.

This recognition is open to all newspaper publishers worldwide, from newspapers both large and small.

According to E&P, all entries will be treated with strictest confidence, but the selected publisher should be prepared to be interviewed by the magazine for the special “Publisher of the Year” issue.

The deadline for entries is Sept. 23. More information on the award and how to nominate for it can be found here http://www.editorandpublisher.com/poy.
The tug of war...or words...over ad blocking continues unabated, and all indications are that the issue is going to be with us for a while.

First, what is ad blocking? Well of course anything that is written and designed for display on the Internet, especially those that have the capability of attracting a broad-based audience, are too tempting for those who do such things not to post paid advertising on those sites. In most cases, the ads are “pop-ups,” meaning they are intrusive, uninvited and most often unwelcome.

We’ve all experience the frustration of looking for something online only to have to suffer through an array of advertisements before we can get to the information we seek. Many see these ads as a real nuisance and a bit of an invasion of their privacy.

Just as things can be designed to take advantage of the Internet audience, someone else can devise a means of blocking those intrusive ads. Of course this happens much to the chagrin of those who paid to have their message “pop up” in the Internet. It also chagrins publishers who sell these things to go on their web sites hoping to generate some revenue.

What’s at stake here? Well, you could guess that the numbers would be staggering if all the ads on the Internet were to be blocked. I’m not sure that’s even possible, but blocking a high percentage of them represents an incredible loss of revenue for online publishers.

Then you may ask why should we get all worked up over this in the newspaper business? Isn’t this a good thing?

Well, the answer is maybe. If you are heavily invested in your digital presence online and depend on the ads on your site to generate revenue, perhaps even a profit, then you’re likely very concerned about software that can block your ads from ever being seen.

Can you just imagine what the advertisers may be feeling? After paying big money to get their ad before a broadened audience only to have it blocked by software designed to do just that, then you could understand the reticence of advertisers to continue advertising online.

“So what?” you might be asking, considering you are, after all, in the print business. Why should we care about what these online goobers are doing, much less what may actually be impeding their progress toward profitability online?

Well, the answer to that is that a whole lot of newspapers are invested in expanding the audience of their digital presence. Selling advertising on the newspaper digital sites is obviously key to any strategy to finding success, may we say even profit in the digital world.

The digital side has long been able to generate revenue, but has often been challenged to make a profit. That’s been the case since the early days of digital publishing when once we shoveled our legacy content on our web sites with total abandon. I’m not sure why we did this, but I suspect it had something to do with mass hysteria among newspaper publishers. There was little concern initially for generating revenue and profit was an entirely foreign concept at the time. We did what we did out of defense, and for the tried and true reason that always seems to fit… everyone else was doing it.

Businesses, including newspapers, run on profit. Indeed they wouldn’t be in business long without it. Yet here we were giving away online what we’d been selling in print for years.

So perhaps you can see why some newspapers might be concerned about ad blocking in the digital universe. It’s different when it’s some Johnny-come-late digital publisher operating from his parents’ basement, but quite another thing when it is our fellow newspapers taking the hit by ad blocking software.

Finding a pathway to profitability online has been tough for anyone who has tried it. That is it’s been tough for purveyors of news who were forced into the digital world by competition and to try to lure back print readers lost to online sites. The problem is there’s just not a lot of money in, and when what little there is can be blocked, well you could understand the concern.

So the discussion continues over ad blocking. It is a topic that will likely be with us for a long, long time. It’s not going to go away and there will always apparently be people who just don’t want advertisements interfering with their online surfing. So long as they are willing to pony up for the software, it will always be with us.

Sure somebody could come up with software to defeat ad-blocking software, but then someone else would come up with software to defeat that software.

If you read any coverage or commentary on the newspaper industry you’ll see stories on ad blocking are ubiquitous. Nobody seems to have the answer, but a whole lot seem to like to talk about it.

The reality is that it’s a new reality, another in a long line of new realities when it comes to dealing with doing business in the digital environment. We didn’t have these problems when it was just print, did we? It sort of makes you long for the old days when the worst concern you had was a new competing shopper coming to town.

Such is life for newspapers in the digital age. Such is life truly for everyone in the digital age.

And so it goes.

Everyone once in a while, when I’ve got a couple of minutes, I try to “unsubscribe” from some of the nuisance email that land in my inbox. The other day I was doing that and a message popped up: “We’re sorry. We didn’t mean to invade your privacy.”

And I’m thinking if you really didn’t mean to invade my privacy you wouldn’t have sent the email in the first place.

Even though I’ve eliminated several of these types of email from my inbox, there seems to be no shortage of others to take their place. The subject matter on some of these gets a little explicit at times, too.

Perhaps there’s a software package that can block these unwanted invasions of my email privacy.

Surely someone has thought of that.

Have a great week!
Rust Media promoted Patti Sanders, advertising manager for The News/Areawide Media in Salem, to general manager on July 1.

“I am excited about this opportunity. I look forward to the continued work of our local newspapers and our communities,” Sanders said. “The communities that we serve and work for are the core of our success. I encourage everyone to reach out to me to improve not only the newspapers but our communities.

“When I first started working around the newspaper, which I called the old Salem Headlight building, there was Gary Clayton, Janie Flynn and Betty Albright, then came Debbie Perryman and Wanda Yarnell, all who are pillars of this company and its successes.”

Little River News welcomes Bagley back to paper

Quinton Bagley has returned to the Little River News after a 16 month absence. Bagley left the Little River News in March 2015 to pursue another opportunity.

“I am glad to be back at the Little River News,” Bagley said. “I wish I had never left but that is behind me now and I am looking forward to getting back to work.”

Bagley’s duties at the Little River News will be reporter and will assist in advertising sales.

Send Us Your News!

Promote your staff, your newspaper.
The Arkansas Press Association encourages members to send news of staff changes or other happenings and associated photos to info@arkansaspress.org for inclusion in The Publisher Weekly and AdNews.

NNA plans 130th convention at Tennessee venue

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) will hold its 130th annual convention and trade show Sept. 22-24 at the Marriott Cool Springs in historic Franklin, Tenn.

Convention topics will address pressing business objectives of the community newspaper owners, publishers and senior staff. Educational sessions and peer sharing activities are on the convention agenda.

Those registering for the NNA convention will have access to five general sessions, an exhibit hall with over 30 exhibitors, along with a welcome reception and entertainment.

Franklin is situated just a short drive south of Nashville. It was the site of an historic Civil War battle, and the battlefield in Franklin remains a very popular tourist destination.

And of course Nashville is just a short drive up I-65 where lively entertainment venues attract thousands of visitors every day.

The NNA convention programming also includes the ever-popular great ideas exchange to be moderated again this year by NNA past president Robert Williams of Blackshear, Ga.

For more information on the convention as well as registration information and more, go to the NNA web site at www.nnaweb.org.

SNPA event to focus on revenues, events

Event marketing, one of the most fertile and often untapped sources of revenue for newspapers, will be among the many topics for the News Industry Summit Sept. 14-16 in Sarasota, Fla.

Sponsored and organized by the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association (SNPA), the gathering will focus on thinking beyond your local market and tapping into non-conventional revenue sources that are not usually on the new media property’s radar.

During a Thursday morning breakout session, John Newby, publisher of the Muskogee (Okla.) Phoenix, and Tim Smolarick, publisher of the Venice Gondolier Sun in Venice, Fla., will share success strategies that you can implement at your newspaper.

Also on the meeting agenda are sessions on growing digital revenue, Penny Abernathy from The Center for Innovation and Sustainability in Local Media, “blitz selling recipes” applied successfully by a group of weeklies in Florida, and much more.

The event will take place at the Ritz-Carlton in Sarasota.

Group execs will convene in Kansas City

The 2016 version of the Inland Press Association’s Group Executives Conference will feature in-depth discussions of the major challenges facing newspapers today, with recapturing lost ad revenues on the top of the list for discussion.

The event will be held at The Kansas City Star offices in Kansas City August 10-12.

In addition to ad revenues, the conference will also focus on best practices in benchmarking performance, how to monetize digital content, and much more.

For more information on the Group Executives Conference, go to www.inlandpress.org.
Newspaper ads triple ROI, study says

Advertisers who are cutting back on newspaper advertising are missing a beat. This is the message of a new study, conducted by effectiveness consultancy “Benchmarking for Newworks,” which claims that advertising with newspapers increases overall revenue return on investment by three times.

The ROI study covers 500 econometric models to provide evidence of the impact news brands have on advertising campaigns. The results show that newspapers increase overall campaign effectiveness as well as boosting other media - newspapers make TV twice as effective and online display four times more effective. It goes on to claim that using digital news brands boosts print ROI by up to five times.

The research hopes to prove once and for all the value of print advertising. It claims advertisers wanting to maximize effectiveness in their campaigns need to return to 2013 levels of expenditure, where investment in print was at 11.4 per cent. That figure has since dropped to 7.6 per cent in 2015.

On a sector by sector basis, the research found that adding newspapers to a campaign increases effectiveness by 5.7 times for finance; three times for travel; 2.8 times for retail; 1.7 times for automotive; and 1.2 times for FMCG.

The Power of State Press Associations

By David Chavern, president & CEO, NAA

Associations have a unique power to convene and create communities. As president and CEO of the Newspaper Association of America (NAA), I believe in the ability of associations to serve as a platform for the exchange of ideas that will propel us forward. In this time of revolution and change, state press associations have a critical role to play in this exchange, and after visiting with four of them recently, I am even more convinced of the importance of state press associations to achieving industry-wide goals.

State press associations are on the ground engaging with local publishers, acting as their voice in larger conversations and making sure they’re benefiting from the knowledge sharing and innovation taking place throughout the industry.

I recently visited with the Illinois, New York, Texas and Louisiana press associations and saw first-hand the amazing work they are doing in and out of their communities. These powerhouses gather input from their members and keep a pulse on the industry. People talk about consolidation in the media industry, but it is a much more diverse industry than most people think. The Texas Press Association membership alone is composed of 463 organizations, including 75 dailies and 388 non-dailies.

State press associations harness the power of their members. In election years, they serve as intermediaries between lawmakers and publishers. Last year, the Illinois Press Association, standing for 500 daily and weekly newspapers, joined the Illinois Automobile Dealers Association, the Illinois Broadcasters Association and the Outdoor Advertising Association of Illinois in the fight against an advertising tax that, if it had passed, would have produced nearly $38 million a year in tax dollars. Several members of the press association ran editorials against the tax.

Likewise, NAA is committed to continuing to work closely with state press associations to solve real world operational problems for news organizations. While visiting with these organizations, I received a lot of questions and comments from them regarding the Department of Labor’s new overtime rules, an issue NAA has been working on for months alongside a broad coalition of small businesses, nonprofits and universities. Despite an undesirable outcome,

NAA is continuing to help our members through having held a webinar on July 12 with experts from Littler Mendelson, who provided detailed guidance on the new overtime requirements and practical steps on how news media companies can respond to the changes to the Rule.

The work being done at the national level on this and other public policy issues is important to the state press associations, too, and we are glad to be able to help these organizations, who help us by keeping an ear to the ground at the state and local levels.

Moving forward, we are counting on our partners as we tackle issues like the proposed advertising tax, for which 47 states showed opposition in 2014, and ad blocking, to ensure news organizations’ rights continue to be preserved.

Crews tapped for Missouri Hall

Former Missouri Press Association (MPA) Executive Director Doug Crews is among the four nominees for induction into the MPA's Newspaper Hall of Fame. The four will be the 26th group to be inducted at a Sept. 30 reception at the Chateau on the Lake in Branson.

Others to be inducted include Edward Heins, a former general manager of the Columbia Missourian and School of Journalism professor; Tad Bartimus, a former journalist for the Associated Press who reported from all over the globe; and James Hamilton, a former Southwest Missouri editor, columnist and book author.

The four will have plaques added to the display of inductees in the MPA offices in Columbia and in the student lounge in Lee Hills Hall at the Missouri School of Journalism.
MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

4 GUEST COLUMN
Be Your Buyer to Determine Your Selling Price
By Lewis Floyd

ARKANSAS
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Don’t forget: Post those public notices

APA members are reminded that they need to post their public notices each day and each week to the APA public notices web site, http://www.publicnoticeads.com/ar.

This site is the repository of public notices from newspapers all over Arkansas. It is a handy way for the public to access public notices at no cost to them or to the government entity publishing the notice.

Uploading public notices from your newspaper is simple and easy. If you haven’t been uploading, or if you haven’t in a while, you will be contacted by a member of the APA staff to offer assistance.

If you aren’t sure how to go about doing the posting, check with the APA at 501-374-1500.

‘It Can Wait’ essay contest details told

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), local newspapers, and AT&T will again sponsor and challenge Arkansas students ages 14-19 across the state to write an editorial or opinion column highlighting the dangers of texting while driving and encouraging their peers to take the “It Can Wait” pledge.

The essay entry will answer the question, “Why is it important to take the It Can Wait pledge to never text and drive?” The piece will highlight the dangers of texting while driving and must include the following call to action, “Take the pledge to never text and drive at ItCanWait.com.”

The contest is open to all students, ages 14-19, in Arkansas.
Each Local Newspaper can determine if entries are to be emailed, mailed or hand delivered.

The contest schedule is as follows:
– September 1, 2016 – Contest begins
  • Announced by local Newspapers and/or directly with schools.
  – The contest ends at a local level October 14.
  • After this date is when newspapers announce local winners.
– October 28, 2016 – Karen Brown, ANF Executive Director, 508 SE Fullerton St., Bentonville, AR 72712 must receive each newspaper’s local winning entry. Email entries may be addressed to: arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.
– The statewide winners will be announced November 11.
Participating newspapers will first determine the local winner. Each winner’s entry will be delivered to ANF, and the ANF will then determine the statewide winners.
The prize will include $500, a special guided tour of the Arkansas State Capitol and a lunch for the student and their parents with leadership of AT&T, the ANF and their local newspaper publisher.
Also, newspapers may set their own prizes for local winners if they choose. Newspapers may publish local winning entries, and the statewide winning entry will be made available to member papers to publish at their discretion.
Winning entries may be scanned and emailed to Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com. Be sure to include your newspaper’s contact information.
Unfortunately, common sense doesn’t seem to play well in congress these days. It’s highly doubtful this bill will gain any traction, even though it makes a lot of sense for small business and would certainly be applauded by the newspaper industry. But maybe that’s why it won’t be successful; because it makes too much sense.

Often when speaking to groups regarding the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), I give a background on the state law, its genesis and its impact on the state.

The late Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller signed the FOIA into law on Valentine’s Day in 1967, a time, I usually point out, that was a very different one for Arkansas. That’s true politically for sure, as it was a time when the really important decisions being made in state government were made by a select few politicians most often making these judgments behind closed doors and out of view of the public.

I was reminded of that recently when Ashley Wimberley, the APA’s Director of Marketing, and I attended the Political Animals Club to hear Roger Glasgow, a long-time Little Rock attorney, talk about the experience on which his book, “Down and Dirty Down South: Politics and the Art of Revenge” is based.

The tale is a long and sordid one, but truly sheds some light on the game of politics and how it was played not that many years ago in Arkansas. It was at that time, in the early 1970’s, when Glasgow ran unsuccessfully for prosecuting attorney in Pulaski County.

Shortly after that loss, he and his wife decided to make a driving tour of Mexico and on their re-entry to the country a large quantity of marijuana was found concealed in the seat of their car.

It took years but he was finally exonerated when, of all things, a cab driver in Little Rock told of a conversation he’d had with a fare about being responsible for having the marijuana planted in Glasgow’s car in Mexico. His opponent in the prosecuting attorney race, who even though he won the race took offense at some of Glasgow’s campaign rhetoric, was in on the conspiracy apparently.

The story is much more complicated than that simple description, and the related side stories are chilling, especially considering they actually happened. Listening to Glasgow relate the story it’s hard to believe that this kind of things once happened here. But it did.

The fallout from all of it was another turning point of sorts in Arkansas politics. Some career politicians lost their jobs over their respective roles in the conspiracy.

This book details a piece of Arkansas history that is important to recall because that’s just the way it was at one point in Arkansas. While this is a more outrageous example of how things were, nonetheless it was and is telling about just the way things were once here.

The FOIA has played a central role in continuing to maintain the transparency in government that serves to keep government at all levels in Arkansas operating in the light before the eyes of the public.

Have a great week!

Tom
Graves named senior Publisher by Gatehouse

Ed Graves has been named the new Senior Group Publisher for The Pine Bluff Commercial and The White Hall Journal, according to a news release from Gatehouse Media, owner of the newspapers.

Graves, who will be based in Pine Bluff, replaces Byron Tate of The Commercial and Shane Allen of The Journal. Tate and Allen are no longer with the company.

“I’m excited about being here and having an opportunity to come to Arkansas,” Graves said. “We want to continue to be the leader and take a community approach to providing news and information in all forms, print, digital and mobile to serve the readers and advertisers in this area.”

A graduate of Eastern Kentucky University, Graves previously worked for USA WEEKEND Magazine, where he was senior vice-president for Affiliate Sales Relations. There, he developed and implemented affiliate marketing strategies that increased distribution by 25 percent. Graves also exceeded overall retention goals for USA WEEKEND Magazine, which had a circulation of over 18 million in over 600 affiliate newspapers throughout the United States.

“I am excited to be able to bring someone of Ed’s quality and experience into the fold. I know he will work to bring a culture of excellence to all of our properties,” said Matt Guthrie, Regional Vice-President of Gatehouse Media Southwest division.

Prior to joining USA WEEKEND, Graves was president and publisher of the Jackson Sun Media Works in Jackson, Tenn., and vice-president-circulation for the Greenville News Media Group in Greenville, S.C.

“I look forward to getting out and meeting the people in the community,” he said.

Graves is married and the father of two adult children.

E&P seeking nominations for Publisher honor

Nominations are now open for the 2016 “Publisher of the Year” honor bestowed annually by Editor & Publisher magazine.

This recognition is open to all newspaper publishers worldwide, from newspapers both large and small.

According to E&P, all entries will be treated with strictest confidence, but the selected publisher should be prepared to be interviewed by the magazine for the special “Publisher of the Year” issue.

The deadline for entries is Sept. 23. More information on the award and how to nominate for it can be found here http://www.editorandpublisher.com/poy.

Group execs will convene in Kansas City

The 2016 version of the Inland Press Association’s Group Executives Conference will feature in-depth discussions of the major challenges facing newspapers today, with recapturing lost ad revenues on the top of the list for discussion.

The event will be held at The Kansas City Star offices in Kansas City August 10-12.

In addition to ad revenues, the conference will also focus on best practices in benchmarking performance, how to monetize digital content, and much more.

For more information on the Group Executives Conference, go to www.inlandpress.org.
Tate joins Madison County Record; Tolliver to managing editor

The Madison County Record has hired Wes Tate, of Huntsville, as its new general assignment reporter, while promoting Preston Tolliver to the paper’s managing editor following the departure of former Editor Matt Shelnutt.

Shelnutt began working for the newspaper in August 2010 as a reporter under then-editor Kyle Mooty, but was promoted following Mooty’s resignation. He has served as editor since December 2011.

Tolliver started at The Record as a reporter in November 2012. Earlier this year, he was promoted to the paper’s online editor, tasked with bringing a wider audience to the paper’s website, mrecordonline.com. Since his promotion, online readership has more than doubled.

“I look forward to serving the Madison County community as the managing editor of its flagship newspaper,” Tolliver said. “We’ve been doing a lot of great things here, and I’m excited to build on that as we move forward.”

Tate, originally of Tulsa, attended Oklahoma State University, writing for its student publication, The O’Colly. Tate’s duties at The Record will be to cover general assignment stories, as well as bring a new narrative to the Huntsville School District’s various athletic events.

“I’m grateful for the opportunity to be able to become a part of the community through the newspaper and its readership,” Tate said.

Almost every owner has a selling price they would like for their business, including publishers. The publishing industry has used many methods to determine a publications value, the most common method now used is a multiple of cash flow. However, often sellers set a price by what their business is worth to them, and sometimes it is based on what they need, which is rarely related to the value.

The best way to not be disappointed is to become your own buyer, think about buying your publication as if you only see what the buyer sees. Unless you are about to sell your publication now, you have time to make changes on things that affect your cash flow.

In the not too distant past, revenue was the main factor, today it is cash flow. When it was revenue, your owner discretionary funds did not affect your sales value. Today, those “hidden” expenses hurt your value. If you own your property and do not charge yourself rent (preferably the same amount you would lease the property to for a buyer), your cash flow decreases by the amount you would charge a buyer: Let’s determine your cash flow: like most you prefer not to have a high taxable income, so let’s pick $20,000 taxable income. To determine your cash flow add back depreciation (you have been in business a long time and don’t have any depreciation), add back interest (you have none, business is paid for). Some owner discretionary funds may be acceptable add backs to a buyer, but most buyers will feel that if you expended it they will likely need to also, but just say the prospective buyer allows for $5,000 of $15,000 auto expense shown on your financials. Cash flow to the buyer - $25,000. Then of course there is your salary, most buyers will feel that this is also an expense they will incur, whether for them or for a manager – if it cost you that much to live it will likely cost them the same, so no add back. There is an exception to this, if you can show you are not active in business, or that your salary is high compared to a replacement doing your duties.

To make owner discretionary funds easy to identify some owners have set up “corporate expense” accounts where they put things like their cell phones, auto expense, rent to themselves, and profit distributions. In the example above, let’s say you did this and the total was $28,000 plus your $20,000 profit. Now we have a cash flow of $48,000. (NOTE: get with your CPA to set this up).

The cash flow of $25,000 would likely bring you $112,500 for your publication, while the $48,000 cash flow would likely provide $216,000 for your publication. It is all in how you report your discretionary expenses, yes you may have to pay more taxes, but you also will get considerably more for your publication. In both examples the revenue is considered to be the same and the multiplier used is 4.5 times the cash flow and rent was expensed.

But do we still have the right price for you, the buyer? Without property most publications are expected to pay back their purchase price plus a living (or profit) for the buyer over 5 years. So as a buyer you see the owner has a salary of $80,000 a year on his P&L’s, then you would expect to be able to have the same salary, and since it is not figured in the cash flow it has been accounted for. With the example above your purchase price was $216,000. Your note or investment repay would be somewhere around $45,000 a year for 5 years, leaving a cash flow or year-end dividend of $3,000 a year. Not much of a “cushion” for you but enough to cover the purchase.

If your cash flow was $43,000 and you asked for the same $216,000, the cash flow would provide a negative income in the above example, and as the buyer you would want the price of the business to be lower unless you were willing to accept a lower salary for yourself. The lower price you as the buyer would be asking for might be about where the cash flow shortfall was, in this example a price of $193,500 using the same multiple.

Not what you want as a seller, but the value of the publication shown on financials would be correct, the fact that discretionary funds are hidden in the P&L’s will not matter to the buyer, he will only consider what is shown and identified as add backs to cash in the financials.

The more you report and show your true value on financials, the more likely you will receive that value when you decide to sell. You should do this for at least two years to have a buyer accept it as a consistent financial occurrence and not an abnormality, but it can work with one full year and a year to date that supports the previous year.

When you sell a business you are selling profit, if you are not showing the full profit you will be selling your publication for less than its real value.
We Count on the Mail
By Chip Hutcheson

National Retail Federation, “2016 NRF Back to School/College Spending Survey”

Send US YoUr newS!

The Arkansas Press Association encourages members to send news of staff changes or other happenings and associated photos to info@arkansaspress.org for inclusion in The Publisher Weekly and AdNews.

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Back-to-School Begins Here

This year, parents with school-aged children are projected to spend more than $27 billion on back-to-school shopping.

And, where do they look to find the best deals?

Newspaper media—in print and online.

Eight in ten adults with children in their household said the newspaper and look some action as a result of an ad in a print newspaper in the past month.

Newspapers make back-to-school shopping as easy as 1, 2, 3.

Source: Newspaper Association of America, “Newspaper Survey of Shoppers, 2014”

www.naa.org
A few days ago, maybe it was a couple of weeks, the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* ran an editorial based on the findings of a Harvard economist regarding a study of racial bias in big city police departments. The study found no racial bias in police shootings.

The editorial went on to relate that the findings were quite opposite of racial profiling; that police were more likely to fire their weapons...when the suspects were white.

After relating some of the findings, the editorial concludes that this is “…something you’ll not see on the cable news networks these days. Not the liberal ones not the conservative one.”

In making the latter statement, the editorial just validates what a lot of people today, maybe most people think about network news broadcasts. That isn’t a criticism of the editorial, but rather a commentary on the state of the news business these days, especially the broadcast news. Broadcast news consumers have only to search a short time to find a network that presents the news with a slant they prefer.

Does anyone else have issue with this? News, real news, shouldn’t be presented with any slant. The consumer should be able to correctly assume that the presentation of the news is in an unbiased manner and from a neutral position. But that hasn’t been the perception or the reality in a long time, has it? Again, at least not in broadcast.

The strength of newspapers is that the perception and the reality is and for the most part always has been the presentation of news sans slant. Of course we don’t always achieve that lofty goal, but the effort nevertheless has always been there to keep it that way. Therein lies the reason for the trust of newspapers by consumers of news.

It is that “trust” that is our stock and trade. It is the very thing on which we hang our collective hats in a world very divided about the way things should be.

I truly hope that our industry never sinks to being perceived as the conservative media or the liberal media. Of course we are guilty by association just because we are in the “media” community, lumped in with all those who have no qualms about interjecting their own views or “slants” in their presentation of the news.

It follows that when some criticism of the “liberal media” is advanced, newspapers get lumped right in there. Most people know better, but the temptation to just lump all media into the same laundry basket is apparently irresistible to many. You see this a lot, along with a lot of other useless flotsam, on social media. None of that really means anything and most certainly we shouldn’t take it personally, but it all speaks to the modern perception of the media.

Some are conservative and some are liberal. At least that is the popular view of those outside the media business. It seems we have to be one or the other. There can be no middle ground. Again, that is the perception or the popular view.

Okay, I’ll admit it. I’m old school. I still believe that consumers of news shouldn’t have to question where the reporter stands on a particular issue or question. Truthfully, they should have no clue because if they did then the news they’re consuming isn’t unbiased, but rather laced with the keywords that easily shift the perception of the issue or question at hand.

Newspapers, real newspapers, don’t and won’t do that. As tempting as it is, we just don’t. To do so would risk our credibility with our readers and that’s something newspapers should absolutely never do. Once that credibility is lost, or even if it’s damaged ever so slightly, it takes forever to recover from it if it ever fully can.

Broadcast news has that stigma. Any newsvendor who presents news from solely a conservative or liberal viewpoint has lost any credibility of ever being able to present the news in any other way. In other words, their credibility has left the building, never to return.

Can you imagine how long it would take for that credibility to be restored? That is even if there was an effort to do so, which has not been greatly in evidence for some time.

Continuing to polarize news just drives the wedge of divisiveness ever deeper in this country. Those who believe in a particular way have their beliefs and their personal values validated by continuing to view only the news purveyed by one side or the other. They don’t tend to even consider the other view, or to divide their viewing time between the two sides.

The point is, there shouldn’t be two sides. Not in the news columns. Editorials are, of course, a decidedly different thing. That’s where we vent. That’s where news outlets truly reveal the attitude and position of the editorial board. It is a viewpoint, not news, and is or at least should be clearly marked as such.

Sometimes it seems we’ve done a poor job of educating readers about the difference between news and editorials. Perhaps the lines have been sufficiently blurred to unintentionally create this erroneous perception that something stated as opinion in an editorial is an extension of the slant in the news columns.

We assume everyone knows better. We assume a lot, it seems. These days I don’t think we can assume anything. We can’t assume that consumers of news make any of these distinctions, and continue to put a lot of effort into keeping the two, news and editorial, clearly divided. Otherwise we’re no better than the cable news networks that seem to have no compunction about intertwining their own news and views in practically the same breath. Is it any wonder the trust has been lost?

Newspapers can’t afford that. In a new world in which newspapers have myriad challenges in just continuing to publish day in and day out, week in and week out, the last thing we need is a loss of trust that would make our jobs even more difficult if not impossible.

Because truly once that’s gone, what is really left for newspapers?

Have a great week!

Tom Larimer’s Potpourri

Arkansas Publisher Weekly 2 August 11, 2016
Stephens, Nelson among hall inductees

Dr. Donna Lampkin Stephens, associate professor of journalism at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway was among those inducted in the tenth class of inductees of the Arkansas Sportswriters Hall of Fame July 9.

Rex Nelson, columnist, blogger and play-by-play voice of the Ouachita Baptist University Tigers for the last 40 years, was also among the inductees.

The induction ceremony was held at the Centennial Special Events Center in Conway where NASCAR driver Mark Martin of Batesville, delivered the keynote address.

Daily Leader launches new website

The Stuttgart Daily Leader recently launched an enhanced website design for the newspaper. The new site offers several new features and faster load times.

The new launch also includes a mobile experience, allowing readers to access features of the Daily Leader from any mobile device.

Subscribers to the newspaper have full access to the online features. Other users of the online elements may access a set number of articles per month before having to subscribe to get more.

Check out the new website at www.stuttgardoyleader.com.

‘It Can Wait’ essay contest details told; Prizes await

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), local newspapers, and AT&T will again sponsor and challenge Arkansas students ages 14-19 across the state to write an editorial or opinion column highlighting the dangers of texting while driving and encouraging their peers to take the “It Can Wait” pledge.

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- After this date is when newspapers announce local winners.

Mark Your Calendar!

September 5: Labor Day – APA Office Closed

September 6: Freedom of Information (FOI) Roadshow, University of Arkansas at Hope

November 10-11: ArkLaMiss Circulation Conference, Ameristar Casino & Hotel, Vicksburg MS

Tennessee site for 130th NNA convention

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) will hold its 130th annual convention and trade show Sept. 22-24 at the Marriott Cool Springs in historic Franklin, Tenn.

Convention topics will address pressing business objectives of the community newspaper owners, publishers and senior staff. Educational sessions and peer sharing activities are on the convention agenda.

Those registering for the NNA convention will have access to five general sessions, an exhibit hall with over 30 exhibitors, along with a welcome reception and entertainment.

Franklin is situated just a short drive south of Nashville. It was the site of an historic Civil War battle, and the battlefield in Franklin remains a very popular tourist destination.

And of course Nashville is just a short drive up I-65 where lively entertainment venues attract thousands of visitors every day.

The NNA convention programming also includes the ever-popular great ideas exchange to be moderated again this year by NNA past president Robert Williams of Blackshear, Ga.

For more information on the convention as well as registration information and more, go to the NNA web site at www.nnaweb.org.
We Count on the Mail
By Chip Hutcheson, President/National Newspaper Association and Publisher/The Times Leader, Princeton, KY

I got the mail today.
A couple of bills. A greeting card. Some catalogs. A newspaper. One package that my wife grabbed right away. (Wonder what that was?)

Lately, it occurs to me how completely I take for granted that I will get the mail tomorrow.

I’ve had my share of gripes about the mail. As president of the National Newspaper Association, I have fielded our community newspaper members’ postal concerns all year. The mail is slower than it used to be. The U.S. Postal Service slowed it down by a day, at least, because of financial problems. Newspaper subscribers are unhappy because too often their papers are arriving late. Some local businesses have had problems with cash flow because of late mail.

Still, I get the mail every day but Sunday. Bet you do, too.

If you follow the news, you know the U.S. Postal Service is in trouble. Because so many people and businesses use the Internet, there isn’t as much mail to deliver. But we still expect the mail to come. At my newspaper, we look for it on Saturdays, too, because weekend mail is extremely important in small towns. (Congress considered ending Saturday mail, but thankfully it has dropped that idea for now.)

Beneath the surface, however, we see seismic, economy-rattling changes ahead unless Congress can pass legislation to lower the Postal Service’s cost of doing business. It carries more than $50 billion of debt on its balance sheet. Fortunately, there are bills by Reps. Jason Chaffetz, R-UT, and Elijah Cummings, D-MD, and several other House members, and by Sens. Tom Carper, D-DE, Claire McCaskill, D-MO, Mark Warner, D-VA, Roy Blunt, R-MO, Jerry Moran, R-KS, and Susan Collins, R-ME, that would do the job. Passing these bills is easier said than done. You may have noticed Congress is having a hard time these days getting anything passed.

