**Ad contest deadline nears: January 31**

It’s not exactly the last minute just yet, but it’s close enough to get motivated to create and submit entries in the APA’s annual Better Newspaper Advertising Contest, the deadline for which is January 31.

Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will be judging the contest again this year, and again this year submissions and judging will take place online. For information on the contest and a step-by-step explanation of the process, go to [http://www.newspapercontest.com/Contests/ArkansasPressAssociation.aspx](http://www.newspapercontest.com/Contests/ArkansasPressAssociation.aspx). Of course you can always call the APA office if you need assistance.

This will mark the second year the APA has taken the electronic contest submission and judging approach, and it’s really simple and easy to enter the APA contest. Some suggest that it’s easier than the old-fashioned way of searching through and submitting tear sheets to be considered by contest judges. All you need do now is find ads you’d like to enter, create a pdf of the ad and submit it.

One thing is for sure: you can’t win APA ad awards if you don’t enter the contest.

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**Spots remain for Viers visit to APA Office**

Some spots still remain for the Thursday, January 19, workshop featuring Adobe trainer [Russell Viers](#) to be held at the Arkansas Press Association building in Little Rock. The training will focus on “working smarter” with InDesign and PhotoShop software.

The workshop will get underway at 10 a.m. and continue to mid-afternoon. A working lunch will be provided for those registered to attend the workshop. The registration fee for the event is $60.

If you have not as yet registered please do so at [http://tinyurl.com/h8f6egr](http://tinyurl.com/h8f6egr).

Registration is open to anyone needing the training. APA members will be given priority, but when the workshop sells out it will be closed.

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 feel free to bring your laptop or other devices to use in the training.
The APA Board of Directors met for their fall retreat recently in the River Market area of downtown Little Rock. They dispatched a lengthy agenda and along the way elected new officers for the board.

The meeting was held over two days, Thursday afternoon and Friday morning. Yes that means those on the board gave up almost two full working days to attend the retreat and to tend to the business of the Arkansas Press Association.

APA has been fortunate for many years to have board members who will sacrifice their time and contribute their talents to helping guide the APA. The present board is no exception. It is a treat to work with a group who, armed with all the facts and information regarding an issue, will act decisively and in short order.

Also during this retreat session, the board elected the new APA President for 2017. That would be Byron Tate, the present vice president of the board, who will replace Nat Lea as president in July. Tom White was elected vice president, and Jay Edwards was elected to join the executive board as second vice president. The executive board consists of the president, vice president, second vice president and the immediate past president.

From time to time I get asked how one goes about being nominated to the APA board. The first step would be to indicate your interest in serving on the board and you can do that by informing Rusty Fraser who will serve as the nominating committee chairman this year in his capacity as immediate past president. Or you could let me know if you have a desire to be considered.

Or you could contact other members of the nominating committee named by President Nat Lea. That would be Rusty Turner of Springdale, Kelly Freudensprung of Benton or Todd Frantz of Hot Springs.

The committee will consider all the nominees in their meeting to be held in March in Hot Springs, and this year they’ll have three nominees to select. That’s a bit unusual as normally the committee has only one nominee to select. This year, however, because of two resignations from the board, there are three openings. That provides a great chance for those who may have an interest in serving on the board.

After the committee selects their nominees and the APA board consents, the names will appear on the annual election ballot in May. The ballot will include present members of the board, along with the three new nominees. The results of the election will be announced in June, and the new board members will assume their seats after the adjournment of the 2017 SuperConvention in Little Rock.

There are some things you should know before expressing that interest. The APA board convenes at least three times each year, two in spring and fall retreats, and one at the annual convention. Travel to and accommodations during the retreats are on the individual board members. That’s right. They pay their own expenses.

APA may spring for a dinner for the board, but everything else is on the individual members.

So what’s the payoff? Well I’ll tell you what the payoff is. You get to work with some of the top professionals in the state’s newspaper industry. I can speak from experience that the six years I spent on the APA board back in the late 1980s and early 1990s were a great learning experience. I learned from others on the board, but I also learned more about the industry, how it functions and how we keep it moving forward. I came onto the board thinking I knew a thing or two about the industry we share. It didn’t take long to figure out just what I didn’t know, and it was considerable.

We don’t often acknowledge the contributions made by the APA board to the overall health and well being of the association, but take my word for it they play a big role. In doing so they follow in the footsteps of so many who have guided this association so capably over the years, yes even since its inception in 1873.

It doesn’t take a long tenure on the board to realize you are a part of something much bigger that it often appears. If you ever doubt that, just pay a visit to the APA building in Little Rock and take a stroll down the “hall of presidents.” Here you’ll find the photos of those men and women who have served on the APA board and who have stayed to become president of the association. It is an impressive array. The names on those photos are a who’s who of the Arkansas newspaper industry over the decades.

It is no accident, nor any stroke of luck that has kept APA a vital and sustainable organization over the decades. It has come about because of the diligence and dedication of its board of directors that keeps the organization moving in the right direction.

They’re not super heroes. They do exactly what you do at your newspaper, but collectively they create policy and direction for the association and they do it often without thanks and certainly always without compensation for their time and talent.

That’s something to think about before you express a desire to serve. It’s more than just something that will look good on your resume. It’s actually much more, and it will be an education. You will learn from the experience. I can assure you of that.

Among the many other actions taken by the APA board at its recent retreat was the setting of the rebate amount for APA member newspapers who participate in one or more of the advertising networks.

The networks had a fairly good year. They didn’t set any new records, but it was a solid year and that’s owing to the APA newspapers who provide the space for the network ads and who sell into the network.

The rebates allow the participating newspapers to share in the collective success of the networks. This year that amounted to $700 per newspaper per network. The total expenditure for the 2016 network rebates was $150,000.

During 2016, 102 member newspapers participated in the Statewide Classified Ad Networks (SCAN) and 99 participated in the Display Ad Networks (DAN), while 24 participated in the Daily Connection.

Have a great week!

Tom
Brown named managing editor in Arkadelphia

Jamal Brown has been named managing editor of the Siftings Herald in Arkadelphia, according to Gatehouse Group Publisher Ed Graves.

Brown replaced James Leigh who resigned in October after accepting a position at The Sentinel-Record in Hot Springs.

Brown, a native of McNeil, holds a BA from Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia. He began his career as a general assignment reporter for the Banner News in Magnolia in 2008 before joining the Siftings Herald in 2011.

He is also a Baptist minister and pastors the Mount Olive Baptist Church in Camden.

Delta Argus-Sun has new name, owner, address

The Central Delta Argus-Sun in Brinkley begins the New Year with a new name, a new owner and a new address.

That’s a lot of change for a rural, weekly newspaper, but it doesn’t end there. The new owner is a teenager.

Hayden Taylor, 19, has purchased the assets of the Argus-Sun from Katie and Thomas Jacques who have been publishing the newspaper for 20 years. The new owner’s first order of business was to change the name of the newspaper to the Monroe County Herald and to change the address of the newspaper.

The latter change might not have happened but for a fire at the former Argus-Sun offices that forced the previous owners to move near the end of 2016.

The new flag was to emerge last week and distribute to the 1,800 subscribers of the old Argus-Sun. The newspaper will continue to print at the Stuttgart Daily Leader.

Glenda Arnett who will mark 50 years with the newspaper in the spring will continue with the newspaper.

APA Advertising Conference returning to Hot Springs in 2017

After a four-year run of gatherings at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute atop Petit Jean Mountain, the APA’s annual advertising conference this year returns to the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs March 9-10.

Situated on the banks of Lake Hamilton in the Spa City, the Clarion offers an ideal venue for the annual conference where among other things the 2017 Better Newspaper Advertising Contest awards will be presented. That will take place at the Friday luncheon in the top floor ballroom of the Clarion.

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.

Other popular standing features of the ad conference will return, including the “hot ideas” exchange over breakfast Friday morning and round table discussions to address challenges and opportunities for newspaper advertising people in the year ahead.

Be watching for more registration information coming soon.