This is what the bills have to fix.
A 2006 law imposed a requirement to put advance funding into a federal retirement health plan for postal workers. Other agencies don’t do advance funding. They are on a pay-as-you-go system. That requirement began to cripple USPS within a year or two after its passage. What the 2006 law didn’t do was relieve USPS of also contributing to Medicare for the same workers, which many do not use. So there are two plans for many workers, when only one is used. USPS has to double-pay, which is another way of saying you double-pay every time you buy stamps—for a total of about $29 billion now paid into the Federal Treasury. The Chaffetz-Cummings and Carper bills would end the double-payment. Retirees would go onto Medicare like the rest of us do, and the other plan would provide supplemental coverage. The Postal Service would be relieved of the debt it is carrying from the 2006 law because the funding will be complete.

Sounds so reasonable, right? Why hasn’t it passed? Because Uncle Sam likes keeping half of that double payment. Somehow, some think tanks inside the Beltway (and I say “think” with my tongue in cheek) believe by ending the double payment, USPS would be getting a bailout. But it isn’t a bailout. This is stopping your postage money from being unfairly collected and relieving a financial burden USPS did not deserve if Medicare was used as intended.

Saving this money may not mean much to you at a few pennies a pop, but to businesses, it is big money that could be used to create jobs instead of lining the federal treasury. Did you know that the mail is responsible for 7.5 million jobs and $1.2 trillion in the U.S. economy?

Mail is important. But it has to be reliable and on time. Unless this legislation gets through, mail will get slower and eventually, we won’t be able to take it for granted.

If you get a chance this summer, e-mail your members of Congress a note asking them to pass these bills. Or better yet, send a letter by mail. Bet Congress takes that mail for granted every day, too.

(APA members have permission and are encouraged to re-print this column.)
FOIA ‘roadshow’ will visit southwest Arkansas venue

The third in a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “roadshow” events will take place Tuesday, September 6, at 10 a.m. at the University of Arkansas Community College in Hope. The roadshow events are a cooperative effort between the office of the Attorney General and the Arkansas Press Association.

The first two sessions of the year, one in West Memphis and another in Russellville, were well-attended events. The “roadshow” events are free and open to the public, although registration to attend is requested and may be done at https://arkansasag.eventsmart.com/events/foia-roadshow-hope.

The programs are designed as a refresher on the state’s Freedom of Information Act, and are designed specifically for those with responsibilities under the act. That would include law enforcement officials, elected and appointed officials as well as public records custodians, city, school and county office holders, etc.

In addition, the program has been approved for 2.0 hours of general Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit and 2.0 hours of Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training credit.

‘Publisher of Year’ Nominations now open

Nominations are now open for Editor & Publisher’s “Publisher of the Year” recognition, a program that is open to all newspaper publishers worldwide, from papers large and small.

The deadline for making nominations is Sept. 23.

“We are looking to honor a publisher who has risen above the rest and accomplished what seems like the impossible, outmaneuvering the competition, outthinking the future and maintaining profitability,” the awards program promotional material says.

To make a nomination for the honor, visit this site: http://www.editorandpublisher.com/poy/.
Most of us have never had any serious run-ins with the law. With a possible exception of the occasional speeding ticket, the vast majority of us have never had to deal with the law, the legal system or the police very much.

Serve on jury duty one time and you’ll see plenty of evidence that this is obviously not a unanimous thing, but then it never has been.

The vast majority of us are law-abiding citizens. It’s not that prison is really a deterrent for most of us, but rather I think it is the desire to do right, to be upright citizens and to be thought of as such.

Most of us were taught respect for the law at an early age, from day one actually, by law-abiding parents. Actually we were taught respect in general, but certainly for the law. Policemen, we were told more than once, are our friends.

When serving in the military I had no difficulty adjusting to the rather rigid standards of conduct expected of me. “Yes sir” and “no sir” came easily for me because that is the manner in which I was taught to respond to my elders and to those in the position of respect. I respected them. It wasn’t difficult.

But even in that very structured environment of conduct, there were those who couldn’t bring themselves to act in the expected manner. There are always those who will buck the system and inevitably find themselves constantly in hot water. For some reason, they never seem to make the correlation between their conduct and the state in which they find themselves. For sailors it was the brig where the few found themselves. I was never in a Navy brig but I have seen a few of them, and doing so just reinforced for me the necessary continuation of my respectful behavior. They are not pleasant places, and those in them are decidedly unpleasant. Probably not unlike our prisons of today.

For most of us acting like a decent human being comes naturally. It’s really not difficult to lead a life like this.

For some, however, leading such a life is a foreign concept. Defiance of the law is their means of retribution for perceived or perhaps even real injustice inflicted upon them.

While most of us don’t understand this because likely we’ve never experienced injustice, most of us can understand frustration and the rage that can sometimes come from it.

There are those who reach a point of having lost hope that the situation will ever improve. They see no way out of their plight. Some, sadly, turn to violence.

It’s difficult to imagine the frustration that would drive an individual to the point of taking firearm in hand and opening fire on the police or anyone for that matter. But it happens with increasing regularity. And they don’t have to even be connected in any way to the event that proved to be the last straw before taking action. Likely it is their life in the aggregate that takes them to that point. Some events, like police taking the life of a person of color, just serve to push some over the edge.

The shootings of police officers in Dallas and then in Baton Rouge are really difficult to process for those of us sound in body and mind. Who would do such a thing? What could possibly happen to someone to lead them to do this? We have no answers, but we have plenty of questions.

Then of course in the aftermath of such events, the anti-gun crowd chimes in quickly to be countered by the second amendment shouters and the victims become almost forgotten in the ensuing argument. It’s all so predictable, and frustrating because it just continues to happen with no real solutions at anyone’s disposal.

There always have been and likely always will be that small percentage of people who don’t fall in the same category of most of the rest of us law-abiding citizens, those of us who are aghast at the actions of gun-wielding shooters in Dallas, Baton Rouge and others. There have always been those who resist at any cost the standards of normal behavior. Some would like to blame this behavior on mental defect, and perhaps there is a good argument to be made for this one.

Most of us law-abiding citizens could not perceive of taking a gun and opening fire on other human beings. We just can’t. It’s not in us. But it is in some of our fellow citizens, and it may actually get worse long before it gets better.

Nobody has a clue on how to address this current cultural dilemma faced by Americans. Our political leaders and those who aspire to be such can pay it lip service, but if you’ll notice there are no real solutions forthcoming. None.

A lot of the behavior that polite society abhors is manifest in those who don’t have the same upbringing and certainly not the same opportunities. We can’t raise everyone’s kids for them, and the way people choose to raise their kids is not something in which we can interfere. Yet it’s the way a lot of people are raised that leads them to abhorrent behavior and actions.

There is no simple approach to altering the present course. Education can help, but it can hardly be expected to do it all, and in some cases it consistently fails to live up to expectations in this regard. This is no fault of the educators but more than likely it’s the fault of the interference in how we educate our children, what we’re allowed to teach them, and what we are not.

Bad behavior is not inherent. Like any other behavior it is a learned behavior. The “education” must begin at home AND be reinforced at school, and vice versa. Even then, however, there will always be that small percentage who are going to rebel, who will see no reason to conform and indeed find constant ways to buck the system and the expected norms of behavior.

And for most of us the frustration will continue.

Have a great week!

Tom
Frank Fellone assumes new role at Dem-Gaz

Long-time deputy editor Frank Fellone also known as the “Drivetime Mahatma” for his Saturday traffic column has taken on a new role in the newsroom of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette after holding the deputy editor title for 20 years.

Frank, a past president of the Arkansas Press Association (2012-2013) is now back in the newsroom as a reporter working half time. He adds that he will continue to write the popular “Mahatma” column, a regular feature of the newspaper for the past nine years.

He’s been a senior editor at the newspaper since assuming the state editor position in 1980.

Cabin Joins Others Offering Free WaPo Access

The Log Cabin Democrat in Conway announced recently that it is joining more than 250 other newspapers nationwide in offering free access to the digital edition of the Washington Post, a $99 value.

The offer is made to both print and digital subscribers to the Log Cabin. It’s part of a partnership program launched in 2014 by the Washington Post to expand that newspaper's audience.

The Cabin notified its subscribers of the offer in an email. Once set up subscribers will have access to the Post site for one year.

NEW ADDITION? LET US KNOW!

We want to know about your new hires, retires and promotions!

Send your staffing changes to info@arkansaspress.org to be updated online and included in our weekly bulletin and monthly newsletter.

2016 NAM Annual Meeting & Summer Conference

NEW NAM PRESIDENT – APA Executive Director Tom Larimer, right, congratulates Layne Bruce, Mississippi Press Association executive director, shortly after Layne was installed as the new president of the Newspaper Association Managers group at the Friday evening banquet of the group’s annual meeting last week in Reno, Nev. Layne takes over from Lisa Hills of the Minnesota Newspaper Association.

NAM-A-RENO – Newspaper association managers from across the U.S. and Canada were convened last week in Reno, Nev. for their annual conference. Pictured are, kneeling from left, Don Smith, West Virginia; Layne Bruce, Mississippi; Michelle Rea, New York; Teri Henning, Pennsylvania; Steve Nixon, Saskatchewan; Barry Smith, Nevada; Lisa Hills, Minnesota; and Dave Bordewyk, South Dakota. Back row, Chad Stebbins, ISWNE, Joplin, Mo., Fred Obee, Washington; George White, New Jersey; Mark Maassen, Missouri; Betsy Edwards, Virginia; Tom Larimer, Arkansas; Beth Bennett, Wisconsin; Tom Newton, California; Pam Mitchell, Louisiana; Doug Anstaett, Kansas; Rowland Thompson, Washington; Felicia Mason, Alabama; Robin Rhodes, Georgia; Mark Thomas, Oklahoma; Susan Patterson-Plank, Iowa; Morley Piper, Massachusetts; Allen Beerman, Nebraska, and David Thompson, Kentucky.
JAMES R. “JIM” FALL, JR.

James Randolph “Jim” Fall, Jr., 79, a veteran newspaperman who did stints in several states, including Arkansas, died Aug. 9 at the Mosaic Hospital in St. Joseph, Mo.

Among his career stops include a stint as managing editor of the West Memphis Evening Times. Jim also served as managing editor of the El Dorado News-Times beginning in 1982 before being promoted to general manager of the newspaper, a position he held until 1988.

In 1995 Jim was named the executive director of the Montana Newspaper Association, a position he held until his retirement in 2004. He was elected president of the Newspaper Association Managers during his time in Montana.

A memorial service was held for Jim on Sunday, August 14, in his hometown of Maryville, Mo. Contributions in his memory may be made to the Jim Fall Memorial Fund, c/o Citizens Bank and trust, 105 N. Main Street, Maryville, Mo. 64468.

“Jim was the consummate professional newspaperman and association manager,” says Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “He was a friend to all who knew him and a great mentor to many in the newspaper and association management business.”
The third in a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “roadshow” events will take place Tuesday, September 6, at 10 a.m. at the University of Arkansas Community College in Hope. The roadshow events are a cooperative effort between the office of the Attorney General and the Arkansas Press Association.

The first two sessions of the year, one in West Memphis and another in Russellville, were well-attended events. The “roadshow” events are free and open to the public, although registration to attend is requested and may be done at https://arkansasag.eventsmart.com/events/foia-roadshow-hope.

The programs are designed as a refresher on the state’s Freedom of Information Act, and are designed specifically for those with responsibilities under the act. That would include law enforcement officials, elected and appointed officials as well as public records custodians, city, school and county office holders, etc.

In addition, the program has been approved for 2.0 hours of general Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit and 2.0 hours of Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training credit.

The fourth and last in the 2016 series of FOIA “Roadshow” events will be Thursday, October 13, on the campus of the University of Central Arkansas in Conway.

SPJ ‘Math for Journos’ event coming to APA

Journalists needing a refresher on math will get that opportunity when the Society of Professional Journalists Arkansas Pro Chapter brings a session to a Dutch treat luncheon at the Arkansas Press Association building on Wednesday, August 31, beginning at 11:30 a.m. The APA building is at 411 South Victory Street in Little Rock.

Topics for the session include “Lies, Damn Lies and Statistics,” “Percentage vs. percentage point,” “Beware the decimal” and more. Kelly Kissel, long time Associated Press news editor, will present the program. He will bring a wealth of experience dealing with numbers in elections, government budgets, and political polling.

There is no charge for the program, but you will need to RSVP to jellis@arkansasonline.com. They will also be doing a group order through Jimmy Johns for those wishing to participate.
Let’s take a minute to talk once again about the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). I know, I know. We’ve been down this road before, but it seems there is always something new regarding the FOIA to discuss. That “new” may be a new challenge to the law, a group seeking to amend the law and not in a good way, or some new way to circumvent the law.

Almost since the law’s enactment in 1967, there have been attempts, some subtle and others not so much, to subvert the intent of the law. “What’s that,” you may ask? Well, the intent of the Arkansas FOIA was to keep the public’s business being conducted in public for all to see.

That would make sense now wouldn’t it? It just makes sense that the public’s business, the decisions made on the public’s behalf regarding expenditure of public tax money or in general the conduct of the government’s business be conducted where the public could easily observe. After all, it’s their money. It’s their business.

That would seem to follow, but the truth is that it took the FOIA to require by law that the public’s business be conducted publicly. Before the FOIA it was not always a pretty picture. Government was not always conducted on the up and up, and some profited, some profited greatly, by the public not knowing how their tax dollars were being spent.

Of course that still happens, but there is considerably less likelihood of it happening when the public is guaranteed a front row seat to watch government at all levels take place. It would be illegal to bar them from this observation.

There are other subtle attempts to shut doors to the public. We hear these stories from time to time, and it always amazes us that public servants are still inclined to make efforts to keep the public from having access to meetings or public records.

A great example of this is one we’ve heard more than once in the past. Records custodians at some governing agency, whether it be law enforcement, the city, the local school district or some other entity, requires those seeking documents under the FOIA to fill out an official form of their own creation in order to make the request.

It’s not really so much the idea of a form itself, but the questions asked on the form that sometimes make it clear that it’s really more about intimidating those making the request than complying with the law.

Some of the forms request the phone number, address and email address of the requester, what they might be willing to pay for copies of the records, whether you are a member of the media, or just what they plan to do with the records. These are examples of some questions used in some forms employed in public offices in Arkansas. These questions are not unique to any one form, but are an aggregation of some we’ve heard about from complaining callers.

The use of the form suggests you must fill out this information, listing specifically what records you seek, in order to gain access. In truth, the law allows records keepers to ascertain if the requestor is a citizen of Arkansas, but beyond that there is really little requirement for access and there shouldn’t be. They are PUBLIC records, after all.

There seems to presently be some examples of the practice of using such forms going on in Northwest Arkansas, although certainly the practice is not unique to that corner of the state.

We constantly get phone calls from members as well as concerned citizens in the state seeking to know their rights under the FOIA. The horror stories we sometimes hear about how requests were handled leads us to believe that a considerable amount of education remains to be offered to the custodians of public records in some parts of Arkansas.

Frankly this always amazes me when I hear these stories, whether it’s the intimidation of requiring a form to be filled out or just the downright refusal to allow access to public records. I don’t often get to talk to the custodians refusing access, but if I did my first question would be, “What are you trying to hide?” I would follow that with, “You realize, of course, that these are ‘public records’ and not your records.”

Often the complaints we get are a result of the public records custodian’s “gatekeeper” does not understand their responsibilities under the FOIA. There’s no reason why they would automatically know this, but there is some responsibility for the public servant that hired this gatekeeper to make sure they at least had a passing acquaintance with the law so as to avoid inevitable embarrassment from lack of compliance.

After all, when there is a problem it’s not the gatekeeper that takes the heat. It’s the office holder responsible that gets the bright light of the FOIA focused upon them. Most of them don’t want or need that sort of public exposure, and for good reason. It is rarely favorable attention.

But requiring that forms be used by the public to request information under the FOIA is a thinly veiled attempt to discourage such requests and to intimidate the requester. The FOIA clearly states that requests may be made in any commonly used format, like snail mail, email, or FAX, or you can even make the requests by phone.

Some governmental agencies that employ the requestor forms claim they do it to get specific information about exactly which files the requestor is seeking, and indeed those requesting records are encouraged to be very specific in their requests. However, this specificity can be made clear in any of the request formats mentioned above without using the form.

The FOIA is a “do right” law. Office holders and custodians of public records are either going to do right under the law, or they are not because the penalties for not complying with the law are really not sufficient to form compliance. Perhaps they should be, but presently they are not.

Proof of that is the fact that nobody has ever spent a night in jail for flagrant violation of the state’s Freedom of Information Act, although 30 days and small monetary fine is the punishment for such.

These are the sorts of penalties that would make a scofflaw, well scoff.

Have a great week!

Tom

Arkansas Publisher Weekly 2 August 25, 2016
Cornett joins staff at Madison County Record

Johnna Cornett has joined the staff of the Madison County Record as advertising manager, replacing David Hoye in that position.

Cornett brings several years experience in customer service to the position, and also operates her own business, A Reflection of Beauty. She was also the office manager at McAlister Vision Clinic and also worked at the Madison County Library.

She and her husband, Randy, have three children and live in the Bohannan Mountain area in Madison County.

Lee McLane to seek Beebe council post

Lee McLane, long-time editor and publisher of The Beebe News, has announced she plans to seek the office of city alderman, Ward 1, Position 1, in Beebe.

McLane has been editor and publisher of The News since 1990. She and her family are long time residents of Beebe.

She holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Hardin University in Searcy and a masters of business administration from Webster University in Little Rock.

McLane says that if elected she plans on continuing as editor and publisher of the newspaper.

Log Cabin publisher departs

Jeff Hartley has announced that he’s stepping down after a short tenure as publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway to pursue other interests.

Hartley came to Conway from Augusta, Ga., where he’d worked for a time at the Morris Publishing Group headquarters. Morris is the parent company of the Conway newspaper.

Cindy Crabb, controller of the Log Cabin Democrat and The Topeka Capital-Journal, another Morris property, has been named interim publisher.

Don’t forget about ‘It Can Wait’ essay contest

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), local newspapers, and AT&T will again sponsor and challenge Arkansas students ages 14-19 across the state to write an editorial or opinion column highlighting the dangers of texting while driving and encouraging their peers to take the “It Can Wait” pledge.

The essay entry will answer the question, “Why is it important to take the It Can Wait pledge to never text and drive?”

The piece will highlight the dangers of texting while driving and must include the following call to action, “Take the pledge to never text and drive at ItCanWait.com.”

The contest is open to all students, ages 14-19, in Arkansas.

Each Local Newspaper can determine if entries are to be emailed, mailed or hand delivered.

The contest schedule is as follows:

- September 1, 2016 – Contest begins
- Announced by local Newspapers and/or directly with schools.
- The contest ends at a local level October 14.
- After this date is when newspapers announce local winners.

The statewide winners will be announced November 11.

Participating newspapers will first determine the local winner. Each winner’s entry will be delivered to ANF, and the ANF will then determine the statewide winners.

The prize will include $500, a special guided tour of the Arkansas State Capitol and a lunch for the student and their parents with leadership of AT&T, the ANF and their local newspaper publisher.

Also, newspapers may set their own prizes for local winners if they choose. Newspapers may publish local winning entries, and the statewide winning entry will be made available to member papers to publish at their discretion.

Winning entries may be scanned and emailed to Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com. Be sure to include your newspaper’s contact information.

Sports content theft creating concerns

Some APA newspapers are reporting the theft of their high school sports coverage by a content aggregator that sells advertising on their online site while offering nothing to the newspaper that created the content.

This is hardly a new approach, but it certainly the latest and could likely become more evident as the high school sports season works.

There are several approaches being taken, but one in particular offers high school athletic departments telephone app software and depend on the schools to fill the apps with content. Unfortunately, a lot of that content is being lifted from local newspaper coverage. The ads are sold for the app by the aggregator and the school receives a share of the profits.

“This puts the schools in the position of violating copyright laws of which they may or may not be aware,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “Like any other law, the copyright laws have a punitive side regardless whether you knew about the law or not.”

APA newspapers are encouraged to conduct a search to see if this is something that’s going on in your market, and if your content is being lifted without your permission or knowledge. How you approach the situation if you find your content is being lifted is up to the individual newspaper.

“In the digital age, newspaper content is stolen all the time,” Larimer continued. “Local sports coverage is a huge franchise for the local newspapers, so stealing this content to make a profit from it would likely not sit well with the local publishers who are paying for the content.”
ANF will provide ArkLaMiss Grants

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF) will again be offering continuing education grants for five APA member newspapers to send representatives to the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing Conference set for Thursday and Friday, Nov. 10-11, at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

“The ANF Board of Directors are excited about this opportunity to provide continuing education for member newspapers and their employees,” stated Karen Brown, executive director of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation. “We are happy to provide up to five (5) Continuing Education Grants in the amount of $200.00 each for one person per newspaper to attend the ArkLaMiss Circulation Conference. We have had good participation and hope newspapers continue to take advantage of this grant opportunity.”

The grant application, with specific details and instructions, is posted on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/Arkansas-Newspaper-Foundation-157891060935155/.

Grant applications may also be sent by FAX to Terri Cobb at the APA office, 501-374-7509. Phone inquiries should be directed to Karen at 479-936-6471. Visit the ANF webpage at http://www.arkansaspress.org/component/content/article/3.

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation has been concentrating on developing programs and opportunities for member newspapers that support the goals of educational opportunities, literacy, internship programs, community awareness and continuing education.

Still time to sign up for NNA in Tennessee

There’s still time to register for the 130th annual convention and trade show of the National Newspaper Association when it convenes Sept. 22-24 at the Marriott Cool Springs in historic Franklin, Tenn., just a short drive south of Nashville.

Convention topics will address pressing business objectives of the community newspaper owners, publishers and senior staff. Educational sessions and peer sharing activities are on the convention agenda.

Those registering for the NNA convention will have access to five general sessions, an exhibit hall with over 30 exhibitors, along with a welcome reception and entertainment.

Franklin is situated just a short drive south of Nashville. It was the site of an historic Civil War battle, and the battlefield in Franklin remains a very popular tourist destination.

And of course Nashville is just a short drive up I-65 where lively entertainment venues attract thousands of visitors every day.

The NNA convention programming also includes the ever-popular great ideas exchange to be moderated again this year by NNA past president Robert Williams of Blackshear, Ga.

For more information on the convention as well as registration information and more, go to the NNA web site at www.nnaWEB.org.

Take the Call

While the editor is “busy,” this could be happening just blocks away

By Ed Henninger

YA GOTTA TAKE CALLS. Yes…even on deadline.

During my years as a consultant, I’ve occasionally called the editor of a newspaper I’m working with. When someone (yes, a “real” person) answered, I asked to speak with the editor.

Here’s what I’m told: “Oh, I’m sorry, sir…he’s on deadline right now.”

So, I’m thinking: “WHAT??? He’s on deadline? And he won’t answer the phone because he’s just too ‘busy’ right now?”

“Oh, OK,” I think. “So I just won’t bother him with the news that the old Emporium building downtown is burning to the ground right now.”

Of course, there is no fire. But what if there were? What if someone just shot the mayor? What if there was a quadruple fatal crash on the main drag through town?

Hold all calls until after deadline? Never!

If you’re the editor—or a reporter—ya gotta take calls…whenever.
Still time to sign up for FOIA event

There’s still time to sign up and attend the third in a series of 2016 Freedom of Information Act “roadshow” events set for Tuesday, Sept. 6, beginning at 10 a.m. at the University of Arkansas Community College in Hope. The event will end by noon.

The “roadshow” series is a cooperative effort of the office of the Arkansas Attorney General and the Arkansas Press Association.

The first two sessions of the year, one in West Memphis and another in Russellville, were well-attended events. The “roadshow” events are free and open to the public, although registration to attend is requested and may be done at https://arkansasag.eventsmart.com/events/foia-roadshow-hope.

The programs are designed as a refresher on the state’s Freedom of Information Act, and are designed specifically for those with responsibilities under the act. That would include law enforcement officials, elected and appointed officials as well as public records custodians, city, school and county office holders, etc.

In addition, the program has been approved for 2.0 hours of general Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit and 2.0 hours of Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training credit.

The fourth and last in the 2016 series of FOIA “Roadshow” events will be Thursday, October 13, on the campus of the University of Central Arkansas in Conway.

New regulations on drone use now in effect

New regulations on the commercial use of drones from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) went into effect Monday, August 29. The regulations include some references to the use of drones for newsgathering.

Some newspapers and certainly several broadcast outlets have been utilizing drones for gathering news and now will have to abide by these new regulations.

There’s a fairly thorough discussion on the new regulations and on using drones for newsgathering purposes that can be found on the APA Facebook page. Visit the page for more information and if you haven’t already “Like” the page and check back often for updates on this issue and many more relevant to the newspaper industry.

APA Offices Closing on Labor Day

Monday, Sept. 5, is Labor Day and the Arkansas Press Association will be among those businesses closing in observance of the holiday. The APA office will re-open at the regular time on Tuesday, Sept. 6.
Sometimes it’s those little things that we do that have a huge if unknown impact on those who need it most.

Perhaps I should explain.

It might be best to start at the beginning, which is generally always a good place to start. Almost three years ago the Arkansas Press Association (APA) was asked to partner on a new venture the goal of which was to raise money for non-profit organizations in Arkansas. Called “Arkansas Gives” the program was set up by the Arkansas Community Foundation, a not-for-profit organization based just down the street from the APA building in Little Rock.

It’s not unusual for newspapers, or the APA for that matter, to be asked to partner on such events. We have no delusions. We know why we’re being asked to “partner” on these things.

Being a partner generally means you bring something of value to the relationship, and this case was no different. We were being asked to help spread the word of the statewide effort to give a hand up to Arkansas non-profit groups, some of which were struggling to survive financially.

The idea was to hold a one-day fund-raiser soliciting funds from Arkansas charitable givers, a percentage of which would be matched by the Foundation. Specific non-profits could be earmarked for the donations and would receive those funds, with the matching added, intended for their use.

The non-profits would promote the event to help raise funds that they would ultimately receive. The first year, dozens of non-profit groups signed on to participate. The first-year goal was to raise a million dollars.

To suggest that the event was a success would be a gross understatement. It didn’t raise a million dollars. It raised over $2 million…in one day.

In the second year, hundreds of non-profits signed up to participate, and APA once again partnered along with some other media outlets, and a $2 million goal was set. But, in that second year the event did not raise $2 million. It raised $4 million to benefit non-profit organizations in Arkansas.

By now it was dawning on some of us early doubters of the concept that there was definitely something to this approach.

So just a few days ago a press conference was held in the APA building to kick off the third year of the Arkansas Gives effort. The success of the previous two events was mentioned, and APA was given credit, along with other media sponsors, for helping make the April event such a success.

We gladly accepted the gratitude for our part, but of course it is you, the newspaper members of APA who justly deserve the credit. Reference my initial statement at the top of this column.

As our part of the fund-raising effort, we sent out news releases to our members outlining the concept of the event and offering other particulars. As always, APA member newspapers were great about picking these up and running them in their newspapers. You might think this is “no big thing,” but it is indeed a big thing because it became a big part of helping raise $6 million in just two years that was spread among the non-profit organizations registered for the event.

So yeah, sometimes the things we think are “no big deal” impact in a very positive way those organizations that need help the most in their respective missions to help those who can’t help themselves. You should be proud of this participation and of the success of the program to date. I know I am.

There will be one more opportunity as the Arkansas Gives campaign heads into its third and final year. Information will be coming in the near future regarding the 2017 campaign, which will again take place in April. The goal this year won’t be announced until after the first of the year, but based on past experience it will be huge.

If you have participated in this effort in the past, thank you. If you have not you’ll have another opportunity to help in this amazing effort.

If you wish you can find out the names of a non-profit or two in your coverage area that may have benefitted from the Arkansas Gives campaign. It might make a good feature story on just how the money raised is being used, and why there exists a need for it. You might be surprised by what you find right under your nose, and so may your readers.

I thought I’d pass all this along because it occurred to me when we were being thanked for our end of the partnership at that recent press conference that it was actually you that should be thanked and appreciated for your participation.

So that’s what I’m doing.

“Native Advertising” has proven to hardly be the panacea it was supposed to be for digital advertisers desperate to generate revenue, even if it was employed a tactic to make advertising look like editorial.

It isn’t working. Wow! Who could have seen that coming?

“Native Advertising” is the new term what we once uttered softly and with a modicum of veiled disgust as “advertorial.” It was anathema in print, but the digital wonders saw it as a lifeline to produce the revenues that platform could not produce in sufficient quantities to justify its existence.

So now it’s proving not to be the next best thing. Why? Well mostly because advertisers don’t like it. Why? Because they don’t.

Yet some will continue to try to sell digital in any form just to meet the number expectations foisted upon them mostly by people who don’t have to sell in the digital environment. A lot of advertisers aren’t buying it, and that’s likely because they’re not seeing the return on their investment, just as a lot of publishers are not seeing the ROI on their investment in the digital divisions.

There’s no joy in reporting any of this because we need the digital side to be successful. Actually we need it to be wildly successful to take up the slack for sagging print revenues. But. It’s. Just. Not. Happening.

We tried Native Advertising and it didn’t work. We’ve got to try things to make this new model work, but we learned that this is not an element that’s going to contribute in any significant or sustaining way.

So it’s back the drawing board, where digital has been seemingly since the day it emerged as the new platform.

Have a great week!

Tom
Newspapers dominate oldest business list

It should come as no surprise that newspapers in Arkansas were prominent on a list of Arkansas’ oldest companies published recently in Arkansas Business.

It’s no surprise because in so many cases the local newspaper is the oldest business in town. Make that the oldest continuously operating business.

While some of the newspapers have undergone some name changes since founding, they’re still the same newspaper. Well, sort of, or as much as the same anything else founded in 1854, which the Dardanelle Post-Dispatch and the Daily Citizen in Searcy were, making them the first newspapers on the list.

Several Louisiana newspapers facilities flooded

The Louisiana Press Association was reporting last week on its website several of its member newspapers affected by the recent flooding in Southern Louisiana.

A partial list of those newspaper members and their status as reported by LPA follows:

The Livingston Parish News (Denham Springs) was flooded with several feet of water and the homes of Publisher Nancy David and Associate Publisher McHugh David were also flooded. Ashleigh David Vasquez’s home is the operations center for now. The newspaper will be printing at The Enterprise Journal in McComb, Miss.

The Livingston Parish Business Journal had 5 feet of water in the office, but they are fighting to keep their news and information online until they are able to start printing again.

Baton Rouge Press, an associate member of LPA that prints several newspapers was flooded leading to several newspapers having to print elsewhere. The Feliciana Explorer and the Zachary Post did not sustain damage, but have moved printing to a facility in Georgia. The Catholic Commentator in Baton Rouge has moved its printing to The Advocate in Baton Rouge. The Gonzales Weekly Citizen, Donaldsonville Chief and Plaquemine Post/South have all moved printing to The Courier in Houma.

LPA staffers Kenny and Shannon Shutt had water in their home and sustained damage. Former longtime LPA employee Linda Boudreaux and her husband Gary were completely flooded out but survived the ordeal. However, their son, Rowdy, 46, collapsed and died of a massive coronary bringing them to safety.

Unsuccessful attempts were made to get in touch with the following newspapers, attempts at contact will continue: Capital City News (Baton Rouge), Central City News.

There is still the possibility of flooding in LaPlace and the staff of L’Observateur is apprehensive but operating normally as of now.

The following papers have reported that they have not sustained damage and are operating as normally as possible: The Meridional (Abbeville), The Tangi-Digest (Amite), Tiger Rag (Baton Rouge) the St. Charles Herald Guide (Boutte), Central Speaks, St. Tammany Farmer (Covington), The Eunice News, The St. Helena Echo (Greensburg), Daily Star (Hammond) The Courier (Houma), Jennings Daily News, The Kaplan Herald, The Kentwood News Ledger, St. Francisville Democrat, Daily Comet (Thibodaux).
‘It Can Wait’ essay contest starts today

When Louisiana began flooding earlier this month, news coverage was split between the 2016 Rio Olympics and the upcoming presidential election. This was the worst natural disaster since Hurricane Sandy, and you barely saw it on TV or in magazines, or heard about it on the radio. Even the President wasn’t seen talking about it.

It was a difficult storm to cover. The prediction was for flash floods. The Advocate in Baton Rouge was hit hard by the multi-day flooding. Employees and carriers lost their cars and homes. But the online coverage and printing never ceased.

Publisher Dan Shea said, “We halted delivery for just a small sliver of Baton Rouge for three days, and half of Livingston Parish for a week, where 86 percent of the homes were flooded. But we are back to 100 percent today, delivering to driveways to get around massive piles of debris. Even if our customers are living elsewhere, many want the paper at their home as they come there every morning.”

Knowing that members of the local community were relying on them for critical news and updates, the publisher distributed free papers to local shelters and retail locations and made the decision to temporarily drop their online paywall. Web traffic to the news site doubled.

Shea says an emergency grant was offered to employees who lost their homes to the flood, helping them pay for essentials. A no-interest, 2-year loan was offered to help with rebuilding.

I am constantly amazed by reporters’ grace under pressure; reporting on others’ loss, when they themselves have lost everything. The flooding in Louisiana has affected about 100,000 homes. This is one-fifth the damage of Katrina. It is the work of journalists at local newspapers like The Advocate that are demanding national attention, running editorials that demanded President Obama cut his vacation short.

When I think of the journalists and newspaper staff who suddenly found themselves at the center of a natural disaster, a phrase often associated with the U.S. Postal Service comes to mind: “Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night.” When disaster strikes, journalists are among the first responders, the everyday heroes of their communities.

In times of tragedy, we rely on journalists to make sense of it; to tell us what is going on and how to react. We need them to tell the stories in the way only they can.

This is why newspapers are and will continue to be essential during these disasters.

Our thoughts are with the people of Louisiana as they work to rebuild, and we recognize and support the newspaper staff on the ground that risked their lives and put their own losses aside to come to the aid of their communities.

Still time to sign up for NNA in Tennessee

When Lightning Strikes
By David Chavern, president & CEO, NAA

Franklin is situated just a short drive south of Nashville. It was the site of an historic Civil War battle, and the battlefield in Franklin remains a very popular tourist destination.

And of course Nashville is just a short drive up I-65 where lively entertainment venues attract thousands of visitors every day.

The NNA convention programming also includes the ever-popular great ideas exchange to be moderated again this year by NNA past president Robert Williams of Blackshear, Ga.

For more information on the convention as well as registration information and more, go to the NNA web site at www.nnaweb.org.
GUEST COLUMN
Don’t waste your budget on teaser ads
By John Foust

ANF INTERNs
RELATE POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

THROWBACK THURSDAY

Register, apply for ArkLaMiss grants now online

Online registration is now available for the ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference set for Nov. 10-11 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss., and the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation grant applications are also now available on the Arkansas Press Association (APA) web site.

The Mississippi Press Association created the registration feature, which may be accessed at http://tinyurl.com/jg3ybg9.

The ArkLaMiss conference is a joint effort of the Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi Press Associations. The three rotate responsibility for the conference programming, and this year it’s Louisiana’s turn.

The event will kick off with the “managers round table” discussion on Thursday morning, Nov. 10. The ArkLaMiss programming begins right after lunch on Nov. 10 and concludes right before lunch on Friday, Nov. 11.

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation is once again offering a limited number of $200 grants for attending the ArkLaMiss conference. Applications for the grants may be found under the Foundation heading on the APA web site.

NAA changes its name; Now ‘News Media Alliance’

The Newspaper Association of America today announced it has changed its name to News Media Alliance and launched a new website, www.newsmedialiance.org.

The announcement is the culmination of a larger strategic plan to highlight the news media industry’s evolution to multi-platform, digitally savvy businesses and premium content providers.

The organization’s new focus better reflects the fully integrated multi-platform media organizations that comprise its membership. The new website visually depicts this expansion of news media into digital and mobile formats, with a modern look and feel that incorporates imagery of what it means to be a news media organization today: communicating in real-time across multiple platforms. The site is also mobile-responsive to accommodate the increasing number of readers accessing the site on mobile devices.

As the industry has expanded to reach audiences on digital, social and mobile formats, the association’s approximately 2,000 news organization members have become increasingly optimistic about the future of the industry.

“The news media industry should be optimistic. All evidence shows that people of all ages want and consume more news than ever,” states News Media Alliance President and CEO David Chavern. “We need to focus on new ways to address the needs of audience and advertisers. Advertising on news media digital and print platforms continues to be one of the most effective ways for advertisers to reach important audiences. Publishers are working to adapt advertising across all platforms, make ads less intrusive and increase consumer engagement.”

The News Media Alliance will continually evolve to ensure resources are available to members that facilitate growth and revenue diversification. Chavern doesn’t see the challenges as insurmountable. “All industries periodically face disruptive market and technology changes, and like many others before us, I believe we will come out of it stronger.”

For more information visit www.newsmedialiance.org.
It was just a couple of weeks ago that the Newspaper Association Managers (NAM) group held its annual conference in Reno, Nev. This is the association for press associations, and its attendees come from all over the U.S. and Canada. We spend a full three days in sessions, hearing presentations on topics of importance to the newspaper industry and of course specifically to the press association business.

It only follows that if the newspaper industry has challenges that the associations of newspapers would as well. In fact, both always have had their challenges, but it just seems as if more new challenges crop up every day in the rapidly changing and evolving environment both newspapers and their associations operate.

Newspapers associations are fortunate to have some truly talented people running them. We don’t always agree on how best to do things or how best to go about meeting the challenges, but we get gold stars for innovation and creativity for the solutions we create and which get shared at this annual gathering.

It’s always amazing to monitor the conversation from year to year at these gatherings. You might think that over time we’d run out of things to talk about, but that just never seems to happen and likely never will. It’s much the same as your state press convention. We never seem to run out of topics to discuss at these events, and again likely never will.

But just like newspapers, there is no one model that will work for every association. We have to be creative and willing to adjust to varying market influences, both internal and external, while at the same time being ever alert to the opportunities that present themselves.

I sit listening to my counterparts across North America make their presentations and I make notes about what they’re doing. Not all of it will work for us here in The Natural State, but some elements of every idea, every solution can be applicable to our own peculiar set of challenges.

For instance, the Arkansas Press Association doesn’t have a lot in common with the California Newspaper Press Association or the Texas Press Association, so something that works well for them may not be something that would work for us and vice versa. The same could be said for several other states where the numbers of member newspapers and the varying laws of each state come into play.

Still, there is a wealth of newspaper and newspaper association knowledge sitting around that huge table when the NAM group comes together.

There’s always something to be learned from such a group if one will just pay some attention. The same is true for those attending state press conventions like the one we just had in June up in Bentonville. There is always something new to learn.

The NAM meeting, as reported north of here in this column, was held in Reno, Nev. This was the first time I had visited Reno since 1971, and while there is obviously some new construction and more population in the “Biggest Little City in the World,” it looks pretty much as it did.

The downtown casino hotels are pretty much the same, but the area, downtown and all, is very clean. I described it as a smaller version of Las Vegas without all the clutter and … ahem … “street people.” I was going to say “weirdos” but they’re not all weird and to characterize them as such might not be fair. They are on the street, however, doing all manner of things, some of it actually entertaining and some it just, well, weird.

Reno doesn’t have much of that. It remains a smaller city with its own sort of desert appeal. It is surrounded by desert, but the elevation keeps the city much cooler than Las Vegas.

While there I met several very nice people, and these were folks not in the hospitality side of Reno business. I also met a young man who was in the hospitality business who detected an accent when I spoke. He asked me if I was from Texas.

Of course I had to straighten him right out on that, and told him I was from Arkansas, even though I don’t really think I have much of an accent. He knew, however, I wasn’t from Reno.

Turns out he’s from Natchez and we had a nice conversation about his hometown. It was funny that he lapsed into a deep-south accent himself while talking about home, something he hadn’t exhibited at first.

I’ll swear I don’t have an accent, but apparently I do. He spotted it right off, so apparently my inflection is not nearly as un-regionalized as I had thought.

It should be noted that I can talk with an accent, the accent of the hills in which I grew up in Northwest Arkansas, although my parents would never let me or my older brothers incorporate that dialect in our conversation. It was difficult not to pick it up when speaking with those with whom we grew up.

My sweet wife says I revert to talking like that when we visit the old home place to check on things and when I run into acquaintances who have remained there all these years. If I do revert it is certainly unconsciously, much as likely the young man I conversed with in Reno did when he reverted to his Southern roots in our conversation.

My first visits to Reno back in the early 70s were when I was still in the Navy, attached to Top Gun at Miramar Naval Air Station north of San Diego. We did some training at Fallon Naval Air Station just outside of Reno and visited the city on our time off. I do recall having some great times in the city.

As a poor sailor I didn’t have money for gambling, but there was plenty of other activities to occupy young, single sailors on liberty. Top Gun moved its headquarters to Fallon many years ago and remains there today as part of the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center.

Have a great week!

Tom Larimer’s
Potpourri

—

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

September 8, 2016
**Bona stepping down as Daily Record CEO**

Don Bona, CEO and managing owner of the Daily Record in Little Rock, has announced he will be stepping down from the day-to-day activities of running the 91-year old publication. His decision was based upon his desire to spend time with his wife, Kay, family, and concentrate more on health issues.

Bona served on the board of the Arkansas Press Association for a number of years, culminating in his election as president in 2011. He was also a member of the American Court and Commercial Newspaper Association and served as a board member of the organization for 8 years.

For the past 15 years, he was publisher of the Hamilton County Herald in Chattanooga, TN. In this role, he served on the Government Affairs Committee of the Tennessee Press Association (TPA), where he was instrumental in the growth of the TPA public notice website.

“I have the utmost confidence in our management team of Bobby Burton, Robin Hill and Jay Edwards,” Bona says, “who have worked closely with me over the past decade and who I know will continue to create the high-quality publication our subscribers have come to expect, and one that we are all proud of.”

**Geiss retires from The Courier after 37 years**

Mike Geiss, the long time circulation director of The Courier in Russellville, has retired.

He is retiring after 37 years in the newspaper business, the last 15 years were with The Courier.

Mike started his career as a carrier for the Kansas City Star and later worked at Ottawa and Olathe (KS) newspapers and the Grand Island (NE) Independent.

Mike and wife Marsha will return to Nebraska to be near family.

**ANF interns relate positive experience**

Small newsroom offers varied experience

By Sam Hoisington

There really is no division of labor in the South Arkansas Sun newsroom, where I had the good fortune of working this summer. The newspaper covers happenings across Calhoun County, the least populated county in Arkansas.

Depending on the day, I could be found photographing, writing, editing, laying out the paper, working on circulation-related issues or building ads. I even bundled papers on Thursday mornings and dropped them off at the post office.

It was really fantastic to be involved with a production from start to finish. As someone who focuses a lot on online journalism, I had a gap in my education that I was able to fill with some practical experience in the print journalism realm.

As a native of the Bentonville/Rogers area, I experienced a bit of culture shock upon arriving in Hampton, the county seat, where I would spend my summer living and working. A six-hour drive can really mean a world of difference. However, I ended up falling in love with the town and staying for a little over a week after my internship officially ended.

I am very thankful for the opportunity presented to me by the South Arkansas Sun team and the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation.

(Sam Hoisington was a summer intern at the South Arkansas Sun in Hampton as part of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation program.)

**ANF internship leads to full time employment**

By Tanner Newton

My summer internship was a great experience. I write for UALR’s student newspaper, and for that newspaper I tend to stay in the entertainment section and I get to pick what articles I want. With the Sheridan Headlight, I had no choice over which articles I took. I feel this made me a better writer as it gave me more variety in what I was writing.

A few weeks into the internship, the Headlight’s main writer quit. After that, I got to write a lot of articles. On several occasions, I wrote the entire front page. These articles included covering meetings, personality profiles, new laws, etc. To date I have had 46 articles published in the Sheridan Headlight and 76 photos published. That is a lot of experience that I would not have gotten without this internship.

One thing I learned, that I was not expecting, is that a journalist has to be competent with a camera. Almost every article I wrote, I had to take pictures with them. I wish I had taken some photography classes in college. It took me a few weeks to get used to the camera.

There is not really anything negative to say about the experience. The work was fun and I learned a lot from it. The people at the Headlight are also easy to get along with.

The Headlight has hired me, and I will continue to work there for the foreseeable future. Without the internship, I would not have this job.

Thank you for allowing me to have this internship.

(Tanner Newton was a summer intern at the Sheridan Headlight through the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation program.)

**APA represented at Chicago Triathlon**

TRIATHLETES — Byron Tate, right, vice president of the APA Board of Directors and publisher of the Sheridan Headlight, along with his son, Ethan, are shown at the Chicago Triathlon event recently. The father and son divided the three legs of the event, Byron doing the Lake Michigan swim and the run and Ethan doing the cycling.
Ad Libs:
Don’t Waste Your Budget on Teaser Ads
By John Foust, Raleigh, N.C., john@johnfoust.com

I ran across something in my Bad Ads file which reminded me of ads I see every now and then. It was about an eighth of a page, with big bold type: “Big news coming to Main Street.” That’s it. No details. Just “Big news coming to Main Street.”

This is known as a teaser ad. Although it was attempting to create curiosity, I’ll bet it generated little more than a collective “ho hum” from readers.

Teaser ads usually have mysterious headlines like, “Exciting new product coming soon” or “You wouldn’t believe what we have in store.” But these headlines are rarely accompanied by copy that reveals what the fuss is all about. That’s why I think teaser ads are a waste of money.

Here are some points to keep in mind:
1. **Most teaser ads are ego driven.** There is a strong “made you look” element. Unfortunately, some advertisers measure the effectiveness of their advertising by the number of positive comments they hear. In the case of teaser ads, those positive comments come from family and friends – the people who actually know details about the Big Event.
2. **Most merchants want immediate response from their advertising.** Teaser ads can’t do that. Instead of asking readers to take action, they ask readers to wait. Teaser ads sell hype, not benefits.
3. **Readers are rarely as excited about a coming attraction as the advertiser.** Big news to an advertiser is not always big news to consumers. It is human nature for readers to care more about what is happening in their own world than anywhere else. That’s why the best ads dramatize ways the product or service can save money or improve the quality of the consumer’s life.
4. **Readers are frustrated by advertisers who withhold information.** Newspapers and their digital counterparts are sources of information. That’s where people turn for in-depth coverage of news and sports. In the reader’s mind, holding back information – even in advertising – is not fair. It doesn’t fit the general purpose of a news outlet.
5. **The arrival of the Big Event often doesn’t live up to the build-up.** When that happens, readers become suspicious of that advertiser’s future promotions. And the advertiser loses credibility.
6. **Cleverness vs. creativity.** Cleverness calls attention to itself and results in advertising gimmicks. Creativity calls attention to the product and results in sales.
7. **There’s a big difference between a curiosity headline and a curiosity ad.** A curiosity headline is designed to make consumers want to read the rest of the ad (which will provide them with information about a specific product or service). A curiosity ad leaves everything to the imagination. That’s not a good thing.
8. **Of course, there are exceptions.** If planned properly – and if backed by accurate market research – some teaser campaigns can be effective. Most of those successful campaigns build information in layers, over a specific period of time. However, in most cases, advertisers would be wise to avoid teasers and invest their efforts on ads that tell the whole story.

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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.

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SPJ Pro Chapter hosts math class

Mark Your Calendar!


October 13: Freedom of Information (FOI) Roadshow, University of Central Arkansas, Conway

November 10-11: ArkLaMiss Circulation Conference, Ameristar Casino & Hotel, Vicksburg, Miss.

MATH FOR JOURNALISTS – Members of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) Arkansas Pro Chapter listen to a presentation on “Math for Journalists” last week in the APA conference room. Kelly Kissel of the Associated Press (not shown) led the review of relevant mathematics for working journalists.
Time nears for filing USPS forms

It’s that time of year again, or at least it soon will be, for filing the USPS Form 3526 for Periodicals Class newspaper mailers. The deadline for the Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation to be filed is October 1 each year, meaning the time has come to get busy on the form.

In addition to filing Form 3526 with the USPS, newspapers with Periodicals Class mailing permits must publish the form in their newspapers. Daily newspapers must publish the form by October 10, while non-dailies may publish the form in any edition during October.

Filing the form and publishing it in the newspaper is a requirement to continue to enter newspapers into the mail stream using a Periodicals Class permit.

The reports can be picked up at most post offices, or they can be downloaded from http://about.usps.com/forms/ps3526.pdf.

APA launches 15th cover photo contest

For the 15th year the Arkansas Press Association is kicking off a photo contest among APA members and associates to find the cover photo for the 2017 Arkansas Media Directory now in production.

“Over the years we have had some outstanding photos submitted for consideration, and from these we’ve been able to select some amazing photos to adorn the cover of the annual Directory,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director.

The top three entries will receive cash prizes including $100 for first place, $50 for second, and $25 for third.

A panel of experts will judge the photos.

The window for entering photos for consideration opens today, Sept. 15, and the deadline for photos to be considered is Friday, Oct. 14. There is no fee to enter.

To compete, APA member newspapers and associates should email their photo entries as an attachment to graphics@arkansaspress.org. Each contestant may submit up to seven photos.

The winning entry will appear on the cover of the Arkansas Media Directory when it is published early in 2017. The other top entries will be featured throughout the directory on a space available basis.
If you had any doubts about the continuation of the ongoing challenges to the state’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), you had only to read the story recently about a legislative committee that heard there’s more to come in attempts to water down the FOIA.

Rep. Kim Hammer (R-Benton), who has on occasions in the past introduced legislation that would weaken the FOIA, said in open session of the Joint Performance Review Committee, which he co-chairs, recently that he thinks some state agencies are over-burdened with FOIA requests for public records. One can only assume he would want to close those records to save state employees from having to actually, you know, do their jobs.

The comments sounded all too familiar in that he started off by saying that, “This is not about eliminating transparency”, …in government. We’ve learned over the years, however, that when a legislator says it’s not about transparency, it’s about transparency.

There are those in our state legislature who don’t like the state’s Freedom of Information Act, and would like to see something done about it. Every general session brings more proposed legislation that would “amend” the FOIA in the name of improving it. In almost every instance, what the proposal actually does is to undermine the state statute.

When talking with many legislators, they make it clear right up front that they are in full support of the state’s Freedom of Information Act. Some of them think everything in government should be open for public review, well, except for maybe the stuff they don’t want open and accessible.

This is why every legislative session we spend countless hours in trying to convince a sufficient number of legislators that what they’re proposing is a really bad idea; that it would serve to weaken the state’s FOIA. Some will listen and are convinced; others not so much. Rep. Hammer is one of the latter, but he’s certainly not alone in this.

The main complaint in this latest effort is the time it takes to fulfill bulk information requests for public records. Admittedly, these can be time consuming. The law does not allow custodians of the records to charge for staff time in finding them. It does allow a charge for reproduction of the records, but even this is limited to the actual cost of the reproduction.

Records custodians often view these volume requests as a nuisance, and they often complain; sometimes to their legislators who vow to do something about it.

What we’re talking about here are public records…PUBLIC records. If the public is going to be denied access to the records, then they’re not really public are they? And allowing an agency to charge staff time for finding and producing the records would be like double paying the staff working on the records request. They’re already being paid to do their job, part of which is to produce public records upon request.

Charging for the time would also discourage some from making the requests, which is likely the intent of an effort to see this part of the FOIA changed.

There is a price to pay for operating an open government. There is a price to pay for this sort of accessibility to public information. It is the price we pay for giving the public the opportunity to see what their government is doing for or to them.

Those who would seek to change that apparently have something they would like hidden from the public. They would prefer to do the peoples’ business behind close doors and in secret. They honestly believe that the public’s business is no business of the public.

There really is no other explanation for these efforts to undermine the law that was created in the first place to keep government operating in the bright light of day, where everyone can see. The law came into being because it wasn’t always this way in Arkansas, and to do anything to return to those days would be a giant step backward for the people of Arkansas.

Those who propose such amendments to the FOIA that would undermine its usefulness to the residents of Arkansas do not have the best interest of those residents in mind.

So anytime you hear a legislator talking, yes even boasting that they’re going to get something done about the FOIA, be wary. Be very wary because what they’re talking about is taking away your access to government, to your public records and to the operation of government at all levels in the state, from school boards to city councils to quorum courts and to the state legislature.

A suggestion I’ve made several times in the past and which still has considerable validity is that every time you encounter a state legislator from your coverage area, bring up the Freedom of Information Act. Get their take on it and make clear your position on preserving the FOIA.

We will work on defending the Act on this end, but it is most helpful when legislators come to Little Rock armed with the knowledge of how their folks back home, including the newspaper publishers and editors, feel about the FOIA. Make your case at every opportunity.

Believe me, it is in your best interest to do so.

The FOI Coalition will be active again in the upcoming legislative session, reviewing any proposed piece of legislation that would in any way amend the state Act. If you would like to be a part of that, please let me know.

We’ll have a first meeting of 2016 before the session begins early in 2017. That session will be just to get organized and to discuss the challenges we know will be forthcoming in the upcoming general session. Most of the meetings of the Coalition called during the session are last minute and short notice. That’s because they are a reaction to a bill or bills aimed at the FOIA that appear to be gaining traction in the legislature.

Working journalists, businessmen, interested citizens, college and university instructors, and others populates this loosely organized group. It meets only when there is need, and of course that need is largely during the general session of the Arkansas legislature.

If you want to get involved, this is a good opportunity. Just let me know.

Have a great week!

Tom
One month left in ‘It Can Wait’ essay contest

Only a month remains for entries in the “It Can Wait” essay contest, which opened earlier in September.

The “It Can Wait” essay contest, sponsored by the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation, participating newspapers, and AT&T Arkansas continues until Oct. 14, with the statewide winners of the contest to be announced Nov. 11.

The contest is for Arkansas students ages 14-19. They will write an editorial or opinion column highlighting the dangers of texting while driving and encouraging their peers to take the “It Can Wait” pledge.

The essay entry will answer the question, “Why is it important to take the It Can Wait pledge to never text and drive?” The piece will highlight the dangers of texting while driving and must include the following call to action, “Take the pledge to never text and drive at ItCanWait.com.”

Each Local Newspaper can determine if entries are to be emailed, mailed or hand delivered.

The contest schedule is as follows:
– September 1, 2016 – Contest begins
– Announced by local Newspapers and/or directly with schools.
– The contest ends at a local level October 14.

• After this date is when newspapers announce local winners.
– October 28, 2016 – Karen Brown, ANF Executive Director, 508 SE Fullerton St., Bentonville, AR 72712 must receive each newspaper’s local winning entry.

Email entries may be addressed to: arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com
– The statewide winners will be announced November 11. Participating newspapers will first determine the local winner. Each winner’s entry will be delivered to ANF, and the ANF will then determine the statewide winners.

The prize will include $500, a special guided tour of the Arkansas State Capitol and a lunch for the student and their parents with leadership of AT&T, the ANF and their local newspaper publisher.

Also, newspapers may set their own prizes for local winners if they choose. Newspapers may publish local winning entries, and the statewide winning entry will be made available to member papers to publish at their discretion.

Winning entries may be scanned and emailed to Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com. Be sure to include your newspaper’s contact information.
Best practices in public notice seminar topic

The Public Notice Resource Center (PNRC) will host the first-ever symposium on Best Practices in Public Notice on Thursday, September 22, in conjunction with the National Newspaper Association’s 130th annual convention and trade show at the Marriott Cool Springs in Franklin, Tenn., a few miles south of Nashville.

The half-day conference is scheduled to begin at 11:30 a.m. and will conclude by 4:30 p.m. just prior to the traditional NNA welcome reception in the trade show area of the convention.

The brief guide is based on research by PNRC that identified the practices that publishers must follow to protect newspaper public notice and the public’s right to know. It will be provided to publishers and state press associations to consider for their own Best Practices resolutions.

Speakers for the event will include Beth Bennett, executive director of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association, David Thompson, executive director of the Kentucky Press Association, Tonda Rush, president of American Press Works and director of the public policy and general counsel of the National Newspaper Association and co-director of PNRC, Robert M. Williams, Jr., editor and publisher of the Blackshear (GA) Times and a past president of the National Newspaper Association, along with many more representatives of the newspaper industry.

“I became a journalist to come as close as possible to the heart of the world.”

I came across this quote, from magazine publisher Henry Luce, a few years ago. But at the time, I didn’t fully understand it.

I wondered what power journalism had to do with something so seemingly extraordinary? I had heard journalism referred to as a “declining” industry, and I questioned if this could be true?

But this summer, as an intern at The News Media Alliance, I realized the true power of the journalism and news media industries, and why it will persist.

Journalism is a fundamental part of life. People will never stop waking up every morning wanting to know what’s going on in the world. And I, just like everyone else, am curious.

During my internship at The Alliance, I’ve fed my curiosity. I’ve written about topics ranging from Donald Trump’s tweets to Virtual Reality. I’ve interviewed talented journalists and leaders; people I one day aspire to be like. I’ve learned about writing, web design, digital graphics, politics and public service. I’ve been lucky enough to work with devoted, accomplished colleagues who are determined to fight for our industry and confront the changes in today’s media.

And with the evolutions in our industry, more opportunities arise. The dialogue for journalism is different than ever before—utilizing video broadcasting, graphic design and interactive digital. And with that comes more consumer engagement and accessibility. At The Alliance, these innovations and transformations are embraced. So to all those people that may claim journalism is “declining,” I’ve learned that it’s quite the opposite.

Journalism is, and always will be, crucial to humanity.

Journalism serves as a catalyst for change; it is irreplaceable in its ability to inform and advocate. A perfect example: the true story that inspired the Oscar-winning film “Spotlight.” In this case, The Boston Globe put out a chilling 2002 report of a Boston priest repeatedly sexually abusing children. This story prompted a 5-month investigation, a worldwide crisis for the Catholic Church, a Pulitzer Prize, and, eventually, an Oscar-winning film highlighting this tragic journalistic success.

And this is just one example of journalism shedding light on societal issues that must be addressed.

So when Henry Luce said he wanted to “come as close as possible to the heart of world,” I think I know what he meant. I think he wanted to explore every imaginable topic; covering political candidates, basketball strategies and economic theories all in the same week. I think he wanted to learn as much as he could about human nature. I think he wanted to advocate for those that couldn’t, plead for change, and brutally analyze reality. I think he wanted to wake up every morning knowing what’s out there, and giving others a way to know as well.

With journalism he could.

(Emma Benninghoff is the 2016 Summer Marketing and Communications Intern at News Media Alliance.)
Oct. 1 deadline for filing USPS form

October 1 is the deadline for filing the United States Postal Service Form 3526, the Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation, to maintain privileges under the Periodicals Class mailing permit.

Most newspapers utilizing the mail for distribution of their newspapers do so under a Periodicals Class permit. One of the requirements of using this permit is to file this form annually.

In addition to filing Form 3526 with the USPS, newspapers with Periodicals Class mailing permits must publish the form in their newspapers. Daily newspapers must publish the form by October 10, while non-dailies may publish the form in any edition during October.

Filing the form and publishing it in the newspaper is a requirement to continue to enter newspapers into the mail stream using a Periodicals Class permit.

The reports can be picked up at most post offices, or they can be downloaded from http://about.usps.com/forms/ps3526.pdf.

Managers roundtable again featured at ArkLaMiss

The newspaper managers’ roundtable will again be a feature of the annual ArkLaMiss circulation and marketing conference set for Thursday and Friday, November 10-11, at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in historic Vicksburg, Miss.

The roundtable was added to the ArkLaMiss schedule three years ago and was so popular that it’s been made a regular feature of the annual gathering that attracts newspaper managers at all levels from the tri-state area. This group will, in a facilitated discussion address myriad challenges and solutions facing newspapers in an ever-evolving environment.

The roundtable will begin at 8:30 a.m. Thursday morning, Nov. 10, and concluding before lunch. The ArkLaMiss meeting will begin right after lunch. Both will meet in the same room at the Ameristar.

You may also register for the popular annual conference at http://tinyurl.com/jg3ybg9, a site created by the Mississippi Press Association for this purpose.

While you’re at it you may also apply for the $200 grant from the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation to help defray the expense of attending the annual conference. Check out details of the grants on the APA web site under the ANF heading.

The ArkLaMiss conference is a joint effort of the Arkansas, Louisiana and Arkansas Press Associations. The three rotate responsibility for the conference programming, and this year it’s Louisiana’s turn.

Be watching for more details on the programming for the ArkLaMiss in the near future.
Potpourri

The name above this column, “Potpourri,” means a little of this and a little of that. That’s what you’ll get today.

If you haven’t already started, it’s time to be giving some serious consideration to attending the annual ArkLaMiss circulation and marketing conference to be held Nov. 10-11 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

This conference has been going on for years, although an exact number of years seems to elude the principals in the event, namely the representatives from the Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi press associations who combine forces to stage this annual event. It doesn’t really matter how long it’s been going on I suppose but that it continues to do so and does so I believe because it remains highly relevant to newspapers in the tri-state area.

This conference started out as solely a circulation conference designed to bring together professional newspaper circulators from the tri-state area to talk about how better to do that thing they do. That “thing” started out to be delivering the newspapers and maintaining the circulation list.

The role of the newspaper circulator changed dramatically over the years. One day we woke up and expected our circulation people not only to deliver our products but also to SELL the product, as in marketing it to the coverage area. Many circulators were not prepared to assume this new role.

Helping them to be prepared was one of the original reasons for starting the ArkLaMiss conference. It is a mission that has remained relevant all these years as the newspaper model has shifted continuously as the industry evolves. The role of the circulator in all of this has continued to grow, and the challenges along with it.

A few years ago the brain trust of the ArkLaMiss conference decided to try a newspaper managers’ roundtable to bring together newspaper managers at all levels to discuss whatever issue or issues that were vexing them at the time. Publishers, general managers, production managers, circulation and market directors and editors attend this facilitated session.

This short but fast-paced session addresses a lot of issues all of us in the newspaper business face, but more importantly it also addresses some solutions that may be working at some participating newspapers. This ArkLaMiss session became an instant hit and was added permanently to the conference schedule.

You can find information on the ArkLaMiss on the APA web site at www.arkansaspress.org. You really should plan on attending.

You’ve still got a few days but only that to prepare for the annual filing of the USPS Form 3526, the “Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation.”

This filing is a requirement of holding and using a Periodicals Class mailing permit from the USPS, and Oct. 1 is the deadline for filing the form with the post office. Failing to do so can put your Periodicals Class permit in jeopardy.

In addition, the USPS regulations require that you also publish the form in your newspaper. Daily newspapers have until Oct. 10 after filing the form to publish it, and non-dailies must publish the form in one of their October editions to be compliant.

You can get the forms at most post offices or you can download one from online at http://about.usps.com/forms/ps3526.pdf.

Form 3526 contains information on just what it says, ownership, management and circulation of the newspaper. It is from this form that we take information for the annual Arkansas Media Directory, including your circulation figures and management team.

It doesn’t take a great deal of time to complete the form, but it does need to be done in the next few days and published after the filing deadline. If you were waiting until the last minute to get started, we’re nearing it.

There were approximately 60 people in the room when the third Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “roadshow” was staged in Hempstead Hall on the campus of the University of Arkansas Community College in Hope. That is I believe an excellent number attending one of these events.

Attorney General Leslie Rutledge was there and addressed the group briefly. Chancellor Chris Thomason introduced her. I did my usual bit welcoming those attending on behalf of the newspapers of Arkansas, and giving a brief history of the FOIA.