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.

Just a reminder: APA dues are coming due

Pardon us for this bit of housekeeping. We wouldn’t do it if it wasn’t important. Every year about this time members of the Arkansas Press Association are reminded that their dues to the organization are due and payable. January 15 is the due date for the annual submissions.

The dues are calculated based on the equivalent of a full-page ad for tabloid publications and a half-page for broadsheet editions. 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.

If you have questions regarding your dues statement, contact the APA office in Little Rock at 501-374-1500.
ISWNE contest seeking best editorials for ‘Golden Quill’

The International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors (ISWNE) is accepting entries for the 57th annual Golden Quill editorial writing contest.

All newspapers of less than daily frequency (published fewer than five days per week) are qualified to enter. Entries must have been published between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2016.

Each newspaper is allowed up to four entries; two is the maximum per person. Entry fee is $25 per person; checks should be made payable to ISWNE. To enter, complete the PDF form at www.iswne.org (under Contests) and send a tear sheet with the Golden Quill entry clearly marked. Send two copies of each entry to Chad Stebbins, Missouri Southern State University, 3950 E. Newman Road, Joplin, MO 64801-1595. Entries must be postmarked by Feb. 1, 2017.

Entries should reflect the purpose of ISWNE: Encouraging the writing of editorials or staff-written opinion pieces that identify local issues that are or should be of concern to the community, offer an opinion, and support a course of action.

The Golden Quill winner will receive a conference scholarship and travel expenses up to $500 to attend ISWNE’s annual conference at College Park, Maryland, June 28-July 2. Golden Quill runners-up (called the Golden Dozen) will receive conference scholarships if they have not previously attended an ISWNE conference.

Grassroots Editor, ISWNE’s quarterly journal, will reprint the Golden Quill and Golden Dozen editorials in the Summer 2017 issue.

For questions, contact Chad Stebbins at stebbins-c@mssu.edu.

Guest Column:
Some Resolutions for the New Year
By David Chavern, President & CEO, NAA

How can anyone possibly characterize 2016? From Brexit to Syria to possibly the craziest election cycle in US history, this was a year in which common assumptions about the world we live in were challenged. On the news media front, we battled fake news, hostile presidential candidates, deceptive ad blocking, outdated media laws, and many other challenges.

As we look forward to 2017, and putting this crazy year behind us, I wanted to share a few of my resolutions with you.

1. We are going to fight even harder against “fake news” and the fundamental danger it represents to our society and to journalism. Bottom line: the answer to fake news is better appreciation for great reporting under the auspices of established brands.

2. We are going to finally prove to the FCC that a 40+ year old ban on cross-ownership between TV and newspapers is utterly absurd. I’m very proud of the work the Alliance policy team has done on repealing this ban and look forward to the progress they will continue to make.

3. We are going to greatly expand the membership of the Alliance. When we reimagined the Alliance, I knew I wanted to champion an organization that mirrors the forward-thinking industry of news media. We have opened the door to digital-only members and I am excited to welcome new members and innovation in the New Year.

4. We are going to fight for the rights of journalists to safely and effectively do their jobs. In the last 10 years, 664 journalists have been killed on the job. Truth and transparency shouldn’t require such a terrible cost.

5. We will defend and fight for open and transparent coverage of government. No matter how hostile politicians might get, the press serves the nation and the world with real fact-based reporting that keeps the public informed.

6. I am going to be thankful every day for representing immensely important industry with a bright future. In 2016, we laid the foundation for a stronger and better organization. I look forward to energetically representing and supporting our tremendous members in the New Year.
We Need Judges

Help judge the Oklahoma Press Better Newspaper Contest

**Deadline to Sign-Up is Feb. 13**

**Categories Include:**

- News, Feature & Sports Writing,
- Advertising, Photography,
- Print Quality & Design

Entries will be mailed to judges.

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**Oklahoma Press Better Newspapers - Judging Sign-Up**

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APA Ad contest deadline nears: January 31

If you haven’t started selecting your Better Newspaper Advertising Contest entries for the APA’s annual contest, it’s not too late but the deadline is in just a little over two weeks away.

You have until January 31 to submit entries into the annual advertising contest. The awards will be presented at the annual APA advertising conference March 9-10 at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs.

Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will be judging the contest this year, and again this year submissions and judging will take place online. For information on the contest and a step-by-step explanation of the process, go to http://www.newspapercontest.com/Contests/ArkansasPressAssociation.aspx. Of course you can always call the APA office if you need assistance.

This will mark the second year the APA has take the electronic contest submission and judging approach, and it’s really simple and easy to enter the APA contest. Some suggest that it’s easier than the old-fashioned way of searching through and submitting tear sheets to be considered by contest judges. All you need do now is find ads you’d like to enter, create a pdf of the ad and submit it.

One thing is for sure: you can’t win APA ad awards if you don’t enter the contest.

APA in need of contest judges

Hello! Anybody out there?

The initial plea for APA judges for the Oklahoma Press Association advertising, editorial and photo contest was, well, underwhelming at best. We got very few volunteers.

Some 45 judges are needed to give OPA a good judging of their contests. That’s a lot of judges and we are a long way from that number at this point.

This judging couldn’t be much easier. The OPA entries will be mailed to you so that you may judge them at your leisure. You will have three weeks to judge the entries sent to you.

Those eligible to judge include both members and associate members of the APA. Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will judge the annual APA advertising and editorial contests in the next few months.

To sign up for judging please email APA contest administrator Terri Cobb at terri@arkansaspress.org, or call the APA office at 501-374-1500.

For those registering we will need your name, title, email and phone, plus the shipping address for the entries. Also needed will be the frequency and circulation of your newspapers and the types of categories you’d like to judge.

Please don’t delay. Sign up today.
We’re just a week away from the long-awaited visit by our old friend Russell Viers of Kansas City who is coming to town to put on a one-day workshop on using InDesign and PhotoShop to work “smarter, not harder.”

The workshop will be Thursday, Jan. 19, beginning at 10 a.m. at the APA building. It will be “hands-on” so if you’re registered to attend feel free to bring your laptop or other device, although doing so is not a requirement.

Believe me Russell will fill the time sufficiently by just demonstrating how to better utilize the Adobe software that has become the industry standard for newspapers and other publications. You will leave this workshop better equipped to work more efficiently with this software, and I guarantee you’ll be entertained at the workshop as well.

Russell is one of those rare presenters who can explain complicated software use like InDesign and PhotoShop in an entertaining and insightful manner. He conducts these workshops across North America and in several locations in Europe on a regular basis. He is a regular visitor to APA events, although it’s been a couple of years since his last visit.

He is also on the program for the SuperConvention July 5-8 at the DoubleTree in Little Rock. So, you might ask, why have him now AND at the convention? Good question. I’m glad you asked.

When Russell presents at the convention it is rarely to the audience that can most benefit from his expertise. It was our hope that by having a stand-alone workshop here at the APA office we might get more of those who actually use this software at their worksites, and for the most part we’ve been successful in that attempt. The conference room at the APA building will be full for this workshop.

Of course there’s always room for a couple more and I wouldn’t want to turn anyone away who could benefit from this training. We’ll make it work so if you haven’t registered and you would still like to attend, contact the APA office or go to the APA website and register for the workshop online.

It occurs to me, too, that those attending the workshop will be developing some networking opportunities with others who use the software and who will be sharing this workshop experience. Facing challenges with the software? Just pick up the phone and call one of those who also attended the workshop for help. We’re really good at helping each other with this sort of thing. At least we always have been, and with all of the changes manifest in our industry, this is not one of them.

I’m fairly confident of that.

A few weeks back I mentioned in this space that the APA nominating committee is looking for some potential nominees to serve on the APA Board of Directors. If you’ve always wanted to serve but have not been asked, it may be because we didn’t know of your interest.

Here’s your chance to express that interest and to be considered along with others for nomination to the APA Board. It’s easy. Just let me know.

The nominating committee won’t meet until March at the annual APA advertising conference, so you’ve got a little time but not much. It will be here before we know it.

If you have interest let me know and I’ll add your name to the list.

The Arkansas legislature is back in town for their general session. Actually it seems the legislature is always here, but they’re here in force now and they will be until well into spring.

At this point not a lot of legislation has been filed or pre-filed that affects us in any great way. Of course I expect that will change and if it does I will be quick to alert you so please stay tuned.

It may be necessary for you to make a quick contact with one of your legislators if one of them is serving on a committee considering a bill that we are either decidedly against or decidedly for. Of course it will more likely be the former rather than the latter, but you get the idea.

When I make this contact with you it is really important that you act on it quickly. Often these things pop up and need immediate attention. A phone call from you to a legislator or two can make all the difference. It really is impactful and helps to reinforce the concerns we likely have already raised with the legislators in question.

They hear from us regularly but when they hear from someone back home they definitely react differently. I can’t emphasize enough the importance of making this effort when you are asked to do so.

Last but certainly not least this week is a plea for judges to judge the Oklahoma Press Association advertising and editorial contests. We needed judges yesterday but will certainly still take them today.

Please contact Terri Cobb, APA contest coordinator, if you can help us out. Email Terri at terri@arkansaspress.org, or call the office at 501-374-1500.

Judging is a great way to pick up ideas that you can put to work at your own newspaper. That can be story or feature leads, or it can be a really good advertising promotion that would work well in your community. These are nice side benefits of judging one of these contests.

As you know we exchange judging with other press associations each year, so the OPA folks will be judging our contests in the next few months. We owe them a good judging and I’m sure they will reciprocate at the appropriate time.

The deadline for the APA advertising contest is Jan. 31. The editorial contest deadline will be March 31.

Please sign up to judge the OPA contests, and be preparing your own entries for the upcoming APA contests.

The APA advertising awards will be presented at the annual APA ad conference March 9-10 at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs. The editorial awards will be presented at the annual awards luncheon at the SuperConvention Saturday, July 8, at the DoubleTree in Little Rock.

You can’t win if you don’t enter, so enter and be among those we will honor at the two annual awards luncheons.

Have a great week!
APA Dues due

It’s that time of year again, that time when member dues to the Arkansas Press Association come due. Actually January 15 is the due date.

The dues are calculated based on the equivalent of a full-page ad for tabloid publications and a half-page for broadsheet editions. 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.

If you have questions regarding your dues statement, contact the APA office in Little Rock at 501-374-1500.

Only two spots remain for Viers workshop at APA Headquarters

With one week to go only two spots remain for the Thursday, Jan. 19, InDesign and PhotoShop workshop featuring Russell Viers to be held at the APA building beginning at 10 a.m.

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 feel free to bring your laptop or other devices to use in the training.

Those registered to attend the Russell Viers workshop next week so far include:

• Ashley Foreman, Samantha Swisher, Kristie Nall, and Harold Coggins of the Advance Monticellionian
• Joe Dempsey
• Byron Tate, LeAnn Brown, Millie McClain of The Sheridan Headlight
• Alex Lee, Mena Newspapers
• Lori Freeze, Ed Coates, Daphne Morton, Lana Mason of The Stone County Leader, Mountain View
• Tiffany Donovan, Kimberly Friedman, Bobbie Handcock, Meghan Ables, Arkansas Department of Education, Little Rock
• Brad Mayhugh, UAPB
• Kelsey Womack, Terrence Armstard, James Wisinger of the El Dorado News Times
• Chris Swindle, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Springdale
• Crystal Newton, Anna Hubbard, Arkansas Bar Association, Little Rock
• Deena Hardin, Magnolia Banner-News
• Debbie Kelly
• Tammy Frazier and Amber Conway of the Camden News

So who is this Russell Viers?

So who is this Russel Viers character and why are so many signing up to attend his workshop Thursday, January 19, at the Arkansas Press Association building in Little Rock?

Russel Viers has spoken at publishing events in 22 countries since 1997, including the HOW Conference, The InDesign Conference, IFRA, and PePcon. He has also taught many major publications and designers to work faster and improve quality, including Better Homes and Gardens, Ladies Home Journal, New York Times Regional Papers, Sabah, American Greetings, Crayola, and many others.

Viers has been actively involved with digital publishing since the early days, having started with CompuGraphic typesetting machines in the early 80s, and PageMaker 1.0 in 1987. He also authored several videos from lynda.com, Peachpit Press, and Total Training. You can find more about Russell at russellviers.com.

What the bio doesn’t say is that Russell is one of the most entertaining presenters in his field. He makes learning more about working in the Adobe software world fun while expanding the knowledge of those attending his sessions. This is one of the if not the main reason we’ve had him back at APA events for many years.

So that’s who Russell Viers is.
New ad series promotes Public Notices

A new series of ads promoting public notices, more specifically promoting why keeping public notices in newspapers is a good idea, has just been made available by the News Media Alliance. The ads are available for use in your newspaper.

The new ad series can be found at http://tinyurl.com/ggge6ru.

There are three different ads offered in the series, with varying sizes provided for each.

APA member newspapers are encouraged to utilize these ads to help raise awareness about the importance of public notices in newspapers, and by way of explaining why public notices are so important to newspaper readers as well as the public at large.

Best practices offered for protecting Public Notices

Public notices in newspapers have been under attack in legislatures across the country and there is little likelihood that the effort to remove public notices from newspapers will cease anytime soon.

With that in mind, the Inland Press Association has put together a webinar featuring some of the leading industry experts on the subject who will address best practices regarding newspaper public notices. The webinar will be available Wednesday, Jan. 25, at 10:30 a.m.

The good news is that since APA is one of the co-sponsors of the Inland webinar series, APA members can register for the discounted price of $15. The normal rate is $25.

Featured in the webinar will be Eric Barnes, publisher and CEO, The Daily News Publishing Company; Richard Karpel, president, APW; and Brad Thompson, president and CEO, Detroit Legal News Co. and president of the Public Notice Resource Center. This session will focus on the state of public notice and the best practices that every publisher should follow to help the industry maintain its rightful position as the publisher of official notice of public actions.

For more information on this webinar and others offers by Inland Press, and for registration information visit http://tinyurl.com/gpl87wq.

Annual reminder: Don’t use ‘Super Bowl’ in promotions

Here’s your annual reminder that “Super Bowl” is copyrighted and may not be used in advertisements of “Super Bowl Specials” or “Super Bowl Parties,” or any other reference in advertising to “the big game.”

So if you have an advertiser looking to capitalize on “the big game,” remind them that you’ll need to call it that, “the big game,” or some such other moniker other than “Super Bowl.”

Super Bowl advertising, mostly of the broadcast variety, has neared $5 billion since the inception of the big game 51 years ago. Spending on advertising on this year’s Super Bowl is expected to top $385 million. It ads up quickly when a 30-second spot costs $5 million.

Save the Date!

APA Advertising Conference

March 9 & 10

Clarion Hotel | Hot Springs, AR
We Need Judges

Help judge the Oklahoma Press Better Newspaper Contest

**Deadline to Sign-Up is Feb. 13**

**Categories Include:**

News, Feature & Sports Writing, Advertising, Photography, Print Quality & Design

Entries will be mailed to judges.

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**Oklahoma Press Better Newspapers - Judging Sign-Up**

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FOI Coalition

Now more than ever public notices in newspapers have come under attack at legislatures across the country, including the Arkansas legislature.

If you would like to do your part in helping the newspaper industry keep public notices published in newspapers, there are a few things you can do:

1. Publish “house” ads on the importance of public notices. Samples of these can be found at http://tinyurl.com/gqge6ru and at http://www.pnrc.net/informing-the-public/psa-campaigns. The first is from the News Media Alliance, and the second from the Public Notice Resource Center.

2. Upload the public notices from your newspaper(s) to www.publicnoticeads.com/ar, the searchable APA repository for public notices published in the newspapers of Arkansas. If public notices are already published online and at no charge to government at any level, there’s really no reason to pull the notices from newspapers to “publish” them on a government web site.