We have done these events for the past several years in partnership with the Attorney General. The events started under Dustin McDaniel and have continued during the administration of General Rutledge.

The Hope event was the third of four planned for the year. The fourth and final FOIA “roadshow” event of the year is set for Thursday, October 13, on the campus of the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. If you are anywhere near there you should plan on attending, and if you newspaper is anywhere near there you should help us publicize the event.

These “roadshow” sessions are great at educating office holders, records custodians, law enforcement officers and so forth on their responsibilities under the law. There continues to be a lot of misconceptions about the FOIA. These “roadshow” sessions have been great at clearing up some of those while at the same time answering the many questions that those attending bring with them.

We spend a lot of time an energy defending the FOIA at each session of the Arkansas legislature. As good as the law is, there are those who think it can be improved by being watered down. It can’t.

One of the best defenses of the FOIA is education. That means educating those who don’t understand the law, or those who have lost sight of its original intent.

As stated here before, that “intent” was to keep government at all levels in the state operating in the bright light of day and not behind closed doors; that the public meetings and the public records in the state be open and accessible to the public.

It is a simple premise but it remains a relevant one for the people of Arkansas who have been well served by the FOIA since the late Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller signed it into law on Valentine’s Day in 1967.

Have a great week!
This year we mark the 76th anniversary of National Newspaper Week (NNW), October 2-8, an annual observance that celebrates and emphasizes the impact of newspapers to communities large and small all over.

Materials for NNW will be available for download at www.NationalNewspaperWeek.com beginning Friday, September 23.

The content kit will contain editorials, editorial cartoons, promotional ads and more, all available for download at no charge to daily and non-daily newspapers across North America.

Newspaper Association Managers, Inc., the consortium of North American trade associations representing the industry on a state and provincial, regional and national basis sponsor NNW.

This year’s theme is “Way to Know!” The aim is to applaud and underscore newspaper media’s role as the leading provider of news in print, online or in palms via mobile devices.

APA newspapers are encouraged to celebrate National Newspaper Week by downloading these materials and devoting as many column inches as possible to reinforce the importance of the newspaper to your communities. Local editorial support about your newspaper’s unique relevance is encouraged to compliment the special week.

Since the principle is timeless, the materials, new and archived, remain on the website and accessible year-round as a continuing resource.

‘Live coverage’ expands audience: webinar topic

Live coverage is the latest mobile and social trend to help journalists reach new audiences, and a Thursday, October 13, webinar from Online Media Campus can help you with that.

Sports journalists can connect with fans via live, play-by-play broadcasts on internet radio. Reporters can enhance their storytelling on Facebook Live with a solid list of “best practices” and tools like Mevo and SnapChat’s My Story can be used to create flip book style visuals with the latest details pushing your story to the top of followers feeds. In this session we will concentrate on best practices and using cost effective tools to get the most out of live coverage.

Deadline to register for the webinar is Monday, October 10. The registration fee is $35, and any number of newspaper staff can view the webinar for the same fee. Register and get more information at www.onlinemediacampus.com.

The instructor for this webinar is Val Hoeppner, a digital journalist, teacher, trainer and media strategist. Hoeppner spent 20 years in newsrooms as a photojournalist, newsroom leader and multimedia director. She also spent five years working with journalism professionals, educators and students in her role as director of education for the Freedom Forum Diversity Institute. As CEO of Val Hoeppner Media and Consulting, LLC, Hoeppner travels to newsrooms, universities and media conferences to train journalists in mobile, social, video and multi-platform storytelling. She is also the Professional Journalist in Residence at Middle Tennessee State University.

The Arkansas Press Association partners with Online Media Campus to provide these webinars at reduced rates.

This year’s theme is “Way to Know!” The aim is to applaud and underscore newspaper media’s role as the leading provider of news in print, online or in palms via mobile devices.

APA newspapers are encouraged to celebrate National Newspaper Week by downloading these materials and devoting as many column inches as possible to reinforce the importance of the newspaper to your communities. Local editorial support about your newspaper’s unique relevance is encouraged to compliment the special week.

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The instructor for this webinar is Val Hoeppner, a digital journalist,
September 14, 2016

Dear Publishers and Circulation Executives:

Fall is on its way and so is the 2016 ArkLaMiss Circulation, Marketing & Audience Development Conference. The event will be held Nov. 10-11 at the Ameristar Hotel and Casino in Vicksburg.

The agenda includes great sessions for both daily and non-daily publications, large and small. This year we are excited to welcome Gary and Helen Sosniecki, as featured speakers. They will speak on USPS Changes, Mailing Savings and what is and isn’t working with respect to paywalls.

As in recent years, the meeting will be preceded by a Round Table for Newspaper Managers. This session will touch on a number of topics. We are grateful to David Specht Jr. of Specht Newspapers for moderating this program. There is no cost to attend, but advance registration is required.

Our venue at the Ameristar is the longtime home of ArkLaMiss. They are providing a great room rate of $69 nightly. You can find more information on making your reservations inside this packet.

Please make sure to reserve your room by October 31.

As always, it will be a fun, interesting, informative and entertaining conference for a very reasonable cost.

Please take the time to complete the registration form for yourself and your key personnel and return it to the address listed. We look forward to seeing you in Vicksburg this November.

Cordially,

Aaron Armand, Vice President of Circulation
The Advocate, Baton Rouge
Conference Chairman
2016 ArkLaMiss Tentative Schedule

Wednesday, November 9

Some registrants and host will check in

Thursday, November 10

8:00 a.m.  Registration Opens  
*Outside Magnolia Room*

Vendors Set up  
*Bottleneck Bar*

9:00 a.m.  Newspaper management roundtable  
*Magnolia Room*

11:00 a.m.  Lunch available  
*Heritage Buffet*

1:00 p.m.  Opening Session & Welcome  
*Magnolia Room*

1:30 p.m.  Vendor Showcase  
*Magnolia Room*

USPS Changes/Mailing Savings  
*Magnolia Room*

In this session, Helen Sosniecki will be reviewing USPS changes that have happened recently and those on the horizon.

She will also be sharing money saving tips for submitting your periodical postage forms. Bring your forms! One-on-One sessions with Helen to review your 3541s will be available by appointment for the rest of the conference!

3:00 p.m.  Break with Vendors  
*Bottleneck Bar*

3:30 p.m.  Paywalls- What's working & what isn’t  
*Magnolia Room*

In this session, Gary Sosniecki will moderate an interactive discussion about the digital side of circulation, touching on paywalls, e-Editions, bundling with print and industry trends. Learn how to increase circulation revenue from your website.

Postal Q&As (by appointment only)  
*Bottleneck Bar*

4:45 p.m.  Free time & Hotel Check in

5:30 p.m.  Hospitality Reception with Vendors  
*Bottleneck Bar*

7:00 p.m.  Dinner on your own

Friday, November 11

8:00 a.m.  Breakfast Buffet  
*Bottleneck Bar*

8:30 a.m.  Hot Ideas Exchange- Dennis Dunn  
*Magnolia Room*

9:45 a.m.  Break with Vendors  
*Bottleneck Bar*

10:30 a.m.  Potpourri Discussion moderated by  
Aaron Armand  
*Magnolia Room*

What’s working what’s not? How did you deliver in a crisis? What do you think about Mathers Economics?

11:30 a.m.  Open Mic & Conference Wrap-up  
*Magnolia Room*
REGISTRATION FORM
Or register online @ arklamissconference.com

November 10-11, 2016
AmeriStar Hotel & Casino | Vicksburg, Miss.

Room rate: $69 | Call 1-855-888-7281
Group code: SARKLA6 | Hotel cutoff: October 31st

Newspaper/Company Name ________________________________________________________________

Street Address ______________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip ________________________________________________________________________

Phone __________________________ Fax __________________________

Check the box next to registrant’s name if attending the Nov. 10 Newspaper Managers Roundtable at 9 am. There is no added cost.

☐ Name ______________________________ Email ________________________________

☐ Name ______________________________ Email ________________________________

☐ Name ______________________________ Email ________________________________

TOTAL REGISTRANTS ______ x $95.00 = $____

Vendor sponsorship contribution: $____

Total Amount Due: $____

Exhibiting during this conference? ☐ YES  ☐ NO

PAYMENT

☐ Visa  ☐ Mastercard  ☐ AMEX  ☐ Check enclosed  ☐ Bill me

Card No: ___________________________ Exp. Date: __________

CVN # __________ Signature __________________________

REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS MONDAY, OCT. 31, 2016

Return form with payment to:
ArkLaMiss, 404 Europe St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802
or Fax to 225-344-9344

Questions? Contact Mitch Droge, 225-344-9309, ext. 107 | mitch@lapress.com
National Newspaper Week Oct. 2-8; Materials available online now

Materials for use in observing National Newspaper Week (NNW) Oct. 2-8 are now available online at www.nationalnewspaperweek.com. This year will mark the 76th year of the observance. Here you’ll find editorial copy, cartoons, promotional ads and more to assist newspapers in marking the annual occasion, and for calling attention to the continuing vital role that newspapers play in the communities they serve. The theme of this year’s observance is “Way to Know!” NNW is sponsored by the Newspaper Association Managers (NAM) organization, the trade association for press association directors across North America.

APA newspapers are encouraged to celebrate National Newspaper Week by downloading these materials and devoting as many column inches as possible to reinforce the importance of the newspaper to your communities. Local editorial support about your newspaper’s unique relevance is encouraged to compliment the special week.

Since the principle is timeless, the materials, new and archived, remain on the website and accessible year-round as a continuing resource.

Photographers: It’s APA contest time

APA photographers are reminded that the annual APA photo contest is now accepting entries, with cash prizes and bragging rights on the line.

The photo entry judged best will also appear on the cover of the annual Arkansas Media Directory. This is the 15th year for the photo contest.

A panel of eight judges will select the winners. The top pick will receive $100 for first place, while second and third will receive $50 and $25 respectively.

The deadline for photos to be considered is Friday, Oct. 14. There is no fee to enter.

To compete, APA member newspapers and associates should email their photo entries as an attachment to graphics@arkansaspress.org. Each contestant may submit up to seven photos.

The winning entry will appear on the cover of the Arkansas Media Directory when it is published early in 2017. The other top entries will be featured throughout the directory on a space available basis.

One grant remains for ArkLaMiss event

Only one Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF) grant remains for the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing Conference Nov. 10-11 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

A total of five ANF grants of $200 were made available this year to assist APA members in attending the annual gathering on the banks of the Mississippi River. Applications for the grants can be found on the APA web site at http://www.arkansaspress.org/?page=anfgrants.

The grants would just about cover a stay at the Ameristar and the registration fee for the event, maybe even with some left over for gas money.

You may also register for the popular annual conference at http://tinyurl.com/jg3ybg9, a site created by the Mississippi Press Association for this purpose.

The ArkLaMiss conference is a joint effort of the Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi Press Associations. The three rotate responsibility for the conference programming, and this year it’s Louisiana’s turn.

Another popular feature of the ArkLaMiss conference, the newspaper manager’s roundtable will again be included in the programming. This event is for newspaper managers at all levels, from publishers and general managers on down, to discuss current challenges and solutions.

This recent addition to the program has proven very popular and the exchange quite lively in the Thursday morning session, Nov. 10. This session adjourns before lunch, and the traditional ArkLaMiss programming begins right after lunch on Thursday and continues until right before lunch on Friday.
Legislative efforts to remove public notices, what some call “legal ads,” from newspapers and allow their placement on a government web site are fairly common across the country these days. Of course, we’ve had similar efforts right here in Arkansas.

In fact, almost every general session of the Arkansas legislature has someone introduce legislation that would do that. Inevitably they cited the cost saving to government at all levels if they were relieved of this statutory requirement and allowed to post their public notices on a web site they operate.

One of our best arguments against taking this action is that the public notices in Arkansas are already online, on a web site hosted and administered by the Arkansas Press Association (APA) at no cost to government at any level.

Most often those proposing to move the public notices to the Internet act as if, and may in fact believe, that it costs nothing and therefore saves taxpayers money. This is, of course, far from true.

For one thing there are significant costs in first establishing the technical infrastructure to host one of these sites for public notices. Then you have to pay some people to keep it working, and that’s not just today or this week or this month. That’s forever that another layer of bureaucracy would be added to government at a time when many are looking to shrink government, not grow it.

There are other arguments against moving public notices to the Internet. Another compelling argument continues to be the connectivity in Arkansas. It’s not great. There are still thousands of homes that do not have connectivity because it simply is not available. U.S. Census Bureau statistics from a few years ago indicated that 25 percent of the households in Arkansas don’t even have connectivity at their local library if they even have a local library.

I know this is difficult to fathom in these times, but it remains the truth. Posting public notices to a government web site would effectively disenfranchise a huge chunk of the Arkansas population because they would have no way of seeing it.

A growing argument against the move of public notice to an online site only is what is commonly called the “hacker factor.” The web site hasn’t been created that can’t be hacked by some goofball somewhere who would do so just to create mayhem. Why is anybody’s guess, but it happens. It happened to the Pentagon, Sony and many more who likely thought their online presence impenetrable. There is no such thing.

So what would keep a hacker from hacking into a government web site and messing with the posted public notices? Just changing a word or two, a letter or two, could in fact change the entire intent. It could change significantly the substance of the public notice to give it an entirely opposite meaning than intended.

Often public notices that appeared years ago, sometimes decades ago in a newspaper are used in lawsuits that take place today. It is important and highly significant that these public notices, published in a newspaper for perpetuity, are from a dependable archive of the notices that is newspapers. An online site cannot guarantee the same.

Think of it this way. Think of a computer or software you used twenty years ago, or even ten years ago. Would the computer or software you are using today still even open those files you originally created in your old computer and in a version of the software that likely hasn’t been supported in years?

The archivability of the public notices is lost online. Perhaps someday there will be a method for preserving the notices online, but if it exists today it is not in common use and that’s likely because of the expense of using it.

In order to be effective and to remain an effective use as a tool for preserving public notices in newspapers, it is vital…VITAL…that the newspapers of Arkansas upload their public notices to the APA web site created for that purpose. It is a simple upload procedure that even the technologically-challenged such as myself could manage with little stress.

The argument we use that the public notices are already posted online, on the APA public notices web site, is only valid if the public notices ARE posted on the APA public notices web site.

If you are not presently uploading your public notices for whatever reason it is really important that you do so. If you don’t know how, or if the staff person who was doing it for you left without telling anyone else how to do it, call the APA office and we will walk you through it.

The only way for this to remain a valid defense of leaving public notices in newspapers is to have the vast majority of those public notices placed in Arkansas newspapers uploaded to the site. So really in uploading your public notices to the site is actually helping you retain the public notices for your newspaper. In other words, you’d be doing yourself a favor.

APA staffer Kathy Edwards in recent weeks has been making contact with APA newspapers that have for whatever reason ceased posting to the site. Most are very cooperative in seeing to it that the notices are uploaded. This indicates that most already understand the importance of the uploads.

What we found was that some did not know they were no longer uploading their public notices. It’s an easy step in the weekly routine to forget I suppose, and I could certainly understand that. But it is an important step and one that each of us need to make sure is being done.

It is truly hard to understand why anyone would refuse.

Some states have passed legislation that make it mandatory that the public notices placed in newspapers to also be uploaded by the newspaper to a web site operated by the state press association. Failure to upload the public notices could result in the loss of the public notices and the revenue that comes with them for the offending newspaper.

I really don’t want to see it come to that in Arkansas. In fact I’m fairly certain it won’t come to that if sufficient numbers APA member newspapers, virtually all the legal newspapers in Arkansas, upload their public notices to the APA site.

Have a great week!

Tom
**Rector taps Wendell Crow for sports hall honor**

Wendell H. Crow, former editor and co-publisher of the *Clay County Democrat* in Rector, has been named to the Rector High School Sports Hall of Fame.

Crow and his wife, Betty, purchased the newspaper in 1954. They published the newspaper until his retirement in 1977.

In naming him for this honor, the Rector High School Sports Hall of Fame cited the newspaper’s coverage of Rector sports, and the support of the school system in general.

The induction ceremony was held Sept. 3 at the Rector High School gymnasium.

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**Express Editor retires after 22 years in newsroom**

Paul David “PD” Gramlich, editor of the *Charleston Express* for the past 22 years, has retired.

After graduating from the University of Arkansas, Gramlich owned and operated the OTASCO store in Charleston until liquidating the inventory and joining the *Express* in 1994.

At a recent Friday night football game in Charleston, Gramlich was presented a plaque in appreciation of what he’d done for the school as well as the entire community while at the Charleston newspaper.

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**Graham named editor at Charleston Express**

Dustin Graham has been promoted to editor of the *Charleston Express*, assuming the position vacated with the retirement of Paul Gramlich.

Graham studied journalism at Westark College, but began his newspaper career working at the Greenwood Democrat while still in high school.

He still lives in Greenwood with his wife Christy and sons Eric and Josh. Graham’s oldest child, Rachel, just gave birth to her first child, Emytt.

Graham officially started as editor in Charleston on Sept. 19.

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**Conway site for next roadshow stop**

The fourth in a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “roadshow” events will take place Thursday, October 13, at 10 a.m. at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway in the Brewer-Hegeman Conference Center rooms 112 and 113.

The roadshow events are a cooperative effort between the office of the Attorney General and the Arkansas Press Association.

The first three sessions of the year, in West Memphis, Russellville, and Hope, were well-attended events. The “roadshow” events are free and open to the public, although registration to attend is requested and may be done at https://arkansasag.eventsmart.com/events/foia-roadshow-conway.

The programs are designed as a refresher on the state’s Freedom of Information Act, and are designed specifically for those with responsibilities under the act. That would include law enforcement officials, elected and appointed officials as well as public records custodians, city, school and county office holders, etc.

In addition, the program has been approved for 2.0 hours of general Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit and 2.0 hours of Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training credit.

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**Groups file suit to delay overtime regs**

A large number of groups, led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, filed suit in Federal court in Texas recently challenging the constitutionality of the U.S. Department of Labor’s proposed new overtime regulations.

The group contends that the agency went too far when it finalized a rule in May making anyone earning up to $47,476 a year, or roughly $913 a week, eligible for overtime pay. The cutoff for overtime pay now is $23,660.

Among other things, the suit claims that the proposed salary threshold is so high that salaried executive, administrative, professional and computer employees, whom Congress meant to exempt, now qualify.

Now would be a good time to contact the Arkansas congressional delegation and ask them to support S. 2707 or its companion bill H.R. 4773, which would nullify the proposed rule.

Few disagree that the threshold should have been increased, but the magnitude of the increase could be devastating to small business, including newspapers.

Don’t hesitate to let our congressional delegation hear from you regarding your concerns about the proposed change in overtime regulations.
Arkansas Publisher Weekly

MEMBERS
IN THE NEWS

Josh Briggs named Editor at The Saline Courier

Saline County native Josh Briggs has been named editor of The Saline Courier in Benton.

He succeeds Beth Reed in that position, but is certainly no stranger to the news environment at The Courier. He’s been at the newspaper since August of 2011.

Originally from Haskell in Saline County, Briggs, 28, is a graduate of Harmony Grove High School and a 2011 graduate of Henderson State University.

Briggs and his wife, Christa, also a native of Saline County, have two daughters, Brynlee, 2, and Hadlee, 1.

Mann retires as Boonville Democrat Ad Manager

An 18-year tenure as advertising manager at the Boonville Democrat recently came to an end with the retirement of Manuel Mann, 78.

Mann was previously the publisher of the newspaper from 1968 to 1978, working at the newspaper during the “hot metal” days of Linotypes and hand-fed, flatbed presses. He actually began his newspaper career at 9 as a youth carrier, rising in the wee hours to deliver the Arkansas Gazette, the Dallas Morning News, and the Texarkana Gazette among others.

Mann and his wife of 57 year, Betty, have two adult children, Belinda and Danny.

Friends, twins unite to buy Spring River Chronicle

The Spring River Chronicle in Hardy has new owners.

David Pigue, Dawana Goings Pigue, and Brad and Deanna Owen are the new owners of the weekly newspaper that serves parts of both Fulton and Sharp counties.

According to the announcement story in the newspaper, Dawana and Deanna are identical twin sisters, and David and Brad grew up together.

The previous owner of record of the newspaper was Renee Clay-Circle.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

Promote your staff, your newspaper.
Send staff changes or other happenings and associated photos to info@arkansaspress.org for inclusion in The Publisher Weekly and AdNews.

SERENAM Dinner

APA Executive Director Tom Larimer and wife, Pam, are shown with his counterpart executives and guests at dinner held in conjunction with their recent meeting in Sarasota, Fla. Pictured with them, clockwise from left, are Mitch Droge, Louisiana Press; Felicia Mason, Alabama Press; Edward van Horn, SNPA, Betsy Edwards, Virginia Press; Stephen Dorris, Parade Athlon Media; Phil Lucey, North Carolina Press; Pam Mitchell, Louisiana Press; Robin Rhodes, Georgia Press, and Teresa and David Thompson, Kentucky Press. Taking the photo was Layne Bruce, Mississippi Press.

Oct. 1 deadline for filing USPS form

If you have been waiting until the last minute to file your annual United States Postal Service Form 3526, the time has officially arrived. The deadline is Oct 1.

USPS Form 3526, also referred to as the Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation, must be filed and published to maintain privileges under the Periodicals Class mailing permit.

Most newspapers utilizing the mail for distribution of their newspapers do so under a Periodicals Class permit. One of the requirements of using this permit is to file this form annually.

In addition to filing Form 3526 with the USPS, newspapers with Periodicals Class mailing permits must publish the form in their newspapers. Daily newspapers must publish the form by October 10, while non-dailies may publish the form in any edition during October.

Filing the form and publishing it in the newspaper is a requirement to continue to enter newspapers into the mail stream using a Periodicals Class permit.

The reports can be picked up at most post offices, or they can be downloaded from http://about.usps.com/forms/ps3526.pdf.

NNA suggests change coming in USPS process

The days of marking up each issue of your newspaper to show advertising percentages in USPS reporting may be numbered. That would be good news to a whole lot of Periodicals Class mailers, which would be the bulk of APA member newspapers.

Chip Hutcheson, president of the National Newspaper Association, announced at last week’s NNA convention in Franklin, Tenn. that such a change is coming and that the antiquated regulation is perhaps about to change.

The change is not yet official and the details not completely known, but there is some change coming and it should be good for newspaper filers. More information will be forthcoming in the near future.

Hutchison thanks the NNA postal committee chaired by Max Heath, long-time postal guru, for their efforts on behalf of newspapers. He also cited this as another reason to belong to the organization.
Photographers: It’s APA Contest Time

The competition is always stiff among APA photographers to see just whose photo will be judged best to appear on the cover of the annual Arkansas Media Directory, and this year it appears will be no different. Photos may be submitted by APA members and associates to be eligible for the judging, and as an added incentive, cash prizes that go to the top entries. First place will receive $100, while second and third will receive $50 and $25 respectively.

The deadline for photos to be considered is Friday, Oct. 14. There is no fee to enter.

To compete, APA member newspapers and associated newspapers should email their photo entries as an attachment to graphics@arkansaspress.org. Each contestant may submit up to seven photos.

The winning entry will appear on the cover of the Arkansas Media Directory when it is published early in 2017. The other top entries will be featured throughout the directory on a space available basis.

Sign up now for ‘Roadshow’ event

There’s still time to sign up for the fourth in a series of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “roadshow” event set for Thursday, October 13, at 10 a.m. at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway in the Brewer-Hegeman Conference Center rooms 112 and 113. There is no admission fee but those attending are asked to register for the event. You may do that at http://tinyurl.com/h2m4au6.

The Arkansas Press Association partners with Attorney General Leslie Rutledge and her staff to stage these educational events. The first three stops this year, in West Memphis, Russellville, and Hope, have attracted large crowds and another good crowd is expected in Conway.

APA newspapers in the area are encouraged to promote the “roadshow” event, which is designed to inform those office holders, both elected and appointed, records custodians, law enforcement officials and others of their rights and responsibilities under the FOIA.

Staff personnel from the Attorney General’s office will make the feature presentations on the FOIA, and of course there will be plenty of time for questions.

In addition, the program has been approved for 2.0 hours of general Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit and 2.0 hours of Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training credit.

Grants depleted; ArkLaMiss event offers plenty

Clark Smith, publisher of the Mena Star, snapped up the last available Arkansas Newspaper Foundation grant for the ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 10-11 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

The Foundation offered five $200 grants to cover the cost of attending the annual conference that attracts newspaper managers at all levels to the banks of the Mississippi River in historic Vicksburg.

The press associations in Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi have for years partnered in staging this annual gathering which continues to draw good representation from all three states. The three states take turns arranging the program, and this year it’s Louisiana’s turn.

“There are good reasons why a conference such as the ArkLaMiss continues to thrive in difficult times,” said Tom Larimer, executive director of the Arkansas Press Association. “Chief among those reasons is that the conference remains relevant to newspaper managers at all levels, with an appeal that goes far beyond the original circulation scope of the meeting.”

Today’s newspapers are concerned with selling or marketing their products as well as audience development. These topics and more are among those that will be addressed at the ArkLaMiss conference. Some will be aired for discussion at the “manager’s roundtable” event that will kick-off the conference Thursday morning, Nov. 10. This popular segment of the annual conference was added three years ago and shows all the earmarks of becoming a permanent part of the event.

The grants may be gone but you may still register for the popular annual conference at http://tinyurl.com/jg3ybg9, a site created by the Mississippi Press Association for this purpose. Registration and hotel information is included at this link.
The Public Notice Resource Center (PNRC) symposium on public notices held recently in Nashville, Tenn. was validating on several different levels. One of them was that it is apparent we’re not the only state facing challenges to the public notices traditionally placed into Arkansas newspapers by government agencies at all levels.

The four-hour symposium included some real “horror stories” regarding public notice legislation, but there were also some encouraging success stories regarding the retention of public notices in newspapers. The symposium was a succession of panel discussions and presentations covering a wide range of public notice challenges and solutions.

Here are some bullet points to summarize at least some of the common sense suggestions taken from the symposium:

- If your state association has a public notices aggregation site online, upload your public notices to it.
- If you include your public notices in your online digital edition, make sure the public notices are in front of the pay wall if you have one.
- Challenge your newsroom to create stories generated from public notices in the newspaper.
- Make sure your newspaper is properly archiving your newspaper to ensure that public notices in your newspaper even from years ago can be found.

Of course the Arkansas Press Association (APA) has an online aggregation site for its member newspaper public notices. It’s been up for years now, and can be found at http://www.publicnoticesads.com/ar.

If you’re not uploading your public notices to this site, please begin immediately. If you’re not sure if your newspaper is doing it or not, ask someone. If you need assistance call APA. We can get you going in short order.

One of the best arguments we can make against legislation seeking to remove public notices from newspapers and to post them on a government web site somewhere is that the notices are already online, at the APA public notices site. We can’t make that argument, however, if the notices are not there.

One counter to that argument when we’ve raised it at the legislature in the past is that some newspapers publish the public notices, but they publish behind their pay wall forcing those looking for the notices to pay a fee to access them. This is a valid argument, but one that is easily countered if newspapers would just place their public notices in front of their pay wall.

Public notices contain a lot of information that is important to newspaper readers. They can also be a trove of story leads for the newsroom. Government agencies at all levels are required by state statute to publish notices of some of their actions, such as bidding for the sale of property or bidding for construction projects, and many others. Each of these could result in an expansion of the story contained in the public notice.

This serves a multitude of purposes. For one and very importantly, it calls attention to the public notices and offers a good example of why they remain in the newspaper. They also inform readers about what their government, whether it’s the city, the county, the local school district or whatever, just exactly what their doing with the public’s tax money and why.

Doing this provides a vital service to newspaper readers and to the community because it informs and educates. Isn’t that a big reason we’re still publishing newspapers in the 21st century? One rather ominous discussion at the PNRC symposium, or at least I found it ominous, was the presentation on a study of newspaper archiving. There was a time when newspapers kept all their past publications. Some had them bound into a hard cover book in some fashion, and considered this their archive.

Actually, some, perhaps many still do bind their copies each year and consider these their archive. However, in this room of maybe 80 people, only a handful of newspaper representatives indicated they still archive their newspapers in the hardbound covers. Of that handful, only perhaps half of them allow public access to them.

Only a handful in a room full of newspaper people.

Well, okay, there are other ways to archive. There are any numbers of online sites that can provide this service for a fee, and of course many newspapers have for years archived their newspapers on microfilm, many providing a second copy of the microfilm to their local library or historical society.

The concern part, the part that I found a bit ominous, is that many newspapers apparently do not archive their newspaper at all. In fairness, some respondents to the survey taken in this regard didn’t know if their newspaper was archived or not. I’d have to guess that if they don’t know one way or the other, then they’re likely not archiving.

So why is this a big deal? Here’s why.

One of the elements we promote in keeping public notices in newspapers rather than online is “archivability” of the notices. Newspapers were once meticulous archivists. Public notices published in their newspapers could be found even years after publication. This is significant because lawsuits that end up in the courts often need access to these archived public notices to either prove their case or to defend themselves against one.

If newspapers do not archive past publications, what does that do to the argument that online posting of the public notices does not provide the archivability required of such notices? It sort of makes the argument moot and worthless to us in making the case to keep public notices in newspapers.

Some newspapers report that up to 40 percent of their revenues come from public notices. That’s a high and I suspect extraordinary number. Most are much less, but public notices still represent a significant revenue stream for newspapers and one newspapers can ill afford to lose. But they can be lost and they will be lost if we don’t do the things necessary to preserve the publication of public notices in newspapers.

And if that happens, then we’ll have nobody to blame but ourselves. I encourage you to take this seriously and heed the suggestions coming out of the PNRC symposium.

You will no doubt be glad that you did.

Have a great week!

Tom
Correction

The “In The News” column of the monthly Ad News publication of the Arkansas Press Association for September contained an error.

Geneva McDaniel was recently honored for 40 years of service with the Malvern Daily Record. She did not retire as the item indicated.

The Ad News regrets the error and is happy to set the record straight.

Deadline nears for essay contest entries

October 14 is the deadline for entries in the “It Can Wait” essay contest sponsored by the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation, participating APA newspapers, and AT&T Arkansas. The statewide winners of the contest will be announced Nov. 11.

The contest is for Arkansas students ages 14-19. They will write an editorial or opinion column highlighting the dangers of texting while driving and encouraging their peers to take the “It Can Wait” pledge.

The essay entry will answer the question, “Why is it important to take the It Can Wait pledge to never text and drive?” The piece will highlight the dangers of texting while driving and must include the following call to action, “Take the pledge to never text and drive at ItCanWait.com.”

The essay contest is open to any newspaper to submit entries, but the entries must be in by October 14. After this date, newspaper can announce their local winners.

Participating newspapers will first determine the local winner. Each winner’s entry will be delivered to ANF, and the ANF will then determine the statewide winners.

The prize will include $500, a special guided tour of the Arkansas State Capitol and a lunch for the student and their parents with leadership of AT&T, the ANF and their local newspaper publisher.

Also, newspapers may set their own prizes for local winners if they choose. Newspapers may publish local winning entries, and the statewide winning entry will be made available to APA member newspapers to publish at their discretion.

Newspapers should submit winning entries to Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com. Be sure to include your newspaper’s contact information.

Tips for better prospecting webinar topic

There’s an old business adage that you don’t grow your business by getting more from your existing customers. You grow your business by finding new customers.

Prospecting is a reality that all businesses, including newspapers, should be doing or should be doing better. A new Webinar coming from the Online media Campus will focus on this topic and offer insights in how to improve prospecting methodology.

Kelly Wirges, a 25-year veteran in the business who has helped companies increase sales and revenue in all facets of business, will lead the session. She has authored over 50 training programs, has customized materials for hundreds of companies.

Register for this Webinar at www.onlinemediacampus.com.

The Southern Newspaper Publishers Association and the Arkansas Press Association bring the Online Media Campus to you.

NEW ADDITION?

LET US KNOW!

We want to know about your new hires, retires and promotions!