3. “Mine” your public notices for leads for local news stories to highlight the public notices and to call attention to why public notices are published in newspapers in the first place. They are to keep the public informed of what their government, at the city, county, school or state level, are doing with their tax dollars.

There are other things that can be done to help in the fight, but these are easily the top three easiest to perform. The importance of doing one or all of them would be difficult to measure, but the loss of public notices in newspapers would be fairly easy to gauge, and it wouldn’t be good news for newspapers or the public.

January 31 deadline for APA Ad Contest Entries

The clock is ticking and the days are passing quickly in the run-up to the January 31 deadline for submitting entries in the APA's annual Better Newspaper Advertising Contest.

Entering is easy and can be done from the comfort of your own computer. No clipping of tear sheets; no mailing of entries; no ink rub-off on your fingers because the contest entries are all electronic. For more information on the contest and instructions on how to submit entries, go to http://www.newspapercontest.com/Contests/ArkansasPressAssociation.aspx.

Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will be judging the APA contest this year. The advertising awards will be presented at the annual APA advertising contest set for March 9-10 at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs.

This will mark the second year the APA has taken the electronic contest submission and judging approach, and it’s really simple and easy to enter the APA contest. Some suggest that it’s easier than the old-fashioned way of searching through and submitting tear sheets to be considered by contest judges. All you need do now is find ads you’d like to enter, create a pdf of the ad and submit it.

One thing is for sure: you can’t win APA ad awards if you don’t enter the contest.

The deadline for the Better Newspaper Editorial Contest will be March 31. Those awards will be presented at the annual awards luncheon Saturday, July 8, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock, site of the 2017 APA SuperConvention.
It seems to me I spend an inordinate amount of time “unsubscribing” to emails I never subscribed to in the first place. And these don’t even account for those incoming email that go automatically to my spam folder, filtered out as obvious spam.

Yet it seems the more email I “unsubscribe” from the more I receive. I’ll swear it seems that by unsubscribing my email address I get more email that I don’t need and don’t want sent to that address.

It’s very tempting to take the approach of one of our Arkansas Press Association (APA) member publisher who changes his email address on a regular basis, like monthly or so. Yes, I can imagine that is inconvenient for those trying to reach him, but I’ll wager he isn’t plagued by hundreds of email he doesn’t want or need.

Okay, I’m not going to start changing my email address, but it is tempting so I don’t keep having to “unsubscribe” only to be added to even more lists. These email marketers are apparently diabolical.

Today is the day for the Russell Viers workshop at the APA world headquarters in Little Rock. As expected the event sold out.

It’s been good catching up with Russell. He flew into Little Rock Wednesday so we’ve had a chance to do some catching up.

Russell spends the bulk of his time doing these kinds or workshops and conferences. That is when he’s not making waffles. That’s a whole other story that can only be described as “so Russell.”

Russell got his start in the newspaper business at his hometown newspaper, the Lamar Democrat in Lamar, MO. Lamar is famous for being the birthplace of the late U.S. President Harry S Truman.

He entered the business about the time the industry was transitioning to computer-based type generation. In those days, most newspapers, even the small ones, were selling off their old hot metal typesetting machines, such as Linotypes, and replacing them with CompuGraphic equipment. CompuGraphic dominated the newspaper industry at the time, with most newspapers, even the small ones, making the conversion to this “cold type” approach.

That’s “cold type” as opposed to the hot metal, lead, that was the industry standard for decades. In just a short period of time, newspapers went from hot, dirty, stinky and marginally dangerous places to work, to much quieter, clean, and more efficient production facilities.

Enter Russell. He took to the computer-generated equipment like a fish to water and the rest is history. He worked with PageMaker 1.0. It’s almost hard to write that without a chuckle. PageMaker was one of the first software programs for generating type and page design. Those early attempts at the software are laughable now, sort of like the early generations of the Macintosh desktop publishing computers compared to today’s desktop publishing equipment.

Russell quickly became an expert in the software, which was a product of Adobe, the software giant that now offers products like InDesign and PhotoShop, the latest generation in technology for publishing and printing. Of course both software products are widely used in the newspaper industry, and both are very complex products. Users of these products often barely scratch the surface of what the programs will actually do.

The training to expand that use of the software is what Russell does in training those who use it how to use it more efficiently, performing functions more quickly and efficiently thereby taking less time to create leaving more time for other projects. He does this training virtually all over the world, having done sessions in 22 countries and most of the states and across Canada.

It didn’t really surprise me that the workshop featuring Russell sold out. It’s valuable training and I am confident everyone attending will become better at what they do as a result.

If you missed Russell at this workshop you’ll have another chance this summer when he returns for the APA SuperConvention in Little Rock Friday, July 7. Of course even if you were able to attend today’s workshop, you could still likely benefit from a second “dose” of Russell later this year.

We’re now less than two weeks away from the deadline for entries in the APA’s annual Better Newspaper Advertising Contest. Each year the contest recognizes stellar effort in ad design, creativity, use of color, campaigns and so on, the awards for which will be presented at the APA’s annual Advertising Conference scheduled for March 9-10 at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs.

It’s not officially the last minute for getting entries into the APA, but it is getting close.

The contest again this year will allow electronic submissions only. We resisted this change for years but circumstances have forced us to make the transition to electronic entry and judging. We were actually pleasantly surprised at the positive feedback we’ve gotten about this new approach.

If you would like to know more about the APA ad contest, including how to go about submitting entries, go to http://tinyurl.com/jernsae. It’s easy and it’s fun, and the real rewards are awards that come with entering. Good luck!

Speaking of contests, we are still in great need of contest judges to judge the Oklahoma Press Association’s (OPA) advertising, editorial and photography contests. We need 45 judges and we have nowhere near that signed up.

The OPA folks will be judging both of our contests this year in a reciprocal agreement, so we need to give them a good judging. We can’t do that, however, without judges.

As contest judgings go, this one couldn’t get much easier. Entries will be mailed directly to judges who will have three weeks to judge the entries and return them to OPA. You don’t even have to leave home.

This is more of an “old school” judging in that it is not electronic. You’ll be judging the entries as the end user of the product actually saw them. We “old schoolers” appreciate this. Sometimes that makes it easier to pick winners, as almost everything looks good on a computer screen, but often does not translate well to newsprint.

Please consider joining us in helping to judge this contest. Have a great week!
SuperConvention planning committee convenes Friday

The planning committee for the 2017 APA SuperConvention will meet Friday (tomorrow) at the DoubleTree by Hilton in downtown Little Rock, site for the annual gathering July 5-8.

Byron Tate, publisher of The Sheridan Headlight and vice president of the APA Board, is the chairman of the committee. He is joined by fellow APA Board members Jay Edwards of the Daily Record and Ellen Kreth, publisher of the Madison County Record in Huntsville. Kelly Freudensprung, publisher of the Saline Courier, Andrea Peel of UAMS, and Melinda Faubel of AT&T Arkansas round out the committee.

The committee will create a rough draft of the convention and discussion programming for the annual meeting. They will also tour the convention facility, including the renovated Robinson Center next door where a Thursday evening, July 6, reception is planned for the convention.

Be watching for more information on the convention, including a full list of presenters and program sessions.

Mark Your Calendar!

January 31:
APA Ad Contest Entry Deadline

February 13:
Oklahoma Press contest judging signup deadline

March 9-10:
APA Advertising Conference

March 31:
APA Editorial Contest Entry Deadline

‘It Can Wait’ Essay Contest Winner

ESSAY CONTEST WINNER – Elizabeth Loudermilk, second from left, a junior at Eureka Springs High School, is the winner in the “It Can Wait” essay contest addressing the dangers of texting while driving. Melinda Faubel of AT&T Arkansas, sponsor of the contest, presents the winner with a $500 check for the top prize. Also showing, from left, front row, Meredith Loudermilk, sister of the winner, Elizabeth, Melinda, Cathy Foraker of AT&T Arkansas, and Karen Brown, executive director of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation. Back row, from left is Samantha Jones of the Lovely County Citizen, local sponsor of the contest, Bob Moore, publisher of The Citizen, Tom Larimer, executive director of the Arkansas Press Association, and Dr. Jon and Laura Loudermilk of Eureka Springs, parents of the contest winner.