Send your staffing changes to info@arkansaspress.org to be updated online and included in our weekly bulletin and monthly newsletter.

Throwback Thursday

APA HQ – This sign let motorists traveling in the 1700 block of Broadway in Little Rock know that this was the headquarters of the Arkansas Press Association. This was home for the APA until 2000. This sign is on display in the present APA headquarters at 411 South Victory Street in Little Rock.

APA MEMBERS

IN THE NEWS

Corrections

The “In The News” column of the monthly Ad News publication of the Arkansas Press Association for September contained an error.

Geneva McDaniel was recently honored for 40 years of service with the Malvern Daily Record. She did not retire as the item indicated.

The Ad News regrets the error and is happy to set the record straight.
Imagine waking up in a world without newspapers.

“Ha!” You say, “I haven’t gotten a newspaper in years.” But I’m not talking about just the paper delivered by carriers or the postal service. I’m talking about the news online, the links on social media, the email newsletter, the source cited in the television broadcast and the push notification on your phone. The word newspaper no longer reflects the media industry encompassed by the word.

It’s time to debunk the idea “Newspapers Are Dying.”

The newspaper business has changed a lot. But so what? Lots of industries go through ups-and-downs as technologies and customer preferences change. Name an industry – cars, airlines, energy, retail, accounting, transportation, construction – and the underlying economic drivers look a lot different than they did in the 1980s. That doesn’t mean they are “dead” businesses. People want and need the underlying products and services and the industries adapt to be successful in the new world.

We are living in the age of information. According to a University of Southern California study, Americans are absorbing five times more information a day than in 1986. And as the demand for quality news grows, storytelling evolves. I think that we have only just begun to explore the incredible upside of new tools in telling compelling news stories.

All evidence shows that people of all ages want and consume more news than ever. We need to focus on new ways to address the needs of audience. Legacy newspapers are considered trusted sources of information; we must continue to keep that trust as we experiment in the digital age. Live streaming, social media and video are just tools for better stories as journalists fight to keep readers in the know.

This week, we celebrate the 76th National Newspaper Week, where we celebrate newspapers as the “Way to Know.” It is a time to be grateful for the news carriers that trudge through the streets hours before you’ve had your first cup of coffee to deliver you the news. We take this week to realize that what we know comes from hardworking editors and journalists, who decide what information to put in front of us each day. We celebrate that we can count on them to go into a tragedy and bring us back hope. They make politics human and science easy to read.
Photo contest deadline extended one week

The deadline for entries in the APA’s annual photo contest has been extended one week until Friday, October 21.

Several entries have been received but nothing near the volume of entries received in the past. Some have requested more time to submit entries. Extending the deadline will not affect the production schedule of the Arkansas Media Directory for 2017, the cover of which will feature the winning entry in the annual contest.

“We’ve got some great news photographers in APA membership,” said Tom Larimer, executive director of the Arkansas Press Association. “The quality of work entered each year is very impressive and presents a real challenge to the panel of judges who pick the winners.”

APA members and associates may enter up to seven photos for consideration. The photos should be high resolution to reproduce better on the Directory cover. Cash prizes of $100, $50, and $25 are awarded the entries judged to be in the top three.

‘Women In Media’ Summit set Oct. 29

Arkansas Press Women has joined forces with the Society of Professional Journalist Student chapter and the Lemke Department of Journalism at the University of Arkansas to host a “Women in Media Summit Saturday, October 29, at the Arkansas Union at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. followed by a welcome at 9 a.m. and the keynote address by Raquel Rutledge, winner of the Pulitzer Prize in Local Reporting in 2010. Rutledge won the coveted prize for a series of reports that revealed fraud in Wisconsin’s child-care subsidy program while a reporter for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

A panel of professional journalists, including Rutledge and Arkansas Business Editor Gwen Moritz, will also discuss their work in media.

All activities will take place on the fifth floor of the Arkansas Union in room 504 and rooms 507 and 508. Registration for the day will be $25 for professionals and $10 for students.

Register by email to Debbie Miller at debbiemiller25@cox.net and pay by cash or check at the door, or pay by check by mailing registration to Arkansas Press Women, 208 Lyndal Lane, Bentonville, AR 71712.

More information on the event can also be found on the Arkansas Press Women Facebook page, www.facebook.com/ArkansasPressWomen/?fref=ts.
There’s an old adage about “change” being the only constant. That could be said for a lot of things. Well, most things probably, but it could sure apply to newspapers and newspaper associations regarding how we go about doing what it is we do in an ever-evolving work and societal environment.

After recently attending two back-to-back newspaper conferences, one of the common threads in the dialogue at both was “social media” and what it means to newspapers. That’s as in how newspapers use social media, and how social media can create even more competition for both readers and advertisers. Of course, that’s just what newspapers need.

It never ceases to amaze me the changes that have taken place during my newspaper career, and we can be assured that is not about to stop. For one thing, those of us who labored in the newspaper business before the late 90s didn’t have the Internet or email, and of course there was no social media.

Now we have them in abundance and so the Internet was added to the list of things that were or are to doom newspapers as a viable medium. The Internet joined radio, television and cable TV as outside factors that would remove the need for newspapers. None have really done an effective job of that, but each did their part to change the way we do business.

None, however, have eroded the profitability of newspapers like the Internet and its attending digital media. The old, reliable newspaper model became out-dated seemingly overnight.

In those wild and crazy 90s, newspapers were rocking and rolling. Newspaper acquisitions were almost daily news items. The profitability of newspapers was attractive to investors who went after newspapers like sharks when there’s blood in the water.

The price paid for newspapers of just about any size was never higher than it was in the mid-90s when all this was going on. That was a point in my career when I was working on a team buying newspapers. It was a highly charged, not to mention highly competitive market at the time. It was fun and it was exciting, but it all came to an end around the turn of the century. Well, maybe not an end but it had certainly begun tapering off by then and truthfully it hasn’t stopped tapering.

In the wake of all that came a series of newspaper mergers. Joint operating agreements became almost a thing of the past. Where once there was plenty of business and profitability, to go around in such agreements, all of a sudden there wasn’t enough to justify or keep viable one newspaper in the agreement.

Newsrooms began shrinking at newspapers of all sizes. A whole lot of career journalists found themselves out looking for new careers. In a sense that’s still happening.

Now think back to the 90s, and just how short a time ago that was. Think about the changes that have gone on in our industry since then. It’s mind-boggling. It is especially so when you consider that we are an industry always considered to be staid, stodgy, old-fashioned, and out-dated is now trying to compete in a modern and rapidly evolving digital world. Putting ink in paper every day or every week seems an inefficient model to continue to some, mostly younger consumers who don’t wake up in the morning excited to see what’s in their newspaper. They’re more excited to see what’s on their smart phone or their computer.

Still, newspapers appeal to a vast audience. Frankly, it’s not the audience it once was and the demographics have definitely changed over the years. But newspapers still have a vast audience who depend on them for accurate news and information, whether it is delivered in the traditional printed product or through some digital means. It’s still the newspaper on which they depend.

Attending these national conferences for the past few years has been a study in the change faced by newspapers and how those in key positions in the industry are reacting to it. There were a few years earlier in this century when there was a lot of concern on the faces of those attending. Frankly, we were at a bit of a loss on how to respond to this latest challenge.

Now, however, you see a completely different demeanor when newspaper people from across the country gather. Yes, they agree newspapers have challenges, but there remain so many opportunities for newspapers it has become highly encouraging, empowering even for those still in the industry.

Change has always come hand-in-hand with opportunity. Yes, it can be inconvenient but it is a matter of recognizing that change is inevitable and our challenge is how to make that change work FOR us instead of dooming us to a long and uncomfortable slide into obscurity.

At any rate you certainly see and hear a lot more optimism being shared when people in the newspaper industry gather these days. There’s a new spring to the step, and an energy that wasn’t evident there for a while. It’s all very encouraging, I can assure you.

This column began with an old adage regarding change. There is another that comes to mind: “The more things change they more they stay the same.”

In this scenario the only “things” that stay the same are the people still laboring to produce a quality newspaper in a world of vastly fragmented audiences. Developing that newspaper audience, or re-developing it perhaps, has become a new challenge for newspapers of all sizes.

That challenge will definitely be on the table for discussion from those fully immersed in it when the ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference convenes Nov. 10-11 in Vicksburg, Miss. If you haven’t attended this conference in the past, now would be a good time to begin. This is where audience development for newspapers is discussed and ideas shared.

Newspaper managers from all levels will be there to talk about what works for them and to find out what is working for others. This conference and others like it have never been more important for newspapers because the challenges we face today have never been with us before, and the solutions can be elusive.

Have a great week!

Tom
Today’s the day For ‘Roadshow’ event

Over 50 registered ahead of attending the fourth and final 2016 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) “Roadshow” event set Thursday (today) in the Brewer-Hegeman Conference Center on the campus of the University of Central Arkansas in Conway.

The event will be from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

Deputy Attorney General Beth Walker will address the FOIA as it pertains to open meetings, and Assistant Attorney General Matt Barker will discuss the law pertaining to open records.

Attorney General Leslie Rutledge will be unavailable for the event.

APA Executive Director Tom Larimer will kick-off the event, offering the official welcome and relating a brief history of the FOIA before introducing the attorney general personnel who will conduct the sessions.

This will be the fourth “roadshow” event of the year. It follows sessions in West Memphis, Russellville, and Hope.

Several APA newspapers promote ‘It Can Wait’ essay contest

Several APA member newspapers, more than last year, are promoting the “It Can Wait” essay contest to call attention to the dangers of texting and driving.

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation, participating APA newspapers, and AT&T Arkansas are sponsors of the contest. The statewide winners of the contest will be announced Nov. 11.

The contest is for Arkansas students ages 14-19. They will write an editorial or opinion column highlighting the dangers of texting while driving and encouraging their peers to take the “It Can Wait” pledge.

The essay entry will answer the question, “Why is it important to take the It Can Wait pledge to never text and drive?” The piece will highlight the dangers of texting while driving and must include the following call to action, “Take the pledge to never text and drive at ItCanWait.com.”

A $500 prize goes to the state winner of the contest. The winner also gets a guided tour of the Arkansas State Capitol and a lunch for the student and their parents with leadership of AT&T, the ANF and their local newspaper publisher.

The deadline for the contest is October 14.

This is when participating newspapers can announce their local winners.

This is the second year for the contest in Arkansas.

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At The Rural Blog we watch events and issues, but also trends and ideas in rural America—especially those that offer opportunities for localizing stories. We’ve had several examples lately.

*The Wall Street Journal* reported on a trend you also may have noticed, but didn’t see as a story: a rural boom in electronic commerce, which makes it easier for your readers to buy goods that may not be available locally. The downside is freight charges, which are often higher for more remote areas, and the damage that e-commerce does to local retailers. We excerpted the story at http://bit.ly/2cSs5oN.

Stateline, the wonderful news service of The Pew Charitable Trusts, had an interesting story about the difficulties farmers and independent repair shops face because manufacturers aren’t required to make parts and repair information available to customers and independent repair people. I’ll bet you can find some such people among your own readers. Read the story at http://bit.ly/2d46Tzr.

**Maps and data:** Some of the easiest stories to localize are national stories with local data. The Washington Post wrapped up its five-part series on rising death rates among middle-aged whites with an interactive, county-by-county map. A link to it is at http://bit.ly/2cCz5oK; one of the stories, focusing on one rural county, is excerpted the story at http://bit.ly/2cZ9cEV.

If your state didn’t expand Medicaid under federal health reform, that was more likely to hurt rural hospitals, a study found. Read about it at http://bit.ly/2cdQbxv.

**Running elections:** This is the most important election year of the four-year cycle. How well does your state run elections? The Pew Trusts ranked the states on 17 performance indicators and concluded that North Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin did best. The worst were Alabama (by far) and California. See your state and the story at http://bit.ly/2cNmrp6.

There has been much controversy about voter-identification laws, ostensibly designed to prevent vote fraud, though studies have found that fraud—defined as multiple votes being cast by a single person, or an ineligible person casting a ballot—is very rare. Still, a lot of voters think it’s a real threat, a Post-ABC poll found. We reported it at http://bit.ly/2cB4TxE.

Most Americans also think the country has a lot more immigrants and Muslims than it really does, an Ipsos poll found. See http://bit.ly/2d2hZIiH.

**Punishment and crime:** Schools still use corporal punishment in 21 states, and it’s a largely rural phenomenon. Among all the school districts that paddle, just over half the enrollment is in rural schools where at least one student was physically punished in 2013-14, Education Week reported. We excerpted the story at http://bit.ly/2cSw6JD.

*If you’re convicted of a drug crime in a non-metropolitan county, you’re 50 percent more likely to go to prison, and for longer, The New York Times found. That’s a change from a decade ago, when people in rural, suburban and urban counties were about equally likely to go to prison. Now, there is a “growing disagreement about how harshly crime should be punished,” especially when it comes to drugs, the Times reported. Its story has a clearly illustrative chart and an interactive, county-by-county map. Link to it at http://bit.ly/2czOoJs.

**Safety issues:** Many rural residents have persuaded state legislatures to raise rural speed limits, but that appears to be backfiring as highway deaths have increased and the National Safety Council blames higher speed limits. Distracted driving is also blamed. We picked up a Post story and linked to several previous blog items about states increasing speed limits, at http://bit.ly/2cNmEZv.

Youth soccer is becoming an increasingly popular but dangerous sport, with emergency-room cases rising 78 percent from 1990 to 2014, a study found. During the same period, annual rates for all soccer injuries rose 111 percent. Get the details at http://bit.ly/2cN8Sr.

**Good groceries:** That noun can mean a store, or food, and we’ve had blog items about both lately. A pair of rural Colorado towns has created models for success that could serve similar areas facing a “food desert,” High Country News reported. We picked up the story at http://bit.ly/2czTJB2.

Community-supported agriculture is a system in which subscribers pay up front, or a monthly fee, for fresh produce from local growers. A pilot program in Kentucky found that if employers gave employees money to spend on fresh, local produce that boosted their health and local agriculture. Sounds like a great idea! Read about it at http://bit.ly/2cSaIF.

If you do or see stories that are relevant across rural areas, please send them to me at al.cross@uky.edu.

*Al Cross edited and managed weekly newspapers before spending 26 years at The (Louisville) Courier-Journal and serving as president of the Society of Professional Journalists. Since 2004 he has been director of the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues, based at the University of Kentucky. See www.RuralJournalism.org.*

*Guest Column: Into the Issues: Creating Local Content from National Stories*

By Al Cross

*Arkansas Publisher Weekly*
Photo contest deadline is tomorrow

Tomorrow, Friday, Oct. 21, is the deadline for entries in the APA’s annual photo contest to find cover photo for the 2017 Arkansas Media Directory.

APA has for years held this contest featuring photography from APA member and associate photographers. A panel of judges determine the winning entries, and APA awards $100 to the first place photo, $50 for second and $25 for third. The top entry will also adorn the cover of the Media Directory for 2017.

The deadline will be at the close of business Friday. Submit entries by email to info@arkansaspress.org, making certain that the entries are high resolution.

Wildy family, state winner, now southeast title holders

The David Wildy Family, the 2016 Arkansas Farm Family of the Year, have now been named the Swisher Sweet/Sunbelt Expo Southeast Farmer of the Year family. The announcement came from the annual Sunbelt Ag Expo held this week in Moultrie, Georgia.

The Wildy family operates a diversified row crop farm near Manila in Mississippi County.

The Wildlys become the second Arkansas Farm Family of the Year to be so honored. The Brian and Nan Kirksey family of Clark County won the honor in 2008.

The Arkansas honoree competed for the Southeast title against families from nine other states in the Southeast part of the country. The Wildy family was named the state honoree at the annual convention last December in Little Rock, and was representing the state in the Southeast contest.

The Arkansas Press Association is one of the founding partners of the Arkansas Farm Family of the Year contest when it began in 1947.

Pulitzer winner to join panel at ‘Women in Media’ event

Raquel Rutledge, Pulitzer Prize winner for Local Reporting in 2010, will be the keynote speaker at the “Women in Media Summit” set for Saturday, October 29, at the Arkansas Union at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. Registration opens at 8:30 a.m.

Rutledge won the prize for a series of reports that revealed fraud in Wisconsin’s child-care subsidy program while a reporter for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

She will join Arkansas Business Editor Gwen Moritz on a panel to discuss their work in media.

All activities will take place on the fifth floor of the Arkansas Union in room 504 and rooms 507 and 508. Registration for the day will be $25 for professionals and $10 for students.

Register by email to Debbie Miller at debbiemiller25@cox.net and pay by cash or check at the door, or pay by check by mailing registration to Arkansas Press Women, 208 Lyndal Lane, Bentonville, AR 71712.

More information on the event can also be found on the Arkansas Press Women Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/ArkansasPressWomen/?fref=ts.
A few days ago I was at lunch with a regular group I dine with come lunchtime about once a week.

None of the regulars are in the newspaper business, but they are, for the most part, managers of other associations. One of them brought a surprise to the lunch recently, a surprise for me.

**Tom Parker** at the Arkansas Petroleum Council had just returned from his 50th class reunion. Tom is a graduate of Yellville-Summit High School. We’re the same age and graduated from high school in the same year. We played basketball against each other in high school and remain friends today.

Anyway, Tom brought a newspaper clipping from the *Arkansas Gazette* from around 1966 when I held a state office in the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) high school organization. **Tommy Johnson** of Yellville and **Danny Keeter** of Mountain Home were also featured in the article, and all of our photos accompanied.

I don’t even recall this being in the newspaper at the time, but perhaps I did and just forgot about it. At any rate, I do not recall saying the things to the reporter on which I was quoted.

Tom found the article in a scrapbook someone brought to his class reunion. He had gone to school with Tommy Johnson and of course knew Danny Keeter in Mountain home, and when he saw my photo also with the story he was drawn to it. He took a cell phone photo of it and brought it to lunch. We all got a big chuckle out of the photo and the lame quote that attributed to me.

And I say “of course” he knew Danny Keeter because Danny was quite an athlete, ending up as a point guard for the Razorbacks. Danny and I had also played against each other in high school and had become good friends.

Danny and I had also travelled in a group to the national FBLA convention in Cincinnati in the summer before our senior year in high school. It turned out to be a memorable trip.

Danny was also a good baseball player and fan, and as luck would have it the Reds were in town playing a series with the New York Mets at the old Crosley Field when we were there. Danny asked me if I wanted to skip the evening events at the convention and take in a ball game. Of course it sounded like an adventure so I was in without hesitation.

As it turned out, the game became one for the history books.

**Jim Maloney** was pitching for the Reds and **Frank Lary** for the Mets. Both men pitched no hitters through nine innings, but in the tenth **Johnny Lewis** pounded a Maloney pitch that struck the center field wall just above the home run line to end the game.

The game became a footnote in history because both pitchers had pitched no hitters. Initially both were given credit for no hitters, but Maloney’s was later removed when the rule was refined that it wasn’t a no-hitter if it was broken up in extra innings. Bummer.

During the game, **Pete Rose** the volatile second baseman of the Mets, got into a heck of a fistfight with the Mets first baseman **Ed Kranepool**. It was quite a spectacle and added to the drama of the evening.

Anyway, there we were some 50 years later showing up in a newspaper clipping discovered by an old friend and colleague. I make that just another example of newspapers recording for posterity the events of our lives, even if we don’t remember all of them. They certainly serve as great reminders of something in which we were involved some 50 years ago.

This is just what newspapers do and have done since day one. We cover readers from the cradle to the grave, publishing when they’re born, when they die and some high points in their life in the interim.

And I still think that’s just pretty darned cool.

One other quick side story to this one in Cincinnati. Danny and I had taken a bus to Crosley Field and neither of us had a ticket to the game. When we arrived we were trying to figure out which line at the ballpark we needed to be in to buy a ticket when an elderly couple approached us and asked if we were looking for tickets.

I told them we sure were and the gentleman handed me two tickets. When I tried to pay for them he wouldn’t have it.

It turns out they had four season tickets to the Reds games and on this night two of them were going begging until he found us.

The tickets were right behind the dugout on the third base side, some of the best seats in the house. And sitting right next to us was that nice, elderly couple who had given us the tickets, a kindness I obviously have never forgotten.

Okay, one more sort of related story since I’m apparently in the story telling mood.

A few years back when I lived in the Nashville, Tenn. area I would sometimes travel with the Nashville Predators hockey team when they were making a swing through three NHL opponent cities in Canada. During those trips I spent a lot of time with the Predators broadcast team, **Pete Weber** and **Terry Crisp**.

Weber was a walking encyclopedia of sports history like I’ve never seen before or since. During one of the trips I related this Cincinnati Reds story for Weber and Crisp over dinner. Weber listened intently to my story until I wrapped it up by saying that **Denny Napoleon** had hit the 10th inning home run off of Jim Maloney to win the game.

“It was Johnny Lewis,” Weber said. I wanted to argue but I knew better. The point is he knew who hit a home run in an obscure game played June 14, 1965 in Cincinnati. I told you he was a walking encyclopedia.

He did this kind of thing all the time and I never caught him being wrong. That’s likely why he is so good as what he does for the Predators, and why he has done it since the very first Predators NHL game in 1998.

Have a great week!

Tom
ArkLaMiss hotel deadline looms; Register online

The deadline to reserve a hotel room at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss. and get the $69 room rate for the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing Conference is Monday, October 31. So if you’ve been waiting until the last minute, we are now very near it.

The conference kicks off with the Newspaper Managers’ Roundtable that starts at 9 a.m. Thursday, November 11, in the Magnolia room upstairs in the Ameristar casino boat. That session will last a couple of hours before adjourning for lunch.

Immediately after lunch, at precisely 1 p.m., the traditional ArkLaMiss program fare will begin, including Helen Sosniecki on Postal Services changes, and Gary Sosniecki on the electronic side of newspaper distribution. This presentation will include a discussion on how to increase revenues on your website.

‘FOIA Wiki’ aims to simplify fed FOIA use

A new FOIA Wiki resource for the Federal Freedom of Information Act users is now available for free, a collaborative project of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press with the support of the FOIA Project, MuckRock, FOIA Mapper, and soon perhaps even you.

The idea for the FOIA Wiki was conceived over years ago when it occurred to some users that the FOIA, an incredibly complex statute was making it difficult for the public to use effectively.

Adam Marshall, the Knight Litigation Attorney at the Reporters Committee, said the founders of the Wiki want only to simplify some of the processes for utilizing the FOIA to gather information.

Click on the links above and you’ll find a main page that lists seemingly every imaginable FOIA topic, from the law’s history to the nine exemptions. The page will even guide you through the process of making an FOIA request.

The FOIA Wiki also includes a page for just about every federal agency where you might send a FOIA request.

The site also features a forum, too, where users can discuss common FOIA problems and solutions, all of which could be fed back into the main pages.

Times Dispatch trivia contest promotes reader interaction

The Times Dispatch of Walnut Ridge uses a trivia contest to promote interactivity with readers and it continues to attract entries on a weekly basis.

The contest is nothing new for the newspaper. They’ve been running it for approximately five years, which is a long time for this type of community newspaper promotion.

“We ask a simple question online with the answer being from a news story or feature that is generally available to readers on our free website,” says Times Dispatch Publisher John Bland. “Answers are submitted online and the winner is picked randomly.”

“Local businesses are asked to donate small prizes, such as a free barbecue plate, milkshakes or pizza,” Bland adds.

The winner is announced each week in the TD print edition. The prize won by the entry is also announced, as well as the business providing the prize.

“We’ve been running the Trivia contest for approximately five years,” Bland says. “We like the interaction it offers our readers.

“Our hope is that it gets subscribers and especially non-subscribers engaged in reading our newspaper,” he concludes.

Tell Us About Your Promotion

If you have a successful promotion you would like to share, send the details to Tom Larimer, APA executive director, at tom@arkansaspress.org.

Who knows? What works for your newspaper may work for another APA member.
Report: New type of newspaper ownership causing concerns

A new report released from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and authored by 2016 SuperConvention presenter Penny Muse Abernathy, raises some concerns about the new type of newspaper ownership.

Abernathy addressed some of the information in this report and from the book she authored, “Saving Community Journalism: The Path to Profitability” on her visit to the APA convention this summer in Bentonville.

According to the new report, private equity funds, hedge funds and other large investment groups, which lack journalism expertise and a traditional sense of civic mission have been aggressively buying and managing local newspapers in recent years, raising questions about the vitality of community journalism and the future of democracy at the grassroots levels.

The report is based on analysis of data from 2004 to 2016 collected on more than 9,500 local newspapers.

Among the findings:

- Since 2004, more than a third of the country’s newspapers have changed ownership, some sold two or more times.
- The largest newspaper companies are larger than ever, and still growing. Some of the largest chains have been assembled by investment fund managers, with newspapers representing only a fraction of their vast business portfolios.
- The largest investment groups tend to employ a standard formula in managing their newspapers – aggressive cost cutting pair with financial restructuring.
- Most newspapers owned and operated by investment groups are located in economically struggling small and mid-sized communities where the newspaper is the primary source of local news.

There are more findings in the report. Much more, actually.

For more information or to view the entire report online, go to www.newspaperownership.com.

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Guest Column: No Ode to Old Gazette Building, Only Epitaph

By Les Minor, Editor of the Texarkana Gazette

Since we moved to our new digs on the corner of State Line Avenue and Broad Street, many people have asked me if I will miss the old Texarkana Gazette building, a place to which I figuratively toted my lunch pail for more than three decades. It is a singular place in many ways to the community, one that is inevitably tied to its history, fortunes locked in an uncomfortable but purposeful embrace. I am always astonished by the number of people I meet that have had some kind of association with the Gazette.

Maybe they worked as a newspaper carrier or clerk, in the pressroom or mailroom, selling ads or as a summer job. Maybe their father, uncle, greatgrandpappy or next door neighbor worked for the newspaper. Maybe they took one of the once-unforgettable Gazette tours that for years seemed a prerequisite to graduating grammar school.

It has its critics, of course, as all newspapers do, but they always knew where to find us, hunkered down in the morning shadow of the Hotel Grim, for 85 years or more. Love it or hate it, it was always there, its staff churning out news daily in an uninterrupted cadence. It changed, but never moved. It has been as steady as the dates on a calendar, never deviating, never flitting around. It was a place where many an aspiring journalist got their chance, including myself, and thus is ripe for sentimental attachment.

It was where I cut my teeth as a young journalist and learned to refine talents I didn’t even know I had. I met my wife on the newsroom floor. That’s pretty significant.

But do I miss it? For me, that’s overreach. It was a job site, a workplace, an information warehouse, an office complex and manufacturing plant all squeezed into an unassuming package. It remade itself several times over the years, functions shifted within the building, offices added and subtracted and moved around, entrances realigned and remodeled.

Did I love the place? Yes, in ways big and small, personal and communal. Will I miss it? Not a bit. On the outside, it had a few nice features, but inside its walls, the goal was functionality—high praise in some corners. Essential and without frills, it was built to do a specific job. Aesthetics did not factor into the thinking, I was mostly OK with that. I’m not all that difficult to please when it comes to creature comforts. But sometimes aging can’t be reversed, or is cost-prohibitive, or is not practical or progressive. It is neither unkind nor untrue to say the old Gazette building had seen better days.

Since the move, I have pulled into the parking lot behind the old building on several occasions, chuckled, then redirected myself to my new locale. Old habits are hard to break; some mornings, the car seems to drive itself along a well-rutted path I have navigated almost unconsciously most of my adult life.

But do I miss the old haunt?

When I first moved to Texarkana, I took a small upstairs apartment on Wood Street, north of Wadley Hospital. It was nothing special I lived above a real estate office and a blind man’s apartment. The rent was $200 a month, which included utilities. It was climate controlled by window air conditioners and space heaters and had ratty brown carpet and bleak furnishings, but was functional and cheap. I eventually moved on to other, less humble abodes, and it was eventually torn down to make way for a parking lot. I pass this place where I once lived most evenings on my way home. On occasion, I slow down and look at where it once stood and remember it fondly. But I would not want to live there again. That time has passed. It was time to move on then. It is time to move on now. I won’t look back. I won’t miss it.

At least not very often.

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PROSPECTING THAT PAYS’ TOPIC FOR WEBINAR

GUEST COLUMN
SOME THOUGHTS AFTER ONE YEAR ON JOB
By Dave Chavern

THROWBACK THURSDAY

APRIL 23, 2016

Hope, Arkadelphia alter publication frequency

In a recent open letter to subscribers signed by Senior Group Publisher Ed Graves, the Hope Star and the Daily Siftings Herald of Arkadelphia announced a change in the frequency of their respective publications. Both dailies will be becoming non-daily newspapers.

The changes will go into effect Oct. 31 for the Arkadelphia newspaper and Nov. 2 for the Hope Star. Both newspapers cited the “ever-growing expense of printing and delivery…” of a daily newspaper for the changes.

Both newspapers will now publish twice a week. Both presently publish Monday through Friday. The new schedule will have both newspaper publishing mid-week on Wednesdays, and the second publication of the week on Saturdays.

The letter also offered a conversion rate for existing subscribers, extending the time left on their daily subscriptions.

“Change is difficult but our goal still remains the same,” Graves wrote in letters to subscribers. “We want to be able to give you the best product we can, while retaining a viable business model…”

The changes in Hope and Arkadelphia brings to 22 the number of daily newspapers remaining in Arkansas, and raises the number of non-dailies to 101, a number that includes eight semi-weeklies, 90 weeklies, and three free circulation weeklies.

‘Women In Media’ event this weekend at UofA venue

There’s still time to register, but precious little, to attend the “Women in Media Summit” Saturday, October 29, at the Arkansas Union on the campus of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. Registration for the event opens at 8:30 a.m. on the fifth floor of the Union.

Raquel Rutledge, Pulitzer Prize winner for Local Reporting in 2010, will be the keynote speaker at the “Women in Media Summit” set for Saturday, October 29, at the Arkansas Union at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. Registration opens at 8:30 a.m.

Rutledge won the prize for a series of reports that revealed fraud in Wisconsin’s child-care subsidy program while a reporter for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

She will join Arkansas Business Editor Gwen Moritz on a panel to discuss their work in media.

All activities will take place on the fifth floor of the Arkansas Union in room 504 and rooms 507 and 508. Registration for the day will be $25 for professionals and $10 for students.

Register by email to Debbie Miller at debbiemiller25@cox.net and pay by cash or check at the door, or pay by check by mailing registration to Arkansas Press Women, 208 Lyndal Lane, Bentonville, AR 71712.

More information on the event can also be found on the Arkansas Press Women Facebook page.

Send Us Your News!

Promote your staff, your newspaper.

The Arkansas Press Association encourages members to send news of staff changes or other happenings and associated photos to info@arkansaspress.org for inclusion in The Publisher Weekly and AdNews.
Tom Larimer's Potpourri

Non-daily newspapers, at least those possessing Periodicals Class mailing permits from the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), have the entire month of October to publish their USPS Form 3526, the State of Ownership, Management and Circulation. Since this is the last week in the month, if you haven’t done it already, you may be late in doing so.

The report is a requirement of the USPS for possessing and continuing to use Periodicals Class mail. This is the class that most periodicals, like newspapers and magazines, use for mailing their products to end users, most often call subscribers. It’s less expensive to mail in the Periodicals Class mail stream that it would be to mail newspapers through First Class mail, with letters and such. In fact it is hugely less expensive.

If only the First Class mail was available, periodicals like newspapers would not likely use the post office. Either that or they would have to charge subscribers a lot more money for their subscriptions, and thereby would, in all likelihood, lose subscribers.

So, Periodicals Class gives the newspaper options to mail at discounted rates, and with even some discounts built into the Periodicals Rate structure.

The trade-off for this privilege includes some hoops through which newspapers must jump. The Form 3526 filing is one of them. It’s important to file the form with the post office and to publish the form in the newspapers ONLY if the newspaper wishes to keep its Periodicals Class permit.

Moreover, there’s also this: the APA takes from the Form 3526 filings the circulation numbers that appear in the annual Arkansas Media Directory, a publication APA produces each year. It is the only comprehensive Media Directory in the state in that it includes not only traditional newspapers and college publications, but also specialty publications and broadcast outlets with contact information for each.

Inevitably when we distribute the Media Directory each year we get calls from some newspapers wanting to know where we got the circulation number we used in the Directory. The answer is simple: from you. We take the circulation numbers off of the Form 3526 filings for each newspaper, so if that number is accurate the number in the Directory will be accurate.

Of course this deals with the paid distribution newspapers only since free distribution newspapers don’t actually qualify for Periodicals Class permits. Newspapers using Periodicals Class mail must be 50 percent plus one paid. In other words just over 50 percent of their publications must be distributed to people who are paying to receive it. Free publications distribute largely through the Standard Class mail stream, the old Third Class mail, if they mail at all. Some rely solely on rack and counter distribution. Those listed as APA members are required to have an independently audited circulation report completed to attest their posted circulation numbers are accurate.

Daily newspapers are required to publish Form 3526 in the first ten days of October. The non-dailies have the entire month, meaning that this week was it. I hope you got yours published.

If you want to get the latest on changes in USPS regulations regarding the mailing and reporting on newspapers mailed you may want to consider attending the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 10-11 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

That will of course be on the agenda for discussion, along with several other topics of interest to newspaper people faced with adapting to a rapidly changing business.

If you’re feeling a little over-whelmed by all the changes, you’ll find at the ArkLaMiss that you’re not alone. That’s why so many show up to put everything on the table so to speak. They’ll talk about current challenges and potential solutions to competing successfully in today’s newspaper environment.

That’s one thing about newspaper people, they don’t mind at all talking shop. There’s a lot of that going on at the ArkLaMiss, both in the organized sessions and in the networking that goes on in between.

This will be my 13th consecutive ArkLaMiss to attend. Over that time I’ve watched this conference grow from a discussion of newspaper circulation and how to sell the product to much more diverse topics for conversation and presentation. Circulation is still addressed, without question, but there’s much more on the agenda now to greatly assist the newspaper manager at all levels including marketing and audience development.

It’s a great gathering. If you’ve never tried it this might be a good time to start.

Get more information on the ArkLaMiss conference at http://tinyurl.com/zlmaymt.

For a few weeks now we’ve been publishing some old photos from past APA events in this weekly publication. It has been fun doing and we’ve received some positive feedback from the series.

We burned through the first stack of photos we published so this past week I was spending some time perusing another stack of old photos. I found some great photos of APA events, some many years ago, but I didn’t always have the identifications of the APA members involved, if they even were APA members.

So I dug out the old bound volumes of the Arkansas Publisher magazines, in which most of these photos were originally published, and began looking for identifications. This was quite a walk down memory lane, and it also reminded me of how so many of our stalwart members who at one time were fixtures at APA gatherings are no longer with us.

I found a photo of myself as a nine-year-old attending an APA convention outing, and one of my older brother and my dad at the keyboard of a Linotype at the family’s newspaper operation in Green Forest. The photo was published in 1960.

The end result of another stack of photos we can now use in the Arkansas Publisher Weekly so you can look for this series to continue for the foreseeable future. At some point of course we’ll run out of old photos, and now no new photos are being added to the stack.

Since the switch to digital, nobody makes prints anymore. Images are consigned to “the cloud” or to some storage medium. Perhaps we’ll be perusing those someday to find images to continue this series, but thankfully that will be a long time coming because we still have a lot of the old photos.

So enjoy!

Have a great week!

Tom
Coggins now editor at Advance-Monticellonian

Harold Coggins has been promoted to editor of the Advance-Monticellonian in Monticello.

Coggins, a native of England (Lonoke County), joined the newspaper in January 2013 as sports editor, a position he held for almost four years before his promotion to editor. A 1977 journalism graduate of Arkansas State University, he has served on or been a correspondent for newspaper staffs in Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana and Missouri.

Advance-Monticellonian Publisher Tom White said Harold certainly deserves this promotion. He has taken on more and more of the duties of the editor position in the last year.

“He is one of the hardest workers I have ever been associated with,” White said. “Most days he is usually the first one at the office, in the wee hours of the morning, and the last one to leave. His dedication to our readers, this community, journalism and this newspaper are beyond compare.”

At the 2016 Arkansas Press Association convention in Bentonville earlier this year, Coggins won 15 awards, including five first places. In total, he has won 25 APA awards, six of them being first-place plaques, since he joined the staff in 2013.

Coggins is very familiar with Southeast Arkansas, having served as a sports reporter for the Pine Bluff Commercial from 1980-85 and from 1987-89, as well as his service to the Advance-Monticellonian. He also served as Assistant Media Services Director at the University of Arkansas at Monticello under Jim Brewer in 1985-86.

“I thank God for this opportunity, and I’d like to thank Tom and David (Smith, president of Smith Newspapers, Inc. of Fort Payne, Ala., which owns the Advance-Monticellonian) for their faith in me,” Coggins said. “And I would be remiss not to thank the late Frank Lightfoot, who was sports editor of the Commercial when I started my professional journalistic career. Frank took a chance on me after my stroke and taught me everything I know today. I still draw on that teaching; I miss Frank every day.”

Nevada County Picayune announces staff changes

The Nevada County Picayune in Prescott has announced some staff changes, including the naming of Richard “Rick” Kennedy editor of the weekly publication.

The 32-year media veteran also currently holds the title of editor of the Hope Star. Kennedy replaces James Leigh who left the post earlier this month.

Kennedy has worked in television, radio and newspapers, and his career path has taken him to positions across Arkansas and nine other states.

Hope Star sports editor Gerren Smith will now assist the Picayune in coverage of Prescott High School sports, and reporter Rachel Wright will be providing coverage of other beats in Nevada County.

ArkLaMiss hotel deadline extended

If you’re planning on attending the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 10-11 in Vicksburg, Miss. but haven’t as yet made a hotel reservation, take heart. It’s not too late.

The original deadline for reserving a hotel room at the Ameristar Casino Hotel, site for the conference, was Wed., Oct. 26. That deadline has now been extended to Fri., Oct. 28 to reserve a room at the $69 conference rate.

For registration information as well as hotel contact information visit http://tinyurl.com/hf2rme.

The conference kicks off with the Newspaper Managers’ Roundtable that starts at 9 a.m. Thursday, November 11, in the Magnolia room upstairs in the Ameristar casino boat. That session will last a couple of hours before adjourning for lunch.

Don’t forget: Upload those public notices

APA member newspapers are reminded to upload their public notices to the APA public notices website, http://www.publicnoticeads.com/ar.

If you are not presently doing this, please begin doing so immediately. If you need assistance uploading your public notices, email info@arkansaspress.org or call the APA office at 501-374-1500 and ask for assistance.

‘Prospecting That Pays’ topic for webinar

“Prospecting That Pays” is the title of an upcoming Webinar from the Online Media Campus, a group with which the APA partners for continuing education.

The Webinar is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 11, from 1 to 3 p.m. CST. APA members get a discount off the $35 registration fee for the event. Nov. 8 is the deadline to register.

Kelly Wirges, a 25-year veteran trainer in sales and revenue growth in all facets of business, will lead the Webinar.

The session will provide a proven prospecting methodology that not only creates sales opportunities, but also is easily implemented. This session has been described as a “must” for those who sell and those who lead sales teams.

Register for this event at www.onlinemediacampus.com.
This time last year, I was just starting at the Newspaper Association of America. When I took the job, one prominent news columnist compared it to being “captain the Titanic.” I never saw it that way.

I always maintained the future of news is bright, and now, a year in, I’m more optimistic than ever. The last year at this association has been one of rapid change. We became the News Media Alliance, a change that was long overdue; we’ve reimagined our organizational identity, including expanding our membership to include digital news media organizations; and we have created new products to provide value to our members.

And over the last year I have learned so very much.

1. Many people don’t know where news comes from.

Whether its people who consume news through Facebook and then say they “don’t read a newspaper”, or people who say that the media is biased for a candidate when every bad thing they know about that candidate also came from the news media – it is still surprising to me the extent to which people don’t connect the information they know to the efforts of journalists at news media organizations.


The historic culture of the newspaper business was to start each day with a whole bunch of blank pieces of paper. You had to recreate the product anew every 24 hours. That means that when a news organization decides to try something new, they have the ability to implement it very quickly. This carries over to the digital space, where newspaper media are leading the way in product and service innovation, content creation, advertising and events, to name just a few.

3. The world of advertising is full of misguided ideas.

We continually hear things like “digital ad inventory is infinite” and “context doesn’t matter.” Since coming on board with the News Media Alliance, I’ve advocated for an improvement in the digital advertising market. Traditional online ads can be jarring, annoying and intrusive, especially on a mobile device. There is no reason advertisements shouldn’t fit the form and function of the platform. Our members are working to make ads more interactive and part of the overall experience. In addition, the News Media Alliance recently joined the Coalition for Better Ads, which is dedicated to improving users’ digital ad experience. In my next year, I look forward to continuing to champion the fight against bad ads and ad blockers.

4. Evidence shows that people value powerful and deep enterprise journalism above all other kind of news.

You want to tell me newspapers are a bad investment? You’re not just investing in paper and ink; you’re investing in the future of society. We need long-form, investigative pieces. The cost of not being an informed public is too high. Just consider the New York Times and Washington Post political reporting this year, or the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reporting on events in Ferguson, or the Tampa Bay Times reporting on restaurants that lie about food sourcing. There are just so many examples of news organizations making huge investments so that the public gets the information it needs.

5. People want and consume more news than ever and we will build upon that demand to drive a successful future for the industry.

We hear about people’s attention spans being shorter than a goldfish. But that doesn’t mean people want less news. We are living in the age of information. According to a University of Southern California study, Americans are absorbing five times more information per day now than they were in 1986. And as the demand for quality news grows, storytelling evolves. I think that we have only just begun to explore the incredible opportunities.

(David Chavern is CEO of the News Media Alliance, the former Newspaper Association of America.)
Over 50 signed up for ArkLaMiss; 14 from APA

As the registration deadline passed Monday, just over 50 individuals had indicated their plans to attend the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing Conference Nov. 10-11 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss. The conference venue is on the upper level of the Ameristar riverboat.

Included in that attendance number are 13 representing APA member newspapers and two from the APA staff.

Among the APA members attending are
Angelia Roberts, Batesville Daily Guard; Sue Silliman and LaDonna Foster, Camden News; Ronnie Bell, El Dorado News-Times; Tom Cardozo, Gatehouse Media; Larry Killian, South Arkansas Sun, Hampton; Tammy
Curtis, Spring River Chronicle, Hardy; James “Rusty” and Neal Fraser, Stone County Leader, Mountain View; Rita Baker and Arthur “Skye” Manning, Texarkana Gazette; Paige Henley, Mena Star; and Byron Tate, Sheridan Headlight.

Tom Larimer, APA executive director, and Terri Cobb, APA business manager, will represent the APA staff at the event.

The conference kicks off at 9 a.m. Thursday, November 10 with the newspaper managers’ roundtable, a facilitated discussion of trending challenges and potential solutions in the newspaper industry. Initially set up as a publishers’ roundtable, this kickoff event has

Continued on page 3

SPJ names winners of Diamond Awards

The Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists today revealed the winners of its 2016 Diamond Journalism Awards, a new regional competition that honors excellence in online, broadcast and print journalism.

Judges named Jordan Hickey, a writer for Arkansas Life magazine, Diamond Journalist of the Year for a portfolio of his work.

“Scene setting, strong characters, complexity, and his ability to narrate while not stealing the voice of his characters all contribute to the strength of his work,” judges wrote. “His subjects hover below the ‘news cycle’ radar, but speak to larger issues that need the public’s attention.”

Hunter Field, a reporter for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette newspaper, was named Outstanding New Journalist, an award that recognizes the work of reporters who have five or fewer years of reporting experience.

“I was impressed by the statistical detail in all the stories, which shows the reporter has a knack for research and doesn’t cut corners seeking out detailed information,” a judge wrote.

Lisa Hammersly, a Democrat-Gazette reporter, received the Robert S. McCord Freedom of Information Award. McCord helped found the Arkansas SPJ chapter, lobbied to help pass Arkansas’ Freedom of Information Act and served as SPJ’s national president in 1975-76. He died in 2013 at age 84.

Hammersly’s “clean writing makes a complicated issue clear for the public,” judges wrote.

Former Democrat-Gazette reporter Chad Day won the award for Community Service for a package of stories about the issue of jailing minors for actions that are not adult crimes.

“The writer and the editors should be

Continued on page 3
The topic of newspaper endorsements of political candidates is an interesting one. It’s generally front and center in these types of election years.

Well actually there’s never been this “type” of election year before, but you get my drift. Some newspapers don’t hesitate to offer leadership for their readers in deciding on which candidates to vote by suggesting which one they should be voting for and why. Others shy away fearing the pushback that might and inevitably would follow.

The latter is especially true in small communities and the small newspapers that serve them. It’s a minefield endorsing candidates in many small communities across the country. In these volatile times readers don’t hesitate to fire back with their own opinions on your selections, and in no uncertain terms. They have at their disposal more than the letter writing pen these days, thanks to social media.

Just ask the Madison County Record in Huntsville. After the newspaper endorsed Hillary Clinton in a recent publication the response was immediate and as you might imagine a tad vitriolic in an area dominated by Republicans. The newspaper published long letters to the editor the very next week, and posts to their Facebook page echoed the sentiments expressed in the letters in no uncertain terms.

As a result, Publisher Ellen Kreth says they might put more effort into their editorials or do more of them because of the response. The community is obviously prepared to interact with the newspaper, as likely it would with just about any newspaper.

It is exactly this type of response from readers that keep some publishers from endorsing candidates, local, state or national. Nobody wants a lot of people in their community upset with them, but that has been the lot of newspaper publishers since day one at the first gazette. It just sort of comes with the territory. A publisher of a community newspaper looking to become beloved in the community is on the road to major disappointment.

There might be some trepidation about the community’s response to an endorsement or an editorial, but there’s little doubt that they’re reading it. That’s a good thing for a newspaper.

Honestly, when it comes to endorsing candidates or issues on the ballot, I’ve done it both ways during my newspaper career. Left to my own devices I would do it in a heartbeat. In the instances where I didn’t it was at the behest of the corporate ownership of the newspaper that frowned on such activities that rile readers. Heaven forbid.

For some it’s just easier to take the course of least resistance when it comes to editorials and endorsements. That may be much more comfortable, but it’s not really what newspapers are supposed to do. If you want comfort, you need to pick another career path because there’s no comfort in these climes.

But that’s exactly what attracted and held my attention for all the years I spent editing and publishing newspapers. That interaction with readers may not have always been fun and it certainly wasn’t comfortable for someone averse to confrontation, but it really kept you connected to the community. Everybody gets their juices flowing in a lively discussion of community issues, and that includes political endorsements.

If they’re talking about you and the newspaper down at the coffee shop you know you’re doing your job.

The Batesville Daily Guard had an interesting experience in recent days and it all stemmed from an “obituary” for a TV character. Yes, a TV character.

Publisher Pat Jones called with the details. It seems Guard Managing Editor Andrea Bruner was so bummed out at the “death” of one of her favorite TV characters, Glenn Rhee, from the TV show “The Walking Dead,” that she couldn’t bring herself to write her column. So, she borrowed an obituary written for the TV character by a friend, Frank Vaughn, and published it next to an abbreviated column in the Guard.

The character Glenn Rhee was apparently murdered, actually bludgeoned to death with a baseball bat. Yes, this series is apparently none too subtle, but then it’s about zombies who are well known for their lack of subtlety.

Obviously this TV show has a large audience, one that includes some of my own family members but I personally have never watched it. Evidence of the audience was obvious however when the newspaper started getting requests for copies of the Guard containing the “obit.” Some of the requests came from as far away as Canada.

The story sprouted legs when it was picked up on social media and conveyed through various web sites and Facebook pages of those tuned into the show, which appears on the AMC network.

Pat says if she’d had any idea it would get this sort of notoriety and the demand would be such for that particular edition she would have printed extra copies.

I’m not sure how anyone could have predicted this sort of response, but it’s the kind of thing that happens more and more these days. The humans that walk this earth no matter where dispersed are more connected now that ever in human existence. Through the wonders of the Internet and social media like Facebook, the world continues to shrink. The like minded who share a passion for something like a TV show about zombies is a great example. They can seek out and find each other and they can connect so much easier and so readily that it boggles the mind.

You just never know what is going to resonate with readers. Sometimes it’s even a fake obituary about a now deceased TV character on a fictional TV show based on zombies that don’t even exist.

Keep that in mind the next time you publish something like that. You may want to do a bit of a press over-run.

Have a great week!

—

Tom
Guest Column: Looking Beyond the Surface for the Real Story
By Jim Stasiowski

One day back in the 1980s, my editor chewed out everyone in the newsroom for being scooped.

After six decades of the spins in life’s perpetually rotating washers and dryers, my memory has faded like an old T-shirt, but as I recall the object of his ire was a USA TODAY trend story about the blossoming use of those fold-out windshield blockers that kept the daytime sun from turning cars’ interiors into furnaces.

I was thinking about the editor’s criticism because of Colin Kaepernick.

(I’ll pause here while you ponder what seems a ridiculous reach.)

Kaepernick’s protest, refusing to stand for the Star-Spangled Banner, got me thinking about things that I never imagined would happen, such as the way newspapers’ downward business spiral has pushed people of extraordinary journalistic talents, many of them my friends, into other occupations.

For instance, as a kid, I would go to baseball games in Memorial Stadium in Baltimore. The big difference today?

No smoking.

In the 1950s and ’60s about half of the U.S. adult population smoked tobacco. At a night baseball game, by about the fifth inning, a massive cloud of tobacco smoke loomed above the stadium.

Now when I go to a baseball game, smoking is forbidden, so there is no more smoke cloud. I never thought that would be the case.

I never thought anything could keep car interiors protected from the sun, I never thought my friends would leave their newsrooms, I never thought athletes would refuse to stand for the anthem, I never thought a Donald-Trump-like person would be a presidential nominee of a major political party.

We journalists are not good at spotting things and thinking, “What’s next?”

We are excellent at writing about things after they have happened and are firmly established. I suspect by now every newspaper has done the obligatory survey of local Republicans about whether they are supporting Trump for president against Hillary Clinton.

But we need to foresee better.

The editor who chewed us out for being scooped on a story about those windshield blockers went around the room and asked who had noticed them. We all sheepishly answered, “Yes,” but acknowledged we didn’t think of doing a story about them.

Should we have foreseen the rise of Donald Trump?

That’s not easy to answer. In the political process, we have been accustomed to the instantaneous insurgent candidate who, for a week or two, grabs front-runner status – Remember Howard Dean? Michele Bachmann? – only to disappear abruptly, allowing the establishment (boring) politician to claim the nomination.

Through most of the 2016 Republican nomination process, even extremely astute politicians assumed that Trump was another Bachmann, another Herman Cain. Surely Jeb Bush would rise to the top, and if not he, Marco Rubio or Scott Walker or even Ted Cruz.

But we journalists missed something. We missed – probably because we didn’t ask – whether voters’ discontent with the nation’s course was deep enough to drive them into the arms of a real maverick, not a career politician who opportunistically boasts of being an anti-Washington zealot.

Even now, when I talk to friends who cannot believe Trump may have left-hand-on-the-Bible moment Jan. 20 on the Capitol steps, I have to say, “But that’s because you’re not as disgusted with The System as millions of voters are.”

Here’s how forgetful journalists are: In 1988, one of the hot issues in the presidential campaign was how to tackle the national debt, which at that time was about $2.6 trillion; now it is $19 trillion.

If $2.6 trillion was a big campaign issue 28 years ago, why is it barely a whisper this year? Shouldn’t someone write that story?

In my extended neighborhood – I take lots of long walks – one car has a Trump bumper sticker and one home has a Trump yard sign; there are no Clinton bumper stickers, but she has one yard sign.

I suspect that lack of grass roots advertising reflects the public’s dislike of both candidates. Have reporters asked why so few signs?

And what about early voting? Especially in this raucous, anything-may-happen-at-any-time campaign, shouldn’t voters be required to wait until Election Day? Have we traded voter knowledge for voter convenience?

Can we explore that in print?

Already, the coverage of Kaepernick’s protest has subsided, even though other athletes have followed his lead. But what if a star quarterback, rather than a pitcher as having a “credible fastball.”

“Credible” means believable; I’m sure the sportswriter meant “credible,” which means “deserving some credit or praise.”

Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, NV. 89436.
ArkLaMiss explores newspaper issues, innovation

The latest issues in the newspaper industry and several innovations in light of market changes were on the table for discussion as the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference got underway today in Vicksburg, Miss.

Byron Tate, publisher of the Sheridan Headlight and vice president of the Arkansas Press Association Board of Directors, kicked off the annual event by facilitating the newspaper managers’ roundtable. Included in the topics were new ways to create newspaper revenues, niche publications, social media, digital enterprise and much more.

The ArkLaMiss is being held again, as it has for the past several years at the Ameristar Hotel and Casino on the banks of the Mississippi River. Over 50 from the three states were registered to attend the event, which began today and will continue until lunchtime on Friday, tomorrow.

Not included in that number but also attending were some newspaper vendors, press association staff, and three presenters.

The Louisiana Press Association was in charge of the programming for the ArkLaMiss this year. Next year the Arkansas Press Association will be arranging the programming.

ArkLaMiss ROUNDTABLE – Larry Killian of the South Arkansas Sun in Hampton and Rusty Fraser of the Stone County Leader join Marcus Bowers of the Rankin County News in Brandon, Miss., and Mike Floyd of the Columbus Dispatch in Columbus, Miss., and Ronnie Bell, background, of the News-Times in El Dorado at the managers’ roundtable kicking off the annual ArkLaMiss circulation and marketing conference Thursday in Vicksburg, Miss. Byron Tate, publisher of the Sheridan Headlight, facilitated the session.

State archives seek newspapers for preservation

The Arkansas State Archives presently collects about 120 publications from across Arkansas for microfilming and preservation and invites those publications that are not presently sending them a copy of your newspaper to begin doing so.

The State Archives, the former Arkansas History Commission, began its microfilming program in 1957. The agency has continued the tradition of microfilming Arkansas publications and today maintains the largest archives of Arkansas materials in existence.

Researchers from all across the globe access these holdings for projects ranging from family and community histories, scholarly endeavors, documentary filmmaking, official reports and news reporting.

“Everyday, the publications you create represent and define the cultural heritage of Arkansas for current and future generations,” the State Archives literature says. “While you may be saving copies of your publication at your office or in your hometown library, consider the devastating ramifications of a fire or other natural disaster in which all your copies are destroyed. When you deposit your publications with the State Archives, a backup will always exist.”

For more information on the State Archives and the microfilming program, visit www.archives.com.

Send Us Your Rate Cards!

APA is requesting 2017 advertising rate cards from all members, so rates can be updated in the accounting program.

Please send a copy of your 2017 rate card, or your current rate card if rates are not changing to Rebecca McGraw at rebecca@arkansaspress.org or mail them to Arkansas Press Association, 411 S. Victory St., Little Rock, AR 72201.
The headlines were telling although hardly big news to newspaper people in some circles. “Print Ad Revenues Tumble” screamed the headline in so many words. No actually I think it was in those exact words.

It was just another in a long line of headlines pointing out the dire situation in which newspapers find themselves. You know the headlines. They’ve been around for a few years now. The slide can be dated to roughly 2008 and the great recession that afflicted this country. The situation has not improved since then.

One would think, and a lot of people do think that their local newspaper isn’t long for this world. I am asked this question on a regular basis, the last time while having dinner with friends one evening last week.

What I explain to them was the same thing I found in the earlier referenced story in the Columbia Journalism Review. You know, the one about print ad revenues tumbling. As in most stories you just have to read beyond the headline. It is a story that’s difficult to tell without reading past the headline, but unfortunately the headline is the lone frame of reference for many who don’t understand what’s going on with newspapers.

The CJR story references a tumbling of revenues, a veritable cascading of revenues at The New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, at Gannett properties, at the Washington Post, and at the Tronc properties. Tronc meaning the Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times and related publications.

So what do all these have in common? It’s not difficult to discern. They are mammoths in our industry and have been for decades. And it is to these newspapers that most of those outside the industry reference when they’re discussing the state of the newspaper industry today.

Are they the norm? Hardly, nor are they rare. Their challenges, however, match their size and stature. The response to ad revenue drops at these dinosaurs of our industry is to cut expenses, and we all know what that means. It means they are cutting people from their newsrooms, which cuts content from their publications which reduces reader incentive to read which gives advertisers seeking eyeballs for their message pause at continuing to use these newspapers for their advertising.

It is in this downward spiral in which most of the troubled publications, the biggies of our industry, find themselves. They’re like the bathtub circling the drain, going down but not out, and unfortunately it is about these newspapers stories like those above are written.

Few writing and creating headlines about the state of the industry take into account that the vast majority of newspapers are not in this category. The mammoths of the industry are a barometer on how the mammoths of the industry are doing, but no so much one for the entire newspaper industry.

It’s funny but community newspapers consider themselves a part of the newspaper industry. And indeed of course they are, but they get little mention in these gloom and doom stories about print ad dollars tumbling.

The truth is you won’t find even many community newspapers setting any new revenue records but you will find several who have actually gained in circulation rather than lost. Community newspaper publishers are not getting wealthy, but then they never did. They never got to ride the cash express their larger cousins in the business did back in the boom days of the 1980s and 1990s. They may have had the same profit margins, perhaps even better profit margins than the big boys, but never of course the volume.

But today’s news consumer continues to see stories such as the one referenced above from which to draw their conclusions that newspapers are rapidly becoming a vestige of the past. In all honesty I do grow weary making the distinction for those inquiring between what they’re reading and the reality of our industry.

So I made that explanation again over dinner one evening last week. Those asking actually seemed relieved to hear it as both professed to being “hard core” newspaper readers. What they meant was they read the printed version every morning.

“God bless you,” I told them. These folks and many others like them are to be highly valued and treated with great respect. We respect them by delivering the best possible newspaper we can, filled with relevant content that enlightens, informs and entertains.

We can’t lose sight of that, no matter how large or small the newspapers, because if we do we have truly lost the battle. You know the battle: the battle for survival.

As you read this the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference is underway at Vicksburg, Miss. This conference has been a joint effort of the respective press associations in Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi for many years, certainly long before my tenure here at APA.

Like most other things in our industry, it could be said that the ArkLaMiss is not your father’s circulation conference. It did start out being just that, but much like our industry it has evolved.

Where once we discussed the mechanism for delivering newspapers to subscribers, incentivizing subscribers to subscribe or to re-subscribe, incentivizing newspaper carriers to not only deliver our newspapers in a timely manner but also to help grow the subscriber list, and so forth we now talk in much broader terms.

It’s not so much about circulation any more as it is marketing of the newspaper products and building the audience for those products.

Like so many others at the ArkLaMiss, I’m an old newspaper “dog” which is sort of like being a fire horse that hears the fire bell go off. When the topic is newspapers, I perk up and delight in listening to the innovations that newspaper managers and staff relate at this conference. It is a very creative bunch and there is so much to learn from those attending.

It is exactly that innovation and creativity that is so badly needed in our industry. It’s on display here in Vicksburg every year. If you’re missing it you’re missing out.

There will be another ArkLaMiss next year when APA will be in charge of the programming. It’s going to be huge! Mark your calendars now for Nov. 9-10, 2017 and make plans to be there.

You won’t be sorry.

Have a great week!
People Actually Like Advertising

By Dave Chavern, president & CEO, NAA

I have an unpopular opinion: People actually like advertising.

I know this flies in the face of every digital ad strategy that forces readers to watch ads (pop-up’s, auto rolls and everything other moving, drifting and jumping ad technique that drives people crazy). And it is also contrary to every ad blocker installed by someone who grew to hate all of intrusive ad formats.

But long-term industry experience is clear. Twenty-six percent of millennials last year preferred the Super Bowl commercials over the game itself. One popular edition of Vogue was 77 percent advertisements. When newspapers hit peak print circulation in the late 1990’s, a large percentage of readers actually bought papers for the sole reason of consuming the advertising. Even today, HubSpot notes that 77 percent of consumers would rather filter out the “bad” ads than block all advertising. You can go on and on. There is a lot of evidence that the public doesn’t have to hate advertising.

So in the digital space, why do we assume that people hate ads and have to be forced to watch them? I think it is because the advertising industry—writ large—has become deeply enamored of data and targeting, and too often dropped the ball on creative. A lot of money and energy is spent figuring out who should be exposed to what ad, and much less on whether that ad actually engages the consumer.

Just look at some of the most common ad formats today, and how misplaced they are for the digital environment. A banner ad is just a print ad. Creatively, my grandfather could have written one. 15 and 30 second pre-rolls? Those are just repurposed TV ads.

Where are the ads that are uniquely designed to creatively engage people in a digital space—and why is it ok that they are so rare? Imagine a radio ad running on a blank TV screen, or someone reading classifieds on the radio. Too many digital ads are creatively retrograde and derivative. We just seem to be hoping that data and targeting will save the day.

In a speech at the IAPI/ADFX awards in Ireland, Bob Hoffman, author of the popular “Ad Contrarian” blog said, “The consumer never sees the briefing documents or the strategic rationale. All she ever sees are the ads. And if the ads stink, the whole thing stinks.”

This is actually the reason why I am an optimist about the future of digital advertising—including advertising on news and other content sites. This whole thing is new and we are still just getting started. When TV first started, they actually did just read radio ads on the air. They didn’t yet understand the power of visual images.

Similarly, I don’t think that we know yet how awesome and engaging digital advertising can be. We don’t know how the medium is different (after all, it does change constantly), and what will really drive people to engage and consume. There really are no answers yet—which also means that we don’t know how great the answers can be.

“We have to make advertising beautiful, and interesting, and entertaining. And I have bad news… algorithms, and data, and metrics can’t do that. Only people can do that,” Hoffman said.

But the good news is also that people can do that. We just need to embrace creativity again stop treating it as a digital advertising afterthought.
New overtime regs coming Dec. 1

New overtime regulations are set to go into effect December 1, in just a couple of weeks, and the new regs are forcing some businesses, including newspapers, to shift their policies.

The U.S. Department of Labor in June proposed new rules on overtime pay for employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act. While news and information has been provided widely since the proposal submitted last June, including here in the APW, we still get questions from members who have not made adjustments under new regulations.

Currently, employees are exempt from the overtime requirement if they exceed the current salary threshold of $455 per week or $23,660 per year. The new regulations will raise that exempt level to $913 per week, or $47,476 per year.

By doubling the weekly salary threshold, the classes of employees who qualify for the so-called “white collar” overtime exemptions (e.g. executive, administrative, professional, etc.) will be narrowed, thereby requiring employers to pay overtime to a larger segment of their work force, including employees previously considered exempt.

Newspapers under 4,000 circulation are still exempt, but if they are part of a group of newspapers and the group’s total circulation exceeds 4,000, they are no longer exempt.

Specifically, salaried white-collar employees who are paid below the higher updated salary level generally will be entitled to overtime pay. On the other hand, employees paid at or above the new salary level will continue to be exempt from the overtime pay if they primarily perform certain duties.

The choice for newspapers not exempt to the overtime regulations is to either raise employees to the minimum of $47,476 per year, or pay them overtime for hours worked beyond the 40-hour week.
The 2016 ArkLaMiss circulation and marketing conference is in the books and once again the conference proved its worth.

The conference is a great time of sharing among newspaper representatives from the three state area. There is a wealth of newspaper knowledge and those attending are not the least reticent to share the knowledge that can help other newspapers raise the bar so to speak in their respective operations. That remains a most endearing hallmark of newspaper people, their willingness to share what works really well for them and how they do it.

The conference was held was again at the Ameristar Hotel and Casino in Vicksburg, Miss., a beautiful and historic city on the banks of the Mississippi River. It continues to be a good, central meeting place for the three state participants who year after year make their way to the conference.