BOARD AT THE BORDER – Back around the turn of the century, the APA Board convened in a session held in Texarkana and pose here divided between Arkansas and Texas. Those pictured are, front row, from left, Jeff Christenson, Milton Scott, Steve Russell, Mark Magie, Nancy Kemp, Dina Mason and Jane Graves. Back row, David Cox, Buddy King, Frank Lightfoot, Charles Berry and Mike Brown.
It was a very interesting election season: Denzel Washington supported Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton sold weapons to ISIS, Hillary was disqualified from holding federal office…

During this election season, Facebook came face to face with a long-known media plague: Fake news.

Dozens and dozens of misleading stories about the election and statistics went viral on the platform in the “trending” section. In fact, these stories were considered more popular and received more engagement than true, accurate articles. Even Google’s search fell prey to the allure of a falsehood.

Of late, it seems that hyper-partisan outlets are spreading misleading, click-baity stories on digital media. This is not a new problem. Fake news and propaganda has been around for as long as news has been around. Legacy news brands are the best way to fight the plague. They have been anti-fake news for generations. The openness of the web has made it staggeringly easy to buy a URL, write whatever you want without fact-checking, and spread it throughout social media.

The algorithms of Facebook and Google lack the human editorial element to decide when a story is false. Mark Zuckerberg said that “identifying the ‘truth’ is complicated.” But somehow journalists have managed to be the purveyors of truth for centuries. By eliminating the humanity from the “trending stories” sections, Facebook opened itself up to the fake news problem. By eliminating the humanity from the “trending stories” sections, Facebook opened itself up to the fake news problem. By eliminating the humanity from the “trending stories” sections, Facebook opened itself up to the fake news problem. By eliminating the humanity from the “trending stories” sections, Facebook opened itself up to the fake news problem. By eliminating the humanity from the “trending stories” sections, Facebook opened itself up to the fake news problem.

Following the election, Facebook announced it would ban fake news in the advertising network. This will hit the fake news sites that generate revenue through running advertisements, but this won’t prevent them from popping up in your newsfeed, shared by a well-meaning neighbor.

Four Ways to Fight Fake News:
1. Double Check Your Sources: I know, it’s so tempting to click the ‘share’ button after reading an especially titillating headline. However, the URL at the bottom of the post can be especially telling. If it is from a source you’ve never heard of before, it’s worth double checking. You can cross reference this Google doc of outlets spreading fake news created by Melissa Zimdars, an assistant professor of communication at Merrimack College in Massachusetts, or just Google if the publication is reliable.

2. Report False Stories: Report the story on Facebook if it turns out to be false. Helping prevent the story from spreading will help tide it from going viral. Facebook does not share who reports fake news, so the process is anonymous.

3. Correct Inaccuracies: If you fell for the trap of spreading fake news, make sure to publicly denounce it. On Facebook, edit your original post admitting your mistake so others don’t fall prey to the same grabby headline. On Twitter, RT your original post with a quote, debunking the site for all. Or simply delete the post from your page.

4. Buy a Print or Digital Newspaper Subscription. Legacy news outlets have trained reporters, working hard to get correct, timely and unbiased information out. Newspapers saw a bump in subscriptions following the election, and it’s a trend I hope to see continue.
**Viers, Adobe InDesign Session**

Viers Workshop at APA – Russell Viers, left, makes a point with his smart phone during a daylong workshop held last Thursday at the APA building in Little Rock. Over 30 attended the fast-paced session on using InDesign for newspaper and other print production, and for handling and storage of photographs. If you missed this workshop you’ll get another chance this summer when Viers returns to the APA SuperConvention Friday, July 7, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock.

**Nominating Committee Seeks Candidates for Board Vacancies**

The APA nominating committee will meet in March to select three nominees to fill vacancies that have either occurred or will occur in the near future.

Those interested in being considered for a position on the APA board should contact either nominating committee chairman, Rusty Fraser, at rusty@stonecountyleader.com, or Tom Larimer, APA executive director at tom@arkansaspress.org.

One of the nominees will fill the seat of Rusty Fraser who will be leaving the board at the conclusion of his year as immediate past president. The other two vacancies were created by the resignations from the board by David Mosesso and Shane Allen.

There are 11 board seats that are divided between daily and non-daily newspapers. The board is a policy-making board that meets three or four times per years two in two-day retreats held in the spring and fall at various locations around the state.

The other present board members include Nat Lea, president; Byron Tate, vice president; Tom White, second vice president; Jay Edwards, John Bland, Rusty Turner, Ellen Kreth, Sue Silliman and Clark Smith.

**Convention planners lay groundwork for 2017 gathering**

The 2017 edition of the APA’s annual SuperConvention set for July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock started to take shape Friday when the convention planning committee met at the convention site.

The convention will have a patriotic theme.

As always a lot of attention was paid to creating convention programming that is useful and relevant to APA members attending and it appears the committee took a huge step in that direction in the two-hour planning session.

Convention Chairman Byron Tate appointed Jay Edwards to chair the annual golf outing, a fund-raiser for the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation. Jay is to research possible venues for the event. Be watching for more details.

The golf outing officially kicks of the convention, and is followed immediately Wednesday evening with the traditional “early bird” party. The initial plan was to have that gathering at the Clinton Presidential Center, but those plans are not yet confirmed.

Among the speakers at the convention will be Ed Henninger on “25 Things Every Publisher Should Know,” and Russell Viers for a pair of sessions on timely trends and topics in the industry.

The keynote speaker for the convention will be announced very soon and will certainly be appropriate for advancing the patriotic theme of the gathering. Be watching for more details on that.

The SuperConvention will end with the editorial awards luncheon Saturday, July 8.

Others attending the planning session Friday were Kelly Freudensprung of Benton, Melinda Faubel of AT&T Arkansas, and Leslie Taylor of UAMS.
It didn’t take long for someone in the Arkansas legislature to introduce yet another bill seeking to remove public notices from Arkansas newspapers and allow them to be “published” on a government web site.

This time it is Sen. Bart Hester who is the lead sponsor of Senate Bill 114, another in a line of bills in recent legislative gatherings that attempt to move the public’s business to a government-controlled and administered web site where it will, you know, be safe.

We deal with this sort of proposition during every legislative session and we make the case for why doing this is a really bad idea. Inevitably the case for the proposition is based in economics and saving the government from having to pay for publishing public notices in newspapers. They make out as if newspapers are getting rich from publishing these government notices.

Of course we all know that’s far from the truth. In most instances among the APA membership, government public notice revenue is a very small percentage of overall revenue. But to hear proponents of such measures talk you would think we’re all getting fat and happy from publishing public notices at government expense.

My first thought when I see such proposed legislation is, “what are they trying to hide.” SB 114 specifically targets delinquent taxes on “mineral interests.” If you are a property owner and you own the mineral rights on your property, there’s a tax to be paid to maintain that right of ownership. It’s a very small tax, but failing to pay it can result in the loss of your mineral rights.

How could you lose something that you own? Because someone else can buy them out from under you for a pittance. Publishing the list of delinquent taxes in the newspaper makes it very easy for a property owner who may not even be aware they were supposed to pay such a tax to see that they owe it and get down to the courthouse and pay it. If they don’t see it in the newspaper, you can bet their friends and neighbors will and will let the property owner know about it.

But who’s going to see it on a government web site? You could ask those folks up in Newton County about that. An application for a massive hog farm operation in the watershed that feeds the Buffalo National River was “published” on a government web site, and not surprisingly nobody concerned about the future well being of the Buffalo River had any clue what was about to happen.

Do you think if that application had been published in the local newspaper anyone would have seen it? Of course they would have, and in time to actually have done something about it before it became a done deal. This example alone should be sufficient to convince anyone that moving public notices out of newspapers and onto a government web site is a really bad idea.

So one might ask what is the real motivation for wanting to move this particular delinquent tax list to a government web site? Who stands to benefit most? These are the relevant questions that need to be asked, and that will be asked as this proposed bill makes its way through the legislature.

In the meantime, it is imperative that you be contacting your legislators, representatives and senators, to let them know that anything that moves public notices out of newspapers only to hide them on a government web site is bad business. It is imperative because this is just one of many bills to take such action that will likely be forthcoming.

If we don’t say anything, if we don’t make the case for public notices in newspapers, if we leave the legislature to their own devices, we cannot expect a good outcome.

Almost every one of the bills filed to take public notices out of newspapers make allowance for putting the notices on a government web site. Proponents make it sound like this is something free, and that government required to “publish” public notices can save the expense of paying a newspaper to publish it.

That, of course, is nonsense. Somebody has to post these things online and it’s not likely that someone with the expertise to do it is going to do it for nothing. Then there’s equipment to be purchased, web sites to be administered and secured against hackers. That’s not free.

So if someone tells you they’re for moving public notices out of newspapers to save the expense, you might suggest to them that it would not. You might also add that at a time when the public seems intent on shrinking government and reducing government intrusion into our daily lives, that this is actually growing government and for no good reason.

And then there is this: public notices published in Arkansas newspapers are already online and at absolutely no cost to government at any level.

The vast majority of newspapers in Arkansas upload the public notices from their newspapers to an aggregated web site operated by the Arkansas Press Association. It is searchable and it is secure, or as secure as a web site can be made these days.

Go to www.publicnoticeads.com/AR and take a look. If you can’t find your newspaper’s public notices there, it could be that someone is forgetting to upload them. Please check on this and make sure someone is designated to do it. If you need assistance doing the upload, contact the APA office and we’ll get you going.

We use this web site as part of our argument against moving public notices out of newspapers and onto a government web site. If the desired goal is to get public notices online, then that goal has already been achieved, and again at no cost to the government at any level.

You could also help by publishing the web address above to make the public aware that this is a resource available to them for no cost. When it comes to public notices, Arkansas newspapers have you covered.

Have a great week!

—

Tom Larimer's
Potpourri

January 26, 2017
James Austin Johnson

James Austin “JJ” Johnson, 69, who formerly worked for the Ashley News Observer in Crosssett and the Chicot County Spectator in Lake Village, died Dec. 11.

He was an avid photographer and motorcyclist.

He earned a bachelor’s degree from Carson-Newman University in Jefferson City, Tenn. and worked at the Franklin County Citizen and several other newspapers in Georgia before moving to Crosssett to accept a position at the News Observer. He had retired from the Spectator for health reasons back in 2004.

Phyllis Marie Walker Stokes, 58, of Pine Bluff, a former part-time writer for the Pine Bluff Commercial, died December 6. She worked on special projects for the Commercial and for SEA Life magazine.

She was born January 29, 1958 in Pine Bluff and spent much of her life working in various ministries when she wasn’t writing or working at a newspaper.

The 95th birthday of the Herald, the student newspaper at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro was observed recently in an early December soiree on the campus attended by former and current students, faculty members and guests.

Among those attending were Roy Ockert, Jr., a past president of the Arkansas Press Association and a past editor of The Herald, along with his wife, Pat, who was also a former editor.

‘Last minute’ arrives For APA Advertising Contest entries

The long-awaited last minute for getting entries into the APA’s annual Better Newspaper Advertising Contest has arrived. The deadline for entries is Jan. 31.

Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will judge the entries this year. Entries are submitted and judged electronically.

There’s a lot more information on the contest and how to enter at http://www.newspapercontest.com/Contests/ArkansasPressAssociation.aspx.

Legislature Considering Bills Affecting FOIA, Public Notices

Among the bills being considered early in the general session of the Arkansas legislature are bills to amend the state’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and at least one to remove a public notice from newspapers and allow it to be “published” on a web site.

APA members have been asked to make contact with their legislators presently considering such legislation. When you are asked to make contact with your legislator please make it a priority. This goes a long way in helping the APA lobbying team to prevent laws being passed that would detrimentally impact the newspapers of Arkansas.

Some of those bills presently being considered but certainly not all affecting the newspapers of Arkansas include:

• Senate Bill 114 by Sen. Bart Hester, which would remove the requirement for publishing notice of delinquent taxes on mineral interests and allow them to be “published” on a web site.

• House Bill 1248 by Rep. Jeff Williams, which would create a FOIA exemption for police dash cameras and body-worn cameras, removing these from public view.

The APA lobbying team is working to defeat these bills and you can be of great assistance. When you are asked to contact your legislature, please assign it a top priority. You won’t be asked unless it is extremely important that you take this action.

It’s also important that you report any feedback you get from these contacts to Tom Larimer, APA executive director.

“We have an excellent lobby team,” Larimer says. “But when legislators hear from their editor or publisher back home regarding a piece of legislation they’re proposing it makes all the difference.”

Judges! We need judges

The Arkansas Press Association (APA) is still short on the number of judges needed to judge the Oklahoma Press Association (OPA) contests, including ads, news and photography.

The judging could not get much easier. The entries are mailed by OPA directly to judges who have three weeks to get them judged and returned.

We originally needed 45 judges but we are still well short of that number. Please consider signing up to judge by contacting APA contest administrator Terri Cobb at terri@arkansaspress.org or call the APA office at 501-374-1500.

For those registering we will need your name, title, email and phone, plus the shipping address for the entries. Also needed will be the frequency and circulation of your newspapers and the types of categories you’d like to judge.

Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will be judging the APA contests this year in exchange of our judging of theirs. Please consider volunteering your time to help judge the OPA contest. The more judges we have the easier it is on everyone.
Guest Editorial:

Bill Would Block Access to Information

(Editor’s note: This editorial was originally published in December in the Jonesboro Sun.)

We cringe before every legislative session begins because we know a handful of legislators will propose new laws exempting access to public information. Such will be the case in January when lawmakers convene for the 91st General Assembly.

Sen. Gary Stubblefield, R-Branch, filed Senate Bill 12 that, if passed, would exempt public schools — ranging from prekindergarten to state-funded universities — from releasing emergency and security records under the state’s Freedom of Information Act.

Arkansas once had one of the nation’s strongest public records laws, but that’s changing with each legislative session, and it’s affecting your right to know.

Stubblefield’s bill seems reasonable on the surface.

It would exempt “records or other information that upon disclosure could reasonably be expected to be detrimental to the public safety, including without limitation records or other information concerning emergency or security plans, school safety plans, procedures, risk assessments, studies, measures, or systems.”

Seems reasonable, right? Who’d want just any Tom, Dick or Harry to gain access to a school’s emergency plan or risk assessments?

But the bill goes further.

It would also exempt “records or other information relating to the number of licensed security officers, school resource officers, or other security personnel, as well as any personal information about those individuals; and any other records or other information relating to or having an impact upon the security or safety of persons, structures, facilities, or other infrastructure of a public school district or public school.”

Arkansas State University officials support the legislation, spokesman Jeff Hankins told Sun reporter Sarah Morris.

Hankins called it “responsible safety legislation” for universities and stressed the importance of keeping sensitive information out of the wrong hands.

On the surface, we agree with Hankins that information regarding security plans and measures that could jeopardize public safety should be handled cautiously and with great care.

However, Stubblefield’s bill would essentially allow A-State and other universities to operate top secret police forces.

Want to know how many officers patrol the public university you’re considering paying top dollar for your son or daughter to attend? Under Stubblefield’s bill, you can forget about that.

Want to know who those officers are? Stubblefield’s bill suggests you can forget about that, too.

You heard an officer got fired at the university and want to find out why? Under Stubblefield’s bill, you can forget about that as well, because acknowledging the department isn’t at full force could create a security threat to the university and jeopardize campus safety.

Want to know if school resource officers are at the school you’re considering sending your child to? Forget about it, Stubblefield says.