The newspaper managers’ roundtable continues to be a real plus event for the conference. The roundtable kicks off the conference and has for the past few years. This year Byron Tate, publisher of the Sheridan Headlight, facilitated the discussion, and as always it took little facilitating to keep the discussion moving along.

There were a host of great ideas put on the table for discussion and there were few if any lulls in the fast-paced discussion of modern challenges and attendant solutions. Those attending no doubt came away with some excellent ideas to take home and put into use.

The “hot ideas” exchange, a popular Friday morning feature of the ArkLaMiss conference, was particularly lively at this session. If you are thinking that there are no new ideas you would be wrong. There are new ideas and several variations of old ideas adapted for modern use at newspapers. Dennis Dunn of the Dothan Eagle in Dothan, Ala., once again facilitated the hot ideas exchange and once again did an excellent job of keeping it moving along.

Frankly it doesn’t take a lot of effort. Regular attendees of the ArkLaMiss conference now know to bring examples of their hot ideas and as soon as it begins they come flooding forth.

Ronnie Bell, general manager of the El Dorado News-Times, got the ball rolling with the first hot idea, a variation of an NIE promotion. That opened the floodgate for non-stop ideas.

Each of those presenting were reviewed at the conclusion of the session and those attending voted on those they thought best.

The winner was Adam Prestridge of the Columbian-Progress in Columbia, Miss. for his variation of a turkey giveaway that was particularly timely considering the season.

After the ideas had been shared the group took a break so the ballots could be counted. It was interesting to watch the discussions continue during that break, with those who expressed hot ideas sharing the details with those who wanted to know more about the promotion.

As almost always is the case, there were enough ideas shared to last a newspaper for a year, at least until the next ArkLaMiss when no doubt even more great ideas will be aired and soaked up like a sponge by those attending.

The networking that goes on at the conference continues to offer ample rewards for taking the time and making the effort to make the trip to Vicksburg. Although the attendance was down some this year, although only by five or six, the conference was another stellar gathering. It’s one you should consider in the future.

As things stand right now you’ll get that chance once again next November. I highly recommend you put it in your budget and plan to attend.

Next year it will be APA’s turn to arrange the programming and in fact we already have the keynote speaker lined up. Some of you will recall Zach Ahrens presentation at the SuperConvention this past summer in Bentonville. Zach, the former publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway and now president and publisher of the Topeka Capital Journal, made a presentation on expanding the reader base of newspapers across and evolving demographic.

As I sat through Zach’s presentation I was thinking that this would be an excellent topic for the ArkLaMiss, so right after the convention I made contact with Zach and made the invitation to be next year’s ArkLaMiss keynote. He readily accepted, and I know his presentation will resonate with the ArkLaMiss group. I’m already looking forward to it and the energy Zach brings to giving it.

You will be getting a lot of information before the conference so you might be looking for it.

Speaking of presenters, we have scheduled Russell Viers for a one-day workshop on Thursday, January 19. The event will be held at the APA building in Little Rock.

We hadn’t really even officially announced the event but word has gotten out and already several have indicated an interest in attending. It will be a full day of training on InDesign, PhotoShop and other Adobe software in which Russell is one of the foremost experts.

In fact, Russell spends most of his time doing these things, spending a considerable amount of time sharing his expertise and training people across this country as well as in Europe where he travels several times a year to conduct similar workshops. He’s been at APA conventions before, and indeed is on the schedule for the 2017 SuperConvention in Little Rock, but this session will be for those who work in the trenches and with this software every day.

Those attending will no doubt leave it much better prepared to handle their composition and design duties and newspaper large and small.

The workshop will get underway mid-morning. We’ll do a working lunch and adjourn the session by mid-afternoon. In between will be a fast-paced, very entertaining and highly useful training for those attending.

Be watching for the information that will be forthcoming in the next few weeks on this training day, and please consider having some of your people make plans to attend. Don’t delay, however, as space is limited and it will likely sell out.

When we have Russell at conventions we find that often those really needing the training are not those attending. So this is an excellent opportunity to get some highly effective training at minimal cost.

And it will be good seeing so many APA members in the APA building.

Have a great week!

Tom
Former Record building becomes RECORD venue

The building that for many years held the Benton County Daily Record in Bentonville has become a special events venue of sorts, and the owners dubbed the facility RECORD as homage to the now gone newspaper.

The Daily Record was folded into the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette a couple of years ago, but the name lives on in the 12,000 square foot events center in downtown Bentonville.

A Walton family interest purchased the building for $700,000 in November 2012. The group did not disclose an amount of the building’s renovation.

The building, built in the mid-20ths century, formerly housed the Burger Motor Company before the newspaper moved in.

Cross ownership ruling subject of NMA appeal

The News Media Alliance this week filed an appeal of the FCC’s inexplicable decision to keep in place media ownership rules that prevent a television or radio station from being co-owned with a newspaper in the same market.

“After 41 years of abiding by a rule that has long outlived its purpose, we have been forced to fight the FCC’s decision in court,” said David Chavern, president and CEO of the News Media Alliance. “Our industry provides long-term investigative journalism and local news and public affairs coverage that is intensely important to local communities. It makes no sense at all to prevent newspapers from helping to fund this essential activity by receiving capital and collaboration by an aligned industry such as broadcasting.”

The FCC is required by law to justify the ban every four years and, earlier this year, it determined that the ban was still necessary, despite the increased power of Internet-based competitors and other media voices in communities. The Commission made a rushed determination without any reliable evidence, and made its decision in a highly politicized and questionable process. It concluded that, despite the colossal transformation of the way we receive news and information, preventing a newspaper and a radio station from being co-owned would somehow preserve newspapers – and localism, diversity, and competition – instead of hurt them. This conclusion contradicts previous Commissions’ findings, court findings and its own findings that are a matter of record.

“This rule prevents our industry from achieving the necessary scale to compete in media marketplace, while investment will continue to flow to Internet distribution platforms that compete with news publishers for advertising revenue. The result will be fewer resources for local news and investigative reporting, the foundation of an open democracy. We are deeply disappointed and we will fight to overturn these rules once and for all,” stated Chavern.

The case is News Media Alliance v. Federal Communications Commission, filed November 14, 2016, in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. The Alliance notes in its filing that it will not oppose a transfer of the appeal to the Third Circuit, which has heard prior appeals in this area.

CONVENTION PANEL – Bill Whitehead, Sr., Fordyce News-Advocate, makes a point during a panel discussion at a 1983 APA convention. Joining him on the panel were, from left, Tommie Gillespie, Atkins Chronicle; Bob McCord, North Little Rock Times; Tom Dearmore, Baxter Bulletin, Mountain Home, and Bonner McCollum, Forrest City Times-Herald.

McGehee-Dermott Times-News changes owners

The McGehee-Dermott Times-News has changed hands, although it will remain in the same family, according to Rachel Freeze, long-time editor of the newspaper who will now be the owner and add the title of publisher.

The former owner and publisher, Arlene White, will continue in some capacity at the newspaper. The former owner is the aunt of the new owner.

The Times-News serves both the McGehee and Dermott communities since the two newspaper merged sometime in the 1970s.

The new owner says she plans no staff changes. In fact, regulars in the community won’t likely notice the difference since most of those working at the newspaper will continue.
Guest Column: 
Taking A Serious Look at Print’s Future
By Russell Viers, Certified Trainer in Adobe Products

A few months ago I was on a train to Brussels, Belgium, leafing through the International Herald Tribune and a story caught my eye. It was a story about a newspaper that refused to have a website—they only had a print edition.

I have heard this line too many times: “If we put our stories up on the Internet, who would buy the paper on Wednesday?” the publisher, Claude Angeli, asked. “We believe in print.”

What made it different this time was that it was a publisher of a newspaper in Paris, France saying it.

The newspaper, Le Canard Enchainé, is a satirical weekly that targets politicians, entertainers and the elite with great success. In a climate where France’s other papers are beginning to struggle, Angeli is succeeding. His readership is up. His subscriptions are up. Profits are up.

“Well if he can do it, why can’t everyone else? Let’s just stop with this website experiment we’ve been doing and go back to print?” Is that what you were thinking?

Before you buy into Claude’s thinking, there are some important questions to answer:

• What’s the future of print?
• How will you distribute it?
• Will your competitors fill the online void?
• How unique is your content?
• Does your community REALLY want print?

The Future of Print

When you look at all the newspapers that are, at best, just getting thinner, it raises the question about supply and demand of newspaper and other print supplies in the future. Taking just the Detroit Free Press, which has become a weekly paper, as an example, how much newsprint is no longer needed to stay in business? Using numbers from last year, the paper had a weekday circulation of just under 300,000 copies and Sunday was as high as 580,000. Numbers in various articles jump around, but no matter what you read, it’s not an optimistic future for small papers that rely on the local post office to distribute the paper each week.

I’m not a postal expert, but I would guess having to work with a post office in a different town would have some impact on price. If not, at the very least that paper would have the added expense and time of delivering it further.

Last week there was an article in USA Today about the USPS anticipating an $8.38 billion loss this year. How are these losses going to impact the price per piece for newspaper distribution?

Back to an earlier question: “How much on an increase on postage rates and delivery can I sustain with my current pricing structure?”

Is your content unique enough?

So how does the future fare for Claude in Paris? Provided he can get the paper printed and distributed in a cost-effective manner, he might continue to do well. He is the only one in his country with the staff and connections to deliver the type of investigative, satirical content his readers crave. It would be very difficult for someone to start an online version of his paper with the same content. As long as he remains unique in that niche with his print product he may do fine.

Provided his readers continue to want print… Does your community really want print?

Statistics are starting to show otherwise. Publishers are often so protective of their paid circulation and the risk of losing it to online, they don’t take a hard look at just who the paid subscribers are. An attendee at one of my seminars recently told me the average age of his subscribers was 65. That’s 65. A sixty and a five. If you look at the consuming public that the advertisers are trying to reach, they’re not in the demographic. So this paper is protecting 2000 paid seniors at the consuming public that the advertisers are trying to reach, they’re not in the demographic.

We can do this through better design, better photos, better ads and better writing. All of these add up to an additional revenue stream as we sell ads on the website.

For those who might accuse me of preaching doom and gloom I’ll conclude with “I would buy a paper today.” I still believe in community journalism. I still believe there is a future for small newspapers. I just don’t have a lot of faith, long term, in the United States Postal Service or the printing industry as it is today.

( dumb Vi er is a certified trainer in Adobe products. He’s made several visits to Arkansas doing training and will do another Thursday, Jan. 19.)
APA director will attend DC conference

APA Executive Director Tom Larimer will be among other press association executives and newspaper government affairs specialists set to convene Dec. 4-6 in Washington, D.C., site for the annual Newspaper Association Managers (NAM) legislative conference.

“The agenda for the conference is always heavily loaded with relevant issues of the day for the newspaper industry,” Larimer said. “This year it is especially so.”

The main talking points will regard public notices, use of drone technology in news-gathering including the use of “Stingrays” to capture journalists’ notes and sources, advertising taxes and other taxes on newspapers, updates on employee wage and hour laws, copyright and fair use laws in the digital age and more.

“This conference is two and a half days of non-stop presentations on issues facing newspapers across the country,” Larimer added. “It’s a fairly intense series of sessions airing issues we’re dealing with now or that we soon will.”

The conference is held each year at the Keybridge Marriott on the banks of the Potomac River.

Don’t forget: Upload those public notices

This is another reminder to APA member newspapers to upload all public notices that are published in your newspaper to the APA public notices website, http://www.publicnoticeads.com/ar.

If you are not presently doing this, please begin doing so immediately. If you need assistance uploading your public notices, email info@arkansaspress.org or call the APA office at 501-374-1500 and ask for assistance.

The process is an easy one, but the uploading is very important to provide a searchable database of public notices published in Arkansas newspapers. It is this existing database of aggregated public notices from Arkansas newspapers that we use as a reason for keeping public notices in newspapers and not on a government website.

Check out the site and if your public notices are not included among those from other APA member newspapers, please see to it today.

“We wouldn’t ask if it wasn’t important,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director.

APA Office Closed
Thursday, Friday for Holiday

The offices of the Arkansas Press Association in Little Rock will be closed both Thursday and Friday in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday this week.

“This is the traditional Thanksgiving schedule at the APA office,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “This schedule allows your APA staff more time to spend with family in this holiday season.”

The office will re-open on its regular schedule on Monday, Nov. 28.

The APA office will close on Monday, Dec. 26, in observance of the Christmas holiday.
(Disclosure: If this column sounds familiar it’s because parts of it are recycled and updated from previous Thanksgiving Day columns.)

Happy Thanksgiving!

Back in the day, as some are wont to say these days, I wrote a column like this twice a week. Well, it wasn’t really “like” this column as it meandered around from topic to topic in a mish-mash of subjects. Anybody who has written two columns a week for 25 years or so can likely identify with that.

But then there are those who might suggest that’s an apt description of the column that fills this space each week, a mish-mash of topics. For the most part, however, these columns are largely focused on newspapers, what’s happening with them, what they’re doing, what they should be doing, and where the entire industry is heading.

So today is Thanksgiving. It’s also the week after the 53rd anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. If we were indeed around we all know where we were and what we were doing when we got that news.

I won’t say those were the good old days, but there were a lot of references to “Camelot” and having the youngest president ever sitting in the White House did give some modicum of shared optimism for some reason. We had no idea what was to come.

In 1963 I was a sophomore in high school. That really hurts my feelings. Not that I was a sophomore in high school, but that it was 53 years ago that I was a sophomore in high school. What? Could that possibly be right?

It was a strange time in U.S. history, and it was to get stranger. I think it was two days after the assassination and I was at home watching TV with my Dad on a Sunday morning. Lee Harvey Oswald had been arrested for the assassination on Friday. Dad and I watched on TV as Oswald was being transferred from jail and we watched as Jack Ruby put some holes in Mr. Oswald on live TV touching off one of the most bizarre and yet to be settled debates about who actually killed President Kennedy, if there was a conspiracy, more than one shooter, and who the heck was Jack Ruby?

Dad and I looked at each other with that “did that just happen” look on our faces. At that time I think it was the first murder committed live on national TV. We were stunned, just like so many others who saw it happen.

It wasn’t quite Thanksgiving yet in 1963 but it was close and the chain of events certainly provided a topic of discussion at holiday dinner tables in homes across the country. In the 53 years since, we are still talking about it.

It seems always in our current condition that there is something of great magnitude to be discussing over Thanksgiving dinner. It is, unfortunately, the world in which we live. Whether it is terrorism in Paris or a commercial airliner being blown out of the sky in Egypt.

Then of course we will always-barely holiday discussions such as what bowl will invite the newly barely bowl-eligible Razorbacks.

Not long after the Kennedy assassination and the Oswald murder, Dad and I had another of those “did that just happen” moments while watching the Army-Navy football game on TV. We watched a play, and then we watched it again via the miracle of “instant replay.” Army scored, and then they scored again on the exact same play from the exact same spot on the field.

But no. Announcer Lindsey Nelson was quick to tell the audience that Army had not just scored again. It was the birth of instant replay in the American lexicon. It was amazing is what that was. It’s old hat now, but at the time it was a showstopper for sure.

It’s hard to believe instant replay has been with us over 50 years, too, just a few days after the Kennedy assassination.

So I was thinking back about other memorable Thanksgivings. Most of the Thanksgivings I knew growing up were about family and food, and lots of both. Most of these special days were memorable in their own right, but none really stood out.

My mind wandered to another Thanksgiving holiday. Not one with family but with thousands of strangers in the middle of nowhere. Well actually it wasn’t the middle of nowhere but you could see it from there.

It was 1971 and I was aboard the USS Midway, an aircraft carrier operating in the Tonkin Gulf just a few miles off the coast of Vietnam. The ship’s cooks had prepared a festive Thanksgiving bounty complete with a white, turkey-like meat substance, gravy that could have doubled for wallpaper paste, and green beans dumped from huge cans and warmed in huge pots. But hey, they were trying.

One of the ship’s bomb factories was situated just off the ship’s mess decks, the main chow hall for the crew. The bombs had to be assembled, meaning a fuse had to be added to the nose and one of a variety of tail fins had to be bolted to the tail of the bombs.

The bombs were then rolled on dollies made specifically for this purpose through the mess desks to the bomb elevator to be taken to the flight deck where they were loaded on our bombers and sent on their way.

So this was our entertainment on this Thanksgiving, watching the bomb construction and the actions of the bomb handlers. Actually, it was our entertainment on almost all days for breakfast, lunch and dinner. On this day, however, someone had taped a cutout of a turkey to the top of a thousand pound bomb that was ready for “delivery.” The caption on the turkey cutout was “Happy Thanksgiving.”

The incongruity of the image registered with most of us. We laughed that sort of sick laugh one does when you know what your laughing at really isn’t all that funny. But in those situations you find humor, you find reason to laugh where you can.

I’m thankful that at least this year we don’t have that far to look to find something for which to be thankful, and that makes us laugh.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving and a great week ahead!

Tom
### APA board will convene fall retreat

The APA/APS Board of Directors will convene in their annual fall retreat Thursday and Friday, Dec. 8-9, at the Courtyard by Marriott in the River Market district of Little Rock.

The board will address a lengthy agenda over the two-day session, including the adoption of a budget for 2017, election of new officers, consideration of year-end revenue distributions and much more.

APA President Nat Lea will preside over the retreat meetings and among other things will be naming members of the 2017 SuperConvention planning committee and the nominating committee to select candidates for the three open positions on the APA/APS Board.

The election of new board officers will take effect at the conclusion of the convention to be held this year July 5-9 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

The three vacancies on the APA board were created by the departure in the last year of board members David Mosesso and Shane Allen, and by the expiration of the board tenure of Rusty Fraser.

### U.S. court blocks overtime regulation implementation

The Associated Press reported last week that a federal court in Texas blocked implementation of new regulations regarding overtime pay that would have made an estimated four million more higher-earning workers across the country eligible for overtime starting Dec. 1.

The court injunction prevents the U.S. Department of Labor from implementing the changes while the regulation’s legality is examined in more detail by the court. The order comes after 21 states, including Arkansas, sued the agency to block the rule before it took effect.

The new regulations sought to shrink the so-called “white collar exemption” and more than double the salary threshold under which employers must pay overtime to their workers.

The threshold was raised from approximately $24,000 to $47,476. The higher level would readjust every three years to reflect changes in average wages under the proposed regulations.

The court agreed in the ruling that the Department of Labor exceeded its delegated authority with the rule, and that it could cause irreparable harm if it was not quickly stopped.
It might be comical if it wasn’t so discouraging that some are just now figuring out that some, perhaps a lot of the “news” on Facebook and other social media is false. Really? A whole lot of it is just someone making stuff up to sway the easily swayed, or to reinforce the pre-conceived notions of the already convinced.

Facebook appears shocked and offended that anyone would suggest this to be true. I would be shocked if anyone believed otherwise.

Social media has been exposed to have a darker underbelly providing a bully pulpit for which was used very effectively by some wishing to influence opinions of those who rely on social media for most of their news. Most do it for profit, selling advertising on their phony sites.

Now that’s a scary reality for you. Relying on social media for your news. What sort of world does someone live in that relies on social media for news?

The prevailing candidate didn’t help matters any when he painted all media with the same brush, labeling them “bad people.” The media as a whole took a bashing during the campaign months of the past year or so.

Admittedly there are likely some “bad people” masquerading as working media, and I’m guessing it’s these bad apples that are soiling and spoiling the whole media barrel.

The media has somehow become the enemy, or at least an arm of it. Those intent on deception and misdirection have been fairly successful in convincing just a whole lot of potential voters that the media is part of the vast conspiracy that is keeping them from being happy and prosperous.

And a lot of that convincing came via social media where a growing number of people spend an inordinate amount of time reading “news” of dubious value or credibility. It was just the tool for those ill concerned about being held accountable; those who have no qualms about not letting the truth get in the way of a good story.

And the social media consumers slurp it up like obedient lap dogs. Not only do they lap it up, but also they regurgitate it over and over, further spreading the “news” that advances the cause of whomever made the original post.

Social media has led us like so many lemmings looking for a cliff off which to blindly plunge. There’s no real explanation for the action. It’s just what we felt like doing because it felt right at the time.

Unintended consequences? Well those were barely considered if considered at all.

Social media is the perfect tool for influencing millions of people with very little expense or accountability. Yeah, a lot of the “news” posted was false and misleading, but who’s accountable for that? Facebook will tell you, “not us.” Ditto Twitter.

And to a certain extent they are correct. They are, after all, only the conduit through which those who would purvey misleading or downright false news flush their swill and then sit back chuckling as the rubes not only soak it up but, gleefully pass it along.

So then, who is accountable? The point is that nobody is accountable anymore, and when nobody is accountable we’ve got a problem.

When a newspaper publishes a story exposing corruption in government or in the private business sector, they are accountable for making sure that every detail of the story is accurate. We still can be criticized, sometimes fairly so, for publishing any story, but the bottom line is that WE, and only WE, are accountable. We’re easy to find and stand ready to be accountable and answerable for what we publish.

Can any social media say that? Well, I suppose anyone could say it, but like a lot of Facebook posts the veracity of the statement might be called into question.

This column was born of frustration that we as a people have allowed ourselves to be influenced by all the wrong sources. We’ve come to believe the unbelievable and unreliable, and certainly the unaccountable, and eschew the reliable and the credible.

Social media was intended to be entertainment. It was to provide a mouthpiece for those who didn’t have one, and a means of staying in touch with friends and with family. Could there be any argument that is has become much more?

So our incoming President castigates the “media” as vile and corrupt, and his chorus of followers, and they are legion, cheer him on in agreement through various social media channels.

Meanwhile the hard working journalists working day in and day out in the trenches under all sorts of deadline pressure and little to show for it at the end of the day now has to be subject to this sort of derision. I’m beginning to understand how attorneys feel. Certainly not all attorneys are of the bad, ambulance-chasing variety, but also certainly there are enough of them to taint the whole barrel and to reflect poorly on the rest.

We’ve all heard the lawyer jokes. Are journalist jokes next?

Just as certainly there are enough media participants, be they social or otherwise, passing themselves off as journalists. There are certainly enough to taint the journalist barrel as well.

I know. It hardly seems fair when you do all things expected of a good journalist, including making yourself accountable, and then you get lumped in with this bunch of goobers. It is at the same time disheartening and discouraging for serious journalists who give it any thought. That includes me, who after all these years still considers myself a journalist at heart.

So what is the answer to all of this? I don’t really have one or any, but to encourage journalists to keep on doing what they do every day and to rise above the fray so to speak. We should be holding our collective selves out as examples of what journalism is supposed to be and what it should be.

And we can hope that in the not too distant future, those with sufficient brain cells remaining to rub together and formulate a complete thought will concur that perhaps we’re being overly influenced by unaccountable “news” sources.

Maybe. Hopefully. We can only hope.

Have a great week!

Tom
E&P again looking for ‘Ten Newspapers’

The March issue of Editor & Publisher will again feature the “10 Newspapers That Do It Right.”

The deadline for entries is January 16, 2017.

Never intend to be a “10 best” list, the annual search spotlights select newspapers that have earned a notable achievement in at least one particular area, carried out a successful innovation, innovated cost-saving procedures, or developed programs that have increase revenues or grown circulation.

The objective of the story is to bring ideas together and share the best and the brightest in one comprehensive feature. The magazine emphasizes that all ideas are welcome.

For more information on how to submit entries visit the E&P web site at http://tinyurl.com/gv4cslb.

Copyright compliance goal of new NMA

The News Media Alliance recently launched the News Media Licensing Initiative, a new program that aims to bolster global digital news distribution and consumption in compliance with the U.S. copyright system. The Alliance unveiled the new initiative at the FIBEP World Media Intelligence Congress in Washington, DC. FIBEP represents more than 120 corporations in 60 countries that provide media monitoring and evaluation services to business and government clients.

The News Media Licensing Initiative will be focused on educating media intelligence firms, called Media Monitoring Organizations (MMOs), on the importance of copyright compliance and ways that they can partner with news organizations in support of high-quality journalism.

News Media Alliance President and CEO David Chavern said, “MMO business models are entirely based on providing aggregated news and media reports that are specifically targeted to their clients. We want to support and help grow these services, while at the same time, sustaining journalistic content that is protected under U.S. copyright laws.”

The Alliance hopes to engage in dialogue with MMOs about publishers’ intellectual property rights and point to easy solutions for these businesses to become copyright compliant and license content from existing entities. “We want to support and propel the growth of MMOs and provide opportunities for the dissemination of high quality, thoroughly researched and accurate journalism,” said Chavern.

“Demand for news is at an all-time high, with everyone wanting to consume more news as quickly and efficiently as possible,” Chavern continued. “This project provides opportunities that will benefit News Media Alliance members and MMOs. We are excited for the opportunity to partner with the MMO community in sharing and promoting journalism of the highest quality.”

APA is requesting 2017 rate cards

APA is requesting 2017 advertising rate cards from all members, so rates can be updated in the accounting program.

Please send a copy of your 2017 rate card, or your current rate card if rates are not changing to Rebecca McGraw at rebecca@arkansaspress.org or mail them to Arkansas Press Association, 411 S. Victory St., Little Rock, AR 72201.

Mark Your Calendar!

December 8-9: Fall Board Retreat, Little Rock
December 26: Christmas Holiday – APA Office Closed
January 19, 10 am - 4pm: Russell Viers Workshop – “Working faster, and smarter with InDesign and Photoshop”
APA contest to continue electronic entries

For the second year, the Arkansas Press Association will be accepting annual contest entries electronically. The advertising contest deadline is Jan. 31, 2017, while the editorial contest deadline is Mar. 31, 2017.

APA joined about 20 other states last year that conduct their contests using the Advanced Contest Entry System (ACES) developed by the Illinois Press Association. Submitting entries in this fashion is as easy as sending an email.

The advertising contest and rules will be the same as the previous year. Complete instructions will be available on the APA website next week. Newspapers are encouraged to begin gathering PDFs of your best ads and special sections for submission in the 2017 contest.

Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will be judging both contests in 2017. The Better Newspaper Advertising Contest awards will be presented Friday, March 10, at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs, site for the 2017 APA advertising conference.

The editorial awards will be presented at the APA SuperConvention Saturday, July 8, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock.

Register online now for Russell Viers workshop at APA

Online registration is now available for the Thursday, January 19, workshop featuring Russell Viers on Adobe products, InDesign and PhotoShop. The workshop will begin at 10 a.m. and will be at the APA building at 411 South Victory in Little Rock.

The online registration form for this workshop can be found at http://www.arkansaspress.org/event/InDesignWorkshop.

The workshop will be open to anyone seeking this training, regardless of APA member status. APA members and associates will be given priority for slots at this training session, but the space is limited and will most likely sell out.

The event will include a working lunch and will adjourn by mid-afternoon.

Viers does this sort of training full time at venues across North America and in Europe where he travels several times a year to do similar training. He has made several visits to APA conventions in the past and will be at the 2017 convention scheduled for July 5-9 in Little Rock.

For more information on Viers, go to http://www.russellviers.com.

Send Us Your News!

Promote your staff, your newspaper.

The Arkansas Press Association encourages members to send news of staff changes or other happenings and associated photos to info@arkansaspress.org for inclusion in The Publisher Weekly and AdNews.
Potpourri

The annual legislative conference of the Newspaper Association Managers (NAM) organization was held earlier this week in Washington, D.C. It is one of those conferences I seldom miss as it holds so much vital and pertinent information for those of us embroiled in sorting out an industry in a rapid state of transition.

This association is for those who do what I do across the country. The topics vary but are always on point regarding so many relevant issues facing the newspaper industry today. It’s important to stay on top of these things, and to be prepared to be able to see what’s coming down the road before it actually arrives.

That’s what goes on at this conference, and it’s not something I would want to miss.

There’s a lot of neat stuff to do and see in D.C., but very little of which I get to see on these trips. For two and a half days we stay holed up in a large meeting room hearing one presentation after another. It can be, at times, a tad overwhelming.

Outside the meeting room the Potomac River flows past. Just on the other side is Georgetown. The spires of Georgetown University are easily visible just across the river.

The topics inside the meeting room range from assaults on public notices, or rather the assault on public notices required to be published in newspapers. There are those who think this time-honored and cost-efficient way of keeping the public informed about what their government is doing is out-dated. Most see the Internet as the place for the new age postings of public notices.

And as almost always happens, those in support of removing public notices from newspapers seem to think that newspaper publishers are getting rich off of publishing them in their newspapers. While admittedly public notices are a vital revenue stream for some newspapers, for most it is a rather small percentage of their overall revenue. Still, small or not it’s not something the newspaper industry wants to give up. It’s not all about the revenue. A big part of the argument for keeping public notices in newspapers is that it remains the most effective, and as already mentioned, the most cost-effective way of getting the word out to the general public.

If we are really trying to keep the public informed, then newspapers remain the best forum. The Internet, while highly entertaining and often educational, is a dicey arena for entrusting something as important as public notices.

If we’re trying to hide public notices then the Internet would be a good repository. Most would go unseen.

There are myriad other topics here as we convene in the nation’s Capitol. It is an appropriate setting and backdrop for discussing legislative affairs.

With the sale of the Forrest City Times-Herald and the Marianna Courier-Index by Weston and Kevin Lewey, we lose another rarity in the Arkansas newspaper industry...a family-owned daily newspaper.

Weston told me months ago that the business challenges of being a sole proprietorship enterprise were becoming overwhelming; that it was difficult for them to remain profitable.

The efficiencies gained by a newspaper holding company in these situations can offset some of those challenges and those losses. In fact, it is about the only way some communities still have functioning newspapers in their communities.

Having been involved in the sale of a long-held family newspaper enterprise, I can identify fully with the mixed bag of emotions that come with it. On the one hand there is relief that the struggle is now over, and on the other there is the inescapable sadness at the feeling that something special is coming to an end.

Congratulations to Weston and Kevin in the sale of their newspapers and good luck exploring and expanding other interests.

Travel always comes with its own kind of adventure. Technology facilitates travel so that we can go from point A to point B faster and more efficiently on America’s airlines.

But there is still a machine that has to be able to pull it off. The thing about machines is they sometimes break down.

So as I was departing Little Rock bound for this conference in D.C. early Saturday morning, we boarded on time and we pulled away from the gate right on time only to have the airplane develop a mechanical problem before we reached the runway.

No problem, says the pilot, we’ll just head back to the gate and get it fixed. Problem. It couldn’t be fixed that easily so we were off-loaded from this airplane and after about an hour, boarded a different airplane.

My connection is Dallas was tight so I knew I wasn’t going to make it. The nice people at the airline booked me on a later flight out of Dallas, which would put me there just three hours later than planned. When we got to Dallas where I was preparing to blow three hours waiting for this later flight, I glanced at the “departures” board and saw that the original flight, the one I missed was “boarding.”

Of course it was at the other end of the terminal but I chased on down there on the off chance that I might still catch that flight which had been delayed by…you guessed it…mechanical problems.

Out or breath I arrived at the gate as the last of the passengers were entering the airplane. I queried if there was room for me, and it turns out there was a seat left so I piled on in patting myself on the back in the process. If I hadn’t noticed the posting on the departures board I might well have been cooling my heels in Dallas’ Love Field for three hours. I was feeling pretty good about it.

The flight to D.C. was bumpy but it arrived just 30 minutes after I was originally scheduled to be there. Off the airplane and in the baggage claim area I looked on as fellow passenger after fellow passenger claimed their luggage off the conveyor until there was no more coming. Unfortunately, while I made the airplane my bag did not. Likely, I figured, it would be on that later flight I was supposed to be on.

So I filed my claim at the baggage service area and headed off to the hotel and the conference. Three hours later I got a text...my bag had arrived on the later flight and would be delivered to my hotel. The hotel delivered it to my room while I was out to dinner with some colleagues.

Considering the volume of luggage these people handle, it is incredible they can track one piece so easily. That’s the technology side kicking back in. Not only could they track it but take possession of it and deliver it to me.