The hypothetical could go on and on, but the public can rest uneasily knowing public officials would cite a disclosure exemption for any record they believe they could get away with. It’s a challenge we regularly face, and costly lawsuits that waste private and public funds are the only way to challenge a public official’s abusive manipulation of public records laws.

John E. Tull III, an attorney who is a staunch defender of the state Freedom of Information Act and an asset to anyone who believes government should be transparent and accountable, said past instances suggest Stubblefield’s proposed law could be abused.

“While I would hope and expect that such discretion would be used judiciously, my experience is that at times such discretion may be abused,” Tull recently told The Sun.

While Stubblefield’s intentions may be in the right place, his legislation is overreaching, and the potential for abuse is great.

We’re living in a time where government agencies and officials need more accountability and transparency, not secrecy.

Let your legislators know you do not support Senate Bill 12 or any legislation that would deny reasonable access to information.
Valentine’s day brings golden anniversary of state’s FOIA

This Valentine’s Day, February 14, 2017, will mark the 50th anniversary of Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller signing into law the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The special day falls on a Tuesday this year, just as it did in 1967.

It was on that cold winter day that the late Gov. Rockefeller took pen in hand and with his signature brought sunshine to Arkansas government at every level. It truly was the day the sun shined on all Arkansas residents. To truly appreciate Gov. Rockefeller’s action one has to have an understanding of the situation at that time. It was a time when the few governed the many and often in secret, behind closed doors and in smoke-filled rooms.

The public did not have a seat at that table, and that was by design of those in power most of whom never thought that the public’s business was any business of the public.

APA member newspapers are encouraged to mark the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the FOIA. By doing so it will remind readers of what a great day that was for the people of Arkansas. It will also remind them of why it is so important that we remain diligent in guarding and defending the FOIA against those who would amend the law to weaken it.

It is the public’s law. It guarantees their right to be notified of public meetings and their right to access government records.

The effects of the FOIA remain quite evident 50 years after Gov. Rockefeller signed it into law. The law remains vital, robust and rarely amended through the efforts of those who have taken on the task of defending it for all Arkansas residents.

The Arkansas Press Association has been at the forefront of that effort since the day the FOIA became law in 1967, and that support is unwavering.

Please don’t let this milestone anniversary pass without making the public aware of the occasion and why it remains significant for them.

You can find the FOIA 50th Anniversary logo and sample ads to use in the commemoration on the APA web site at http://www.arkansaspress.org/page/arkansasfoia.
The Day the Sun Shined on the People of Arkansas

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) of Arkansas was signed into law on Valentine’s Day in 1967. It was a Tuesday, just like it will be this year for the 50th anniversary of the late Governor Winthrop Rockefeller signing the bill into law.

When Gov. Rockefeller left office after two terms as governor, at his last press conference he was asked by a reporter to what would he point as the legacy of his tenure as Governor of Arkansas? The governor did not hesitate before saying, “The Freedom of Information Act.”

It was a pivotal moment for the people of Arkansas, that cold Valentine’s Day now 50 years ago. That new “Sunshine Law” shed light on all facets of government in Arkansas and at all levels. From the state level right on down to the counties, the cities, the school boards and any other agency supported in whole or in part by tax dollars became subject to the law.

For the first time, the people of Arkansas were guaranteed they would not miss a public meeting of their government because the law required that notice of the meetings be given. For the first time the people of Arkansas could be guaranteed a seat at the table and access to government records at the courthouse, at city hall and at the public schools. All thanks to the Freedom of Information Act of 1967.

To understand the significance is to take a stroll back into the day, the pre-FOIA days in Arkansas. That was when just a whole lot of decisions made on the public’s behalf were made behind closed doors and out of the view of the general public. The proverbial “smoke-filled rooms” were where a lot of the business of government was conducted, where the governed had no access to the decision-making process that affected all of their lives, sometimes in profound ways.

This was when the general public had no clue why some things were the way they were, and they had no idea what was happening with their tax dollars or who was pocketing those tax dollars or if they were getting any value at all for their precious tax dollars. They didn’t know and they couldn’t ask. Well, they could ask likely, but just as likely they would get no answer of any worth.

Enter the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act on February 14, 1967, the day the sun shined on the people of Arkansas; the day the doors of their government were opened to the people of Arkansas.

Of course this was neither a change that came easily, nor none too graciously. There were court challenges of the fledgling law. Some of those in control at the time did not want to give it up. To them, the public’s business was no business of the public. They were sure they knew best what was best for the general public, and they needed no help from any new state law.

But the courts begged to differ and challenge after challenge to the law was turned away by the courts. With each challenge and each court decision the fledgling law gained traction until it became clear that it was truly a new day for the people of Arkansas.

Like so many other really good things that happen to us, over time people tended to forget what positive transition the FOIA brought to government in Arkansas. We began to take it for granted, and from time to time there were successful attempts to amend the law, to water it down and to help those desiring to return to the old days of closed doors and smoke-filled rooms.

For the most part though the FOIA continues to be amended very little. Only 23 exemptions to the law have been created since 1967. Think of that: Fifty years and only 23 exemptions.

The Freedom of Information Act was written broadly by the forward thinking lawmakers of the day to be interpreted narrowly by the courts. The courts responded by doing just that, and for the most part so has the Arkansas legislature.

The 23 exemptions include such things as exempting grand jury minutes, child adoption records, blueprints to Arkansas prisons, among others. They were common sense exemptions not spelled out in the original law, but added as obvious necessities of the law for it to survive and to serve well the people of Arkansas.

Can you imagine? Only 23 exemptions in 50 years? It is truly amazing that this law has been so seldom amended and that the original statutes was so well crafted that it continues to serve the people of Arkansas very well.

So here we are 50 years later blessed with one of the strongest “Sunshine Laws” in the country. It is the envy of many states that adopted similar laws only to have them so heavily amended as to render them useless to their intended purpose.

And here we are 50 years later with another general session of the Arkansas legislature, and here we are with a whole raft of proposed bills that would seek to amend the law, to water it down, to carve out special niches for some special interest or another.

I would hope that in this, the 50th year of the law that was so precious to the late Gov. Rockefeller that legislators intent on changing the law keep in mind the original intent of the law. Remember just what the original intent of Gov. Rockefeller was and just what the original legislative intent of the law was, and it was simple:

“That the public’s business be conducted in public, and that the records of government be open and accessible to the People of Arkansas.”

That’s it. It really is that simple, but to listen to some this nearly perfect and very rarely amended law needs some tweaking to accommodate some whim or to assuage the inconvenience of some in government for having to abide by its statutes.

What’s that old saying about comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable. That would be the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act because that’s what it does.

When something works and when something isn’t broken, there’s really no need to fix it.

I just hope the legislature thinks of that in this, the 50th year since the signature of Gov. Rockefeller made the FOIA the law of the land in Arkansas.

Have a great week!

Tom

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

February 2, 2017
Mark Bivens

Mark Bivens, 63, a former staff member of the Malvern Daily Record, died Wednesday, January 25.

A native of Blytheville, Mark worked for the Malvern Daily Record for 22 years before retiring in 2013.

He started at the Daily Record as a sports writer and was editor of the newspaper when he retired.

A celebration of his life was held at the J.A. Funk Funeral Home in Malvern on Saturday, January 28.

Sunshine week ads available

February 14, 1967

The day the sun shined on the people of Arkansas.

This ad sponsored by the Arkansas Press Association and this newspaper.

Ad conference returns to spa city

The annual Arkansas Press Association ad conference will return to Hot Springs this year for a Thursday and Friday gathering, March 9-10, at the Clarion Hotel.

Ryan Dohrn, creator of the 360 Ad Sales Training System, is the featured speaker. Dohrn has trained over 3,000 sales people in seven countries. A veteran of the sales and marketing business, he has worked for the New York Times Company, Morris Communications, PennWell and Disney.

Dohrn, author of a business book, has been featured in USA Today and on Forbes.com. He currently works on a monthly basis with over 75 companies and their related sales management teams.