That’s somehow reassuring. With all the uncertainties we face in traveling today, it’s good to know that the system in place can work efficiently and professionally. I don’t really care to test it again, but it sure worked nicely for me this time.

Have a great week!

Tom Larimer
Arkansas Publisher Weekly

— 30 —

Bill Newsom

William Eldon “Bill” Newsom, 81, former long-time editor of The Courier in Russellville died Saturday, November 26, at St. Mary’s Regional Medical Center in Russellville.

Bill served as editor of the newspaper for over 37 years, according to a front-page story in The Courier the day after his death. During most of those years he penned a column, “Banter by Bill.”

He became editor of the Morrilton Democrat in 1957. He made the move to the Russellville newspaper in 1960 before retiring in 1998.

— 30 —

Jo Folds

Jo Folds, 74, wife of Malvern Daily Record Publisher Richard Folds, died November 30 in Little Rock.

She was born July 30, 1942 in Decatur, Ga. and married Richard on August 30, 1968 in Hapeville, Ga.

She taught public school for 30 years before retiring from the Malvern School District.

Forrest City, Marianna Newspapers change hands

Argent Arkansas News Media has purchased the Forrest City Times-Herald and the Marianna Courier-Index from Weston and Kevin Lewey, according to Randy Cope of Cribb, Greene & Cope, who represented Times-Herald Publishing Company, Inc. in the transaction.

Argent Arkansas News Media is a newly formed company and the Times-Herald and Courier-Index are the only newspapers owned by the company as of this date. Argent is affiliated with other newspaper companies that own and operate newspapers throughout the United States and Canada with more than 175 publications comprised of daily and weekly newspapers and associated publications.

“We are pleased to assume responsibility for the Times-Herald and Courier-Index newspapers. We have a long history of operating community newspapers in small and mid-size communities and look forward to continuing the strong tradition of community journalism established by the McCollum and Lewey families,” said Roland McBride, an officer with Argent.

Publisher Weston Lewey said, “My grandfather purchased the Times-Herald in 1942. My father, Bonner McCollum, became publisher in 1963, followed by me in 1997. Throughout this time, our main focus has been strong community journalism. Over the last several years however, the newspaper industry has experienced many changes, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to remain independently owned. We felt the time was right to strengthen these two newspapers with a larger, established newspaper group, which also shares a commitment to local journalism. We would like to thank our employees and the Forrest City and Marianna communities for their trust and for partnering with us over the years. We welcome Argent Arkansas News Media and believe they will be good stewards.”

The Lewey family will still own and operate their Forrest City printing and office supply business.

McBride indicated that no immediate changes to the daily operations of the newspapers are planned, other than to become acclimated to the operating standards that have been established through the years as the economy and the newspaper industry have evolved to serve the subscribers and advertisers.

ArkLaMiss provides info, valuable networking

By LARRY KILLIAN

This is the first circulation conference I have attended; therefore, what might seem obvious to others was highly beneficial for me. The simplest benefit with a great impact was the comradery with others in the field. It was fascinating to know that other newspapers deal with similar issues and make similar ‘mistakes’ as we trod the road given. I gleaned much from those far ahead in the game and at the same time realized there were areas I was able to contribute.

The session(s) on USPS regulations and procedures caused us to immediately change one our processes – which I wanted to do all along anyway. I did not get to have a one-on-one evaluation, however, many of my questions were answered through others. There was one thing I wanted to obtain whilst at the conference. It remains to be seen as if it will materialize. The opportunity was there and perhaps it will soon be on its way. That aside, the ideas and creativity from the last day caused another production change just this week.

I do think there was some information overload for our small weekly, but the encouragement from others and new friendships acquired made the trip highly beneficial and, hopefully, profitable. The vendors offered more than I expected and overall resulted in a trip well worth the investment. It will be on my calendar for next year.”

(Larry Killian is the owner/publisher of the South Arkansas Sun in Hampton. He writes this review of the ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference as a condition of receiving one of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation grants to attend the annual conference in Vicksburg, Miss.)
APA network rebate checks in the mail

The APA/APS Advertising Network rebate checks have been mailed to those APA member newspapers that participate in one of the three ad networks.

The APA/APS Board of Directors approved at the fall retreat last week in Little Rock the payment of the rebates. Those APA newspapers participating will receive $700 per network, so if you’re participating in both the Statewide Classified Advertising Network (SCAN) and the Display Advertising Network (DAN) you will receive $1400.

The third network, the Daily Connection, participants will receive $350 each.

At the end of the 2016 fiscal year, there were 99 newspapers participating in the DAN and 102 in the SCAN. There were 24 dailies participating in the Daily Connection in the past year.

The checks were to be mailed mid-week this week. If you haven’t already received your checks, you should be receiving them soon.

APA dues statements for 2017 in the mail

APA member newspapers may be looking for a statement of their dues this week. If you haven’t received your statement, you soon will.

Member newspapers have the option of paying their dues or having the amount deducted from advertising checks.

The dues are calculated based on the equivalent of a full-page ad for tabloid publications and a half-page for broadsheet editions.

The dues are due January 15.

If you have questions regarding your dues statement, contact the APA office in Little Rock at 501-374-1500.

APA ad contest deadline Jan. 31

Here’s just a reminder that the deadline for entries in the APA’s annual Better Newspaper Advertising Contest (BNAC) is January 31. That’s when all entries submitted electronically should be completed.

The BNAC awards will be presented Friday, March 10, at the annual awards luncheon held in conjunction with the annual APA advertising conference March 9-10 at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs.

For the second year, APA will be accepting entries electronically only. Entries should be submitted in PDF form. Complete instructions and contest rules are available on the APA website. They are virtually the same as last year.

There’s plenty of time before the January 31 deadline, but it will be here before you know it. Don’t wait till the last minute. Select your best advertising entries at your leisure and submit them in advance of the deadline. If you need assistance in submitting your entries or if you have questions, call the APA office.
Public notices have come under attack the past several years, and the intensity of the assault has in no way abated, nor is it likely to do so.

It’s not so much an attack on public notices, although it could be construed as that. It’s more an attack on the requirement to publish public notices in newspapers, and it’s not an attack unique to Arkansas. It’s pretty much universal across the country.

It’s fairly easy for a legislator carrying such a bill to remove the requirement for publishing this public notice or to insist they’re doing so to save the taxpayers money. That’s always fairly good cover, but the reality is it’s often more heinous than that.

When I read these attempts to close records or remove public notice publication requirements, my first thought is always, “What are they trying to hide.” Often that’s a more accurate reason behind the reason, but you have to look for it.

There remain among us those, yes even in the legislature, who think that the people’s business is really none of their business; that it would be much easier to make decisions that affect the lives of taxpaying citizens behind closed doors with no oversight on the public’s behalf.

It’s the same, really, for those who wish to undermine or eliminate entirely the state’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The FOIA is an inconvenient nuisance for some who would be much happier if we could just eliminate government transparency.

The two, public notices and the FOIA go hand-in-hand in (1) keeping the public informed on the actions of government, especially how government is spending our tax dollars, and (2) keeping those actions of government and the records created thereto open and accessible to the public.

This only makes sense to the sensible. Yet there are those, and more than just a few, who would seek to alter these two protections to the point of being useless to the public at large.

If you think your representatives at the Arkansas legislature fall into this category you really need to be visiting with them, soon and often. To do otherwise just gives tacit approval to those who seek to remove the public from the decision-making process.

So let’s talk about public notices for a minute. These notices are required of some government agencies on various levels in state and local government. The requirement is to publish in a newspaper of “general circulation” in the county. These can come from the state, the county, from the cities, or from local school boards, but all have responsibilities under Arkansas law to publish certain actions.

If you are ever in doubt about what is required under law to publish, and perhaps what is not, download a copy of the Arkansas Public Notices Digest off of the APA website. You’ll need to download it to your computer, and not just use the one on the website. The search function will only work after you’ve downloaded it.

Then search the Digest for Arkansas statutes requiring publication of notices, the frequency of those notices, which is responsible for placing the notices, who is responsible for paying for them, and in rare cases the price for publication is included. An example of the latter would be for the delinquent tax list that many newspapers recently published.

Public notices placed in newspapers have to be paid for by someone. Public notices are a revenue stream for newspapers, albeit a very small one in most cases. Still, it’s revenue, and this always comes up when we raise objection when removing public notices from newspapers comes up at the legislature.

There are those who think newspapers are getting fat off collecting for these required publications. They don’t hesitate to air this view when promoting legislation to remove the publication requirement. That is, of course, not the case. Far from it.

And in fairness, those arguing to remove the publication requirement aren’t suggesting public notices be done away with entirely. Instead, they promote “publication” on a government website. My take on this is if you’re wanting to hide some government action, putting it on a website controlled by the government would be an excellent way to do it.

I heard another great example recently of just how bad an idea this is. The story came from my counterpart in Seattle, Washington who lives on one of the many peninsulas in that beautiful city. Like most peninsulas, there was a light house at the end of it and the light house was also equipped with those foghorns employed by the Coast Guard in times of fog.

Now one might think that the foghorns would be hated by the residents and they would applaud the removal of them, but the residents there sort of liked the foghorns within earshot. They added, some say, to the ambiance of living on a peninsula.

Then one day the foghorns disappeared. All of them. When some of the residents inquired as to why the Coast Guard didn’t give them notice that the foghorns were being removed, they were told that the notice had been posted on the Coast Guard website for six months before removal of the horns.

Could there be any greater evidence of how bad an idea posting public notices on government websites than this? Six months and not one of the thousands of residents living on one of the peninsulas in Seattle took note. It would be the same on just about any government website.

There’s another way you could help in this fight to save public notices. Give them a better showcase in your newspaper. Write stories the leads of which came from public notices in your newspapers.

There is a wealth of stories embedded in those public notices in your newspapers. If you’re not “mining” that information, you’re missing some stories in your community. And, writing stories in your newspaper that cite the public notice calls attention to them among your readers.

Clearly label them, display them in a readable fashion, and find the stories that lurk inside these public notices and tell those stories in your newspapers.

Believe me, this will not only keep your readers better informed on local government action, it will help fight the good fight to keep public notices in newspapers.

Where they belong.

Have a great week!

———

Tom Larimer’s
Potpourri

Arkansas Publisher Weekly       2         December 15, 2016
William Frank Jackson

William Frank Jackson, 81, former owner, publisher and president of the Monticello Advance-Monticellonian, died Thursday, Dec. 1, at his home in Monticello.

Jackson and his wife, Mary Emily Clower Jackson, were owners and publishers of the paper from 1964 to 1996. In addition to a long career in newspapers, Frank was also a radio-control aircraft enthusiast, and he was an avid hunter, fisherman, golfer and tennis player.

He earned a BS degree from the University of Arkansas in 1957, and later served an as officer and took pilot training in the Air Force. He retired from the Air Force reserve as a captain.

His wife of 54 years, Mary Emily, survives him. Four children and two grandchildren also survive him.

Gerald Morris Talley

Gerald Morris Talley, 82, of Batesville, died Sunday, Nov 6. He had worked for newspapers for many years, including the Batesville Daily Guard and the Arkansas Gazette.

He served for 43 years in the Arkansas National Guard and in the regular U.S. Army, retiring as a captain. He was a Master Mason and a member of the Blue Lodge in Searcy.

His survivors include his wife of 58 years, Ritta Turner Talley, three children, several grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Early registration indicates Viers visit a sell-out

If the early registrations are any indication, the upcoming workshop featuring Russell Viers Thursday, January 19, at the APA building in Little Rock will sell out.

“We made an announcement of the online registration opening for the Viers workshop and immediately the registrations started coming in,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “Russell has always been popular with our members and APA is very happy to be able to have him here presenting his workshop again.”

The workshop will begin at 10 a.m. on January 19 and conclude at approximately 3 p.m. The fee for the workshop is $60, which includes a lunch.

The workshop will be open to anyone seeking this training, regardless of APA member status. APA members and associates will be given priority for slots at this training session, but the space is limited and will most likely sell out.

The online registration form for this workshop can be found at http://www.arkansaspress.org/event/InDesignWorkshop.

Viers does this sort of training full time at venues across North America and in Europe where he travels several times a year to do similar training. He has made several visits to APA conventions in the past and will be at the 2017 convention scheduled for July 5-9 in Little Rock.

For more information on Viers, go to http://www.russellviers.com.

APA is requesting 2017 rate cards

APA is requesting 2017 advertising rate cards from all members, so rates can be updated in the accounting program.

Please send a copy of your 2017 rate card, or your current rate card if rates are not changing to Rebecca McGraw at rebecca@arkansaspress.org or mail them to Arkansas Press Association, 411 S. Victory St., Little Rock, AR 72201.
The Arkansas Press Association Hosts

Russell Viers

Working faster, and smarter with InDesign and Photoshop

Showing you the techniques and tricks to create large documents faster and with more last-minute editing flexibility. Process digital photos faster, too, using Bridge and Photoshop together as a power punch!

January 19, 2017
10 am - 4 pm
at APA headquarters
411 S. Victory St., Little Rock, AR 72201

Cost is $60/person with lunch provided.
Register with the attached form or online at www.arkansaspress.org/event/InDesignWorkshop.
The Arkansas Press Association Hosts

Russell Viers

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January 19, 2017
10 am - 4 pm
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Russell Viers Registration Form

Newspaper/Company ____________________________ City ____________________________

Phone (__) __________________ Fax (__) ____________________

Name(s) ______________________________ Email Address ______________________________

1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________
4. ______________________________
5. ______________________________

Total Attendees: _____ x $60 Workshop Fee   TOTAL $ ________

Payment Options: ___ Check Enclosed ___ Bill Me

Credit Card # ___________________________ Expiration Date ___________ VCN# ________

Register online at www.arkansaspress.org/event/InDesignWorkshop
or send registration & payment by Monday, January 16 to:
Arkansas Press Association, 411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 or Fax 501.374.7509.
FOI coalition re-organizing ahead of general legislative session

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Coalition is re-organizing in preparation of the start of the 2017 general session of the Arkansas legislature next month.

The Coalition is comprised of working print and broadcast journalists, media specialists, college professors and others interested in preserving the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The group meets when called during the session when legislation is proposed that would amend in some way the state’s FOIA.

The first meeting will be held in early January. The meetings are generally working lunches held at the Arkansas Press Association building in Little Rock.

If you are interested in participating in this group, please email Tom Larimer at tom@arkansaspress.org.

Tate elected APA President; Committee named

Byron Tate, owner and publisher of the Sheridan Headlight, has been elected the next president of the Arkansas Press Association, and current President Nat Lea has named a nominating committee to fill three vacancies on the APA/APS Board of Directors.

The election was held at the recent APA board retreat in Little Rock. Tate was a unanimous selection by the board to be the next president, an office he will assume at the conclusion of the SuperConvention July 5-8 in Little Rock. Tate is presently vice president of the APA board.

Jay Edwards of The Daily Record in Little Rock will assume the second vice president position on the board and round out the executive board. Tom White of Monticello will move up to be the new vice president.

Rusty Fraser, immediate past president of the APA board, will serve as chairman of the nominating committee to find nominees for the three vacancies on the board, including one to replace Fraser who is in his last year on the board.

President Nat Lea named Rusty Turner, editor of the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, as the other board representative on the nominating committee. The two at-large APA members named to the committee included Kelly Freudensprung of Benton and Todd Frantz of Hot Springs.

The APA board is comprised of 11 members, but due to resignations of two board members, David Mosesso and Shane Allen, there will be three vacancies to fill.

APA members who desire to be considered for nomination to the board should contact either Fraser or APA Executive Director Tom Larimer. The nominating committee will meet at the annual APA advertising conference to be held March 9-10 at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs.
December 22, 1969.

Forty-seven years ago today. It was one of those defining moments; one of those events that sometimes happen in our lives that change them forever.

I was in the Navy on this date 47 years ago, assigned to the Navy Fighter Weapons School (“Top Gun”) at Miramar Naval Air Station just north of San Diego.

The base was operating on a “skeleton” crew, as many were home on leave for the holidays. I wasn’t among the lucky ones to get leave.

I hadn’t been in the Navy all that long. The junior guys don’t get the perks, like getting to go home for Christmas.

It was a glorious Southern California day, December 22, 1969. I was helping carry some Christmas packages up the three flights of stairs to our hangar offices. I had both arms loaded with packages and was about halfway up the stairs when the building shuddered. The stairs shook underneath my feet, and I fell, the Christmas packages going back down the stairway.

It’s funny the tricks the mind will play. I thought someone had slammed the huge hangar doors, causing the building to shake. Of course, it never shook that hard before, but it’s what went through my mind.

As I retrieved the packages, the fire bell went off. Again I fumed. Who was the rocket scientist who picked this time for a fire drill?

I finally reached our offices with my load and was leisurely closing the windows and preparing to lock up for the drill. As I locked the outer door to my office, a chief petty officer came running at me, screaming. He was burned. His uniform was half burned from his body. His face was black. I knew him, but I didn’t recognize him in this state.

What he was saying finally got through to me: “Get out! Get out! The whole hangar’s going to blow!”

I don’t recall going down the three flights of stairs. The next I knew I was running across the tarmac away from the hangar as fast as I could go.

I risked a glance back over my shoulder. Huge billows of black smoke were boiling from one side of the two-bay hangar.

As I looked back I could see firemen waving for help. All Navy personnel are trained firemen. When there is a fire at sea, you can’t call the fire department. You fight it yourself.

I ran back and grabbed onto a fire hose, the third man back from the nozzle. We walked into the heavy smoke blasting away with our hose. You couldn’t see anything for the smoke. We were just pointing it at whatever direction seemed hottest.

Other hose teams were spraying wildly too. It was like being in a water fight in the dark with high-pressure hoses. The building sprinklers added to the mayhem. They were dumping water on us from above.

The heat was incredible. The noise of ejection seats of the airplanes in the hangar blowing up and hitting the roof of the hangar was deafening. The debris falling on us as they fell back to the hangar floor was frightening.

Eventually the smoke cleared and the heat subsided, and we were able to lay down our hose.

I walked out of the hangar, coughing, and again the mind tricks. I was thinking, “wasn’t it something for this to happen and nobody get hurt.”

On the tarmac, just outside the hangar, were stretchers on which the charred and grotesquely contorted bodies of six sailors lay. They were killed instantly when an airplane crashed into the hangar, starting this disaster.

It was an improbable accident. The pilot of the airplane, an F-8 single-seat fighter aircraft, had ejected short of the runway when he experienced engine failure. The aircraft was pointed for a crash on the runway.

Somehow when the pilot ejected the course of the aircraft was altered, pointing it directly at Hangar K-277. The huge hangar doors were open only creating only about a six- to eight-foot opening. The nose of the still flying, pilot-less aircraft went through that opening crashing into the hangar bay full of F-4 Phantoms fighters and crews working on them.

There were others who died that day. Still others died days and weeks later from burns.

I think about those who died on this day there in 1969. I have for the last 47 years. I think about the families of those young men, and how Christmas is memorable for them in a completely different way. It will be that way forever for them.

And I realize how truly blessed I am...how truly blessed we are...to be able to observe this Christmas at home, with family.

Christmas creates for us many images and many memories. My hope is that the memories of this Christmas be happy ones for you, and that this Christmas becomes a memorable one in a very joyous way.

(If you would like to read more about this accident, including a list of those who died as a result of it, go to http://tinyurl.com/zmddsw9.

Merry Christmas to one and all!

Tom Larimer’s
Potpourri

(Note: This column originally appeared years ago. It has been resurrected and updated when the publication day falls on this day in December, as it does today.)
**APA Dues almost due; Time to re-new**

APA member newspapers should have by now received a statement of their dues in the mail. If you haven’t received your statement, you soon will.

Member newspapers have the option of paying their dues or having the amount deducted from advertising checks.

The dues are calculated based on the equivalent of a full-page ad for tabloid publications and a half-page for broadsheet editions.

The dues are due January 15.

If you have questions regarding your dues statement, contact the APA office in Little Rock at 501-374-1500.

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**Send Us Your Rate Cards!**

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Please send a copy of your 2017 rate card, or your current rate card if rates are not changing to Rebecca McGraw at rebecca@arkansaspress.org or mail them to Arkansas Press Association, 411 S. Victory St., Little Rock, AR 72201.

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**Registation continues for Viers visit to APA**

The registrations for the upcoming Russell Viers workshop to be held Thursday, January 19, at the APA building in Little Rock continue to grow. The event is now over half filled, and is expected to be at capacity well in advance of the workshop date.

If you have not as yet registered please do so at http://www.arkansaspress.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=889934.

Registration for the workshop if $60 per individual attending, and is open to anyone needing the training. APA members will be given priority, but when the workshop sells out it will be closed.

The workshop will begin at 10 a.m. Jan. 19 and concluded at approximately 3 p.m., and will including a working lunch.

Viers is a specialist in Adobe products and will be focusing on training in InDesign and PhotoShop, teaching those present how to work smarter and faster utilizing Adobe software. He does this sort of training full time at venues across North America and in Europe where he travels several times a year to do similar training.

This will be a hands-on workshop so fee free to bring your laptop or other devices to use in the training.

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**“Trust Us!”**

Without public notices, the government wouldn’t have to say anything else.

Public notices are a community’s window into the government. From zoning regulations to local budgets, governments have used local newspapers to inform citizens of its actions as an essential part of your right to know. You know where to look, when to look and what to look for to be involved as a citizen. Local newspapers provide you with the information you need to get involved.

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**APA annual ad conference coming in March**

It’s time to mark your calendar, if you haven’t already, for the APA’s annual advertising conference to be held Thursday and Friday, March 9-10, at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs.

**Ryan Dohrn**, creator of the 360 Ad Sales Training System, will be the featured presenter at the conference. Ryan will bring his “mission critical” ad sales training designed specifically for media sales Thursday afternoon.

The conference will include a “hot ideas” exchange session that will take place Friday morning along with some round table discussions on what’s hot and what’s not so much.

The Better Newspaper Advertising Awards will be presented at the Friday luncheon of the conference. The contest deadline for entries is Jan. 31, so take some time to prepare some entries and perhaps you’ll take your place among the top entries when the awards are presented.

Be watching for more information on the APA advertising conference, but in the meantime mark your calendar, get your contest entries ready and plan to be in Hot Springs for this popular annual gathering.

**E&P seeks nominations for ‘Publishing Leaders’**

*Editor & Publisher* wants to recognize the next generation of newspaper publishing leaders, and they need your help. They’re talking about people who are young, bright, and capable of tackling whatever the changing newspaper climate throws at them.

More specifically, they’re looking for people with business acumen to lead through trying times and vision to implement bold, new strategies to move their newspapers forward.

They ask your help by nominating a newspaper up-and-comer (or yourself) for their “Publishing Leaders – 25 Under 35” feature article that will appear in *E&P’s* April issue.

Nominations are open to men and women age 35 years and younger. Candidates may be publishers, editors, advertising executives, circulation managers or other newspaper leaders. Nominees must own or work for a print or online newspaper.

The deadline for nominations is Feb. 13, 2017.


**Guest Column: Into the Issues**

**By Al Cross**

Rural votes played a big role in Donald Trump’s victory, and he plans some big changes that will have a big impact in rural communities.

Extractive industries do most of their extracting in rural areas, and Trump promised “to topple just about every major energy and environment policy enacted in the past eight years,” **Robin Bravender** reported for Environment & Energy News, in a story that we excerpted on The Rural Blog at [bit.ly/2fP90FA](http://bit.ly/2fP90FA).

The Obama administration policies most likely to be reversed are the Environmental Protection Agency’s redefinition of “waters of the United States” in the Clean Water Act, strongly opposed by farm interests, and the regulations to limit carbon-dioxide emissions from coal-fired power plants.

But there is little that Trump can do to bring back power-plant markets that coal has lost to cheap natural gas, experts said in an earlier blog item, at [bit.ly/2ezTu34](http://bit.ly/2ezTu34). In it, Senate Majority Leader **Mitch McConnell** of Kentucky, the No. 3 coal state, said it is “hard to tell” whether a reversal of Obama’s policies will bring back the industry. Trump hasn’t said exactly how he would help coal, we noted at [bit.ly/2eZKrRIF](http://bit.ly/2eZKrRIF), an item that also noted his support of oil pipelines.

While Trump’s opposition to the water rule cemented his support among farmers, they worry about his opposition to trade agreements, which help U.S. agricultural exports and crop prices.

**Philip Brasher** of the Agri-Pulse newsletter did a story the day after the election and we excerpted it at [bit.ly/2gc04x7](http://bit.ly/2gc04x7).

Farmers are also worried about Trump’s stand on illegal immigration. Ironically, his election drove down the price of the Mexican peso from 6 cents to less than 5 cents, which could lead to more illegal immigration from the country, Bloomberg News reported. We excerpted it at [bit.ly/2gbYVpA](http://bit.ly/2gbYVpA).

Trump held rural rallies to spur turnout, a strategy that supposed experts questioned but proved to be a sort of organic turnout operation, as I told **Patrik Jonsson** of The Christian Science Monitor the day after the election. We excerpted his story at [bit.ly/2g9Vqkf](http://bit.ly/2g9Vqkf). Our day-after rural roundup of the election results is at [bit.ly/2eZs7y3](http://bit.ly/2eZs7y3).

**Katherine Cramer**, a political-science professor at the University of Wisconsin, became a leading interpreter of Trump’s rural base because of her 2015 book, *The Politics of Resentment*, based on a long series of interviews with people in 27 Badger State communities.

Washington Post wrote her up, and then she did her own piece for the Post. We excerpted both, respectively, at and [bit.ly/2g9PcAA](http://bit.ly/2g9PcAA).

Cramer wrote that rural people in Wisconsin resent the political and economic dominance of Milwaukee and the capital of Madison, and their attitudes toward rural people. “They perceived that city folks called people like them ignorant racists who could not figure out their own interests,” she wrote. “To them, urban types just did not get small-town life—what people in those places value, the way they live, and the challenges they face.”

The Rural Blog is mainly aggregation, but we do the occasional story, and did the Sunday after the election, when **Chuck Todd** of NBC News featured comments from a leading farm-policy journalist on “Meet the Press.” **Chris Clayton** of DTN/The Progressive Farmer said in an MSNBC interview with Todd and others that Trump’s big rural margin may have been bolstered by resentment at repeated references in the news media to Trump’s popularity among both rural and lesser-educated voters.

“Rural America is not uneducated, even though maybe there are fewer people with college degrees than there might be in the metropolitan areas,” Clayton said, and his remarks stung Todd and *New York Times* columnist **David Brooks**.

Brooks said, “People with college degrees voted very differently than people with high-school degrees, but when you say it, when you actually don’t have a college degree, you hear, ‘Oh, they think I’m stupid.’ I’m guilty of that because I use that shorthand too. And you saw so much sense of moral injury when you went around the Trump world.” Read our blog item at [bit.ly/2g9Kv9V](http://bit.ly/2g9Kv9V).

The highly unusual election prompted more than the usual editorial commentary in rural newspapers, and we picked up some of it on The Rural Blog. You can read examples from both sides at [bit.ly/2fP3CTe](http://bit.ly/2fP3CTe) and [bit.ly/2ezY14c](http://bit.ly/2ezY14c).

I, for one, am glad the election is over and we can get back to more normal coverage. If you do or see stories that are relevant across rural areas, please send them to me at al.cross@uky.edu.

**Al Cross** edited and managed weekly newspapers before spending 26 years at The (Louisville) Courier-Journal and serving as president of the Society of Professional Journalists. Since 2004 he has been director of the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues, based at the University of Kentucky. See [www.Rural Journalism.org](http://www.Rural Journalism.org).
Those of us who profess to think we know a little about newspaper readership have traditionally thought...and often said...that the newspaper reader demographic is “older, better educated and more affluent...”

Back in the early 2000’s when I had a real job as a publisher of a daily newspaper in Middle Tennessee, I had our marketing department conduct a study of our readers. Admittedly it was likely not that scientific but it didn’t have to be for our purposes. I wanted to get a better handle on the demographic of our readers.

It turns out that the age of the average reader of our newspaper was 54. That didn’t surprise, but it was a little bit of a concern. If the average is 54, then it follows that just as many are over 54 than are under 54.

In the parlance, that’s an older demographic and not necessarily one that major advertisers are looking to move out of their recliners.

Now comes a new Nielsen Scarborough readership study that explodes some of those long-held, pre-conceived notions about who’s reading our newspapers. Yes, it’s still the better educated and more affluent, but now thanks to the digital enterprise of newspapers, the demographic is much younger.

So if the millennials tell you they’re getting their news online instead of reading the newspaper, they’re likely only being half honest. Chances are good that the news they’re reading online is on a newspaper web or mobile site. It is the widespread use of the digital world as a news source for the younger generation that is skewing the traditional tried and true precepts of just who is reading newspapers.

This can’t be good news for the “print is dead” crowd. Not only are 69 percent of the population of the U.S. reading newspapers, the age of the average reader is...get this...going down. That 69 percent, or roughly 170 million people, read a newspaper either in print, online or on a mobile app in a given month. That’s a lot of eyeballs for someone looking to be seen by the masses.

Dead? Hardly.

Newspapers still deliver the audience. We’ve known that, or at the very least suspected as much, but here’s verification from a reputable source that not only validates what we’ve been suspecting, but even produces results that exceed our suspicions and our expectations.

Of that 69 percent number, 51 percent indicate they read print only. The rest is a balance of mobile and online readership. Fifty. One. Percent.

When over half of the U.S. population reads a newspaper in print only in a given month, what does that say about the health of the industry? And yet there are those who insist “print is dead.” They not only insist it, they continue to spread that as if it were the gospel. It is not. It is not even close.

So okay, this is validation for newspapers. Maybe we needed it. Maybe we didn’t, but it now lies with us to tell the story to our readers. We need to be telling them that they are not relics of the past and neither is the newspaper.

Certainly we are not without our challenges, but the premise that newspapers remain the best vehicle to reach the majority of people in this country is solid and accurate.

We need to be telling this story, day after day, week after week and month after month. We won’t do it, but we need to be. We won’t do it because newspapers have never been good at tooting their own horn, even when there is plenty of reason to be tooting it.

Oh we may run the occasional house ad, when there is space available or when we have a late ad cancellation, but there’s not as a whole much effort put into self-promotion by newspapers.

That really needs to change. We need to be telling our story if for no other reason than to counter those who for some reason delight in insisting that “print,” or newspapers, are dead. We need to be telling it and we need to be consistent and persistent in the telling of this story.

Newspapers reach the majority of people on a purely personal level. People continue to read newspapers because they trust newspapers and they trust that the stories we’re telling them are the real thing. No fake news in these parts. If you want fake news, go to Facebook or Twitter or any of a host of online sites whose credibility has been, is and always will be suspect.

Not newspapers. We’re straight shooters and our readers know it. It is a responsibility that the vast majority of newspapers take very seriously, and they should.

But while we take that responsibility seriously, we should also take seriously the need to tell our story to those same readers. Tell them these numbers. Do your own local studies and relay the results whatever they are.

For the retailer looking to sell products to the service sector looking to sell services, to politicians looking to reach a wide audience in a trusted medium, we need to be telling them our story. Not just once, but in an ongoing basis.

It is important that we do so. No, it is vital that we do so because our future depends in great part on the perception of our industry. Those who wish us “dead” have done a good job of planting and cultivating the seeds of that fabrication. We need to do just as well with the counter message.

Newspapers are the trusted medium. They are trusted so much that the vast majority of Americans continue to read them and rely on what they’re reading.

This may come as a revelation to some, but it’s something we’ve known all along. It’s just that now we’re reaching a much broader, read that much younger audience.

As the late Curt Gowdy might have said about our industry, “Our future is all ahead of us.”

As the year 2016 comes to an end, we look with great optimism about the year ahead. Here’s wishing nothing but happiness and prosperity in 2017.

Have a great week!

P.S. Back in the early 2000’s I was telling you newspapers are not dead. I’ve been proved right. Now it’s time to tell you the same thing about 2016. I, too, have been proven right.

—

Tom Larimer’s

Potpourri

December 29, 2016