The ad conference will kick off shortly after noon on Thursday, March 9, with Dohrn’s presentation the feature of the afternoon. Afterwards, there will be a reception and group dinner.

The conference will resume Friday morning with the “hot ideas” breakfast session, a lively exchange of newspaper promotion, special section and advertising ideas for newspapers of all sizes. That will be followed by a round table or panel discussion.

The conference will conclude with the annual APA Better Newspaper Advertising Awards in the ballroom on the top floor of the Clarion.

Registration materials will be mailed this week. Those wishing to do so may register on the APA’s web page at http://www.arkansaspress.org/event/2017AdConference.

Safety vests, press cards available from APA

Don’t forget that the brightly colored safety vests and Press Card identification cards are available from the Arkansas Press Association.

The safety vests, which are presently in limited supply, are required of journalists working accidents or other incidents on a public roadway. The vests come in several sizes and sell for $20 each.

The Press Card photo credential is available free of charge for APA publishers and editors. Extra Press Cards are available for $5 each.

Let’s Get Social!

Follow the Arkansas Press Association on Facebook.
www.facebook.com/Arkansas-Press-Association-218467510595
Guest Column:  
On the Methodology of Real Journalism  
Jim Stasiowski

It took 12 tries by an equal number of people before someone finally succeeded in explaining to me how tax-increment financing (known as TIF) works.

Maybe 15 tries.

Even before I fully understood TIF, I knew it was a way that a government uses tax money to lure businesses.

To some, the fact it took me that many tries to grasp the intricacies of TIFs makes me look less than intelligent. But I think it makes me look good.

See, I kept trying to understand TIFs. I didn’t give up when I heard about it the first time, back in the 1980s, and told the explainer: “Huh?”

What you need to know about me: Whenever I have been interviewed for a job, and my prospective boss asks the standard, “So, what are your strengths?” I always say I’m a slow learner. I mean, slo—o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o—o-ow.

I don’t say that out of some reverse-psychology ploy or a brutally honest display of self-awareness; I say it with pride, because what I mean is that I pick up details the way a bricklayer builds a wall: one piece at a time. And if one doesn’t fit – continuing the bricklayer metaphor here – I will tear down what I’ve done and start over.

Throughout my life, I’ve been around fast learners, from my parents and siblings to classmatess and colleagues.

Even my wife, Sharon, swiftly masters numbers and technology and puzzles and instructions and the layouts of cities. When we first got our home wired against break-ins, the security technician had barely started his script when he looked at a distracted me and said, “Sir, are you following this?”

I said, “No,” then pointed to Sharon and added, “but she is, and she’ll fill me in.”

For me as a journalist, slow learning has been an advantage. No matter how difficult the topic, I insist the source go over it until I can explain it to readers.

An example: On a Friday morning last winter, I covered a meeting at which an extremely intricate legislative proposal was discussed. Despite my copious notes, I really didn’t follow a lot of what was said.

After the meeting, I asked the most knowledgeable speaker – call him Roger – to fill in the details. Thinking I could get a story done for the next morning’s edition, I told him I needed an hour of his time.

Roger turned me down, but offered: “How about tomorrow?”

He was running errands on Saturday, so he called me on his cell phone. For four hours Roger helped me, brick-by-brick. It was painful to acknowledge how little I knew of the proposal, but he enjoyed playing tutor. After we talked, I made a few more calls – Reporting tip: In cold climates in the winter, many people are easily reachable on Saturdays – and I wrote a multi-source, nuanced story for the Sunday edition.

I know I should have found a way to get that story on Friday, put it online as soon as possible, then into the Saturday paper. But journalists get paid for more than just speed and clicks; in accepting a newspaper job, we also accept the responsibility of using our judgment. If I had written the story on Friday, it would have been superficial, like local-TV pieces in which, after a complex meeting, the reporter gets 40 seconds of on-camera comments from the mayor.

Yes, I could have found a different source on Friday for a lengthy interview. But here comes the judgment: In listening to the speakers at the meeting, I zeroed in on Roger as having both the broadest knowledge of the topic and the best reputation for candor.

It helped that my editor agreed with me: The story needed steeping, patience, consideration. In our modern media blizzard, speed is seductive but often shallow. A murder? Massive traffic accident? Trial outcome? OK, get it online and compete to be first (and, not incidentally, best).

But a topic with profound and long-term implications deserves time to develop.

I am not criticizing fast learners; I often wish I were one. And my self-assigned “slow learner” label hasn’t inhibited my ability to swiftly turn a slender news tip into a solid deadline-pressure story.

Still, it is an asset to know what I don’t know, like how to operate our home’s security system.

Now, back to TIFs: They started as a noble workaround to develop blighted areas, but shrewd business executives exploited simple-minded politicians lusting after credit for the holy grail called “economic development,” and today some TIFs are little more than corporate welfare, larding with tax money projects that companies would have done without such help.

When your local government considers a TIF, start at the bottom. First study the TIF laws, then methodically build your story brick-by-brick.

THE FINAL WORD: Although I usually reject new or trendy words, I do appreciate the utility of “workaround,” a noun the dictionary defines as “a method for overcoming an obstacle or bypassing a problem.”

(Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 334-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, NV 89436.)
Tuesday major milestone for Arkansas FOIA

The Arkansas FOIA turns 50 Tuesday, Valentine’s Day. It was on that day in 1967 when Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller signed the FOIA into law, opening government at all levels in Arkansas and insuring the citizens of Arkansas access to government meetings and to public records.

Valentine’s Day in 1967 fell on a Tuesday. As luck would have it, the holiday falls on a Tuesday again on this the 50th anniversary of the signing.

The law continues to look incredibly as it did when Gov. Rockefeller signed it into law. The Arkansas FOIA is considered one of the most effective in the country in insuring the right of Arkansas residents when it comes to Arkansas government.

The APA has created a logo to be used through 2017 commemorating the milestone of the FOIA. APA member newspapers are encouraged to incorporate the logo in stories and features they may do throughout the year regarding the FOIA and it reaching this milestone.

“It’s an excellent time to call attention to the state’s FOIA and to raise awareness of how important it is to the people of Arkansas,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “The Arkansas legislature appears intent on watering down the law with a myriad bills that would unnecessarily in our view amend the law.”

APA member newspapers are encouraged to mark the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the FOIA. By doing so it will remind readers of what a great day that was for the people of Arkansas. It will also remind them of why it is so important that we remain diligent in guarding and defending the FOIA against those who would amend the law to weaken it.

It is the public’s law. It guarantees their right to be notified of public meetings and their right to access government records. The effects of the FOIA remain quite evident 50 years after Gov. Rockefeller signed it into law. The law remains vital, robust and rarely amended through the efforts of those who have taken on the task of defending it for all Arkansas residents.

The Arkansas Press Association has been at the forefront of that effort since the day the FOIA became law in 1967, and that support is unwavering.

Please don’t let this milestone anniversary pass without making the public aware of the occasion and why it remains significant for them.

You can find the FOIA 50th Anniversary logo and sample ads to use in the commemoration on the APA web site at www.arkansaspress.org.
Just last week this space was filled with a tribute to the state’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the fact that on Valentine’s Day this year, next Tuesday in fact, the FOIA will turn 50.

The late Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller left little doubt on his departure from the governor’s office that the FOIA was the legacy of his tenure as the state’s top elected official. Truly he was prophetic as it is what his tenure is most remembered for—for opening government at all levels in Arkansas to public view.

He cracked open the hard shell protecting a few in power, and let the sun shine in on government activities. It was a pivotal moment for Arkansas, that cold day in February 1967.

And now here we are 50 years later and the Arkansas legislature, or at least some of its members, is intent on undoing Gov. Rockefeller’s legacy. Bill after bill is being filed that would amend the FOIA in some way. Some of them would amend the law in a big way.

There seems to be a diminished appreciation in the legislature for open government in Arkansas. In fact, as I’ve said here before and actually in testimony at the legislature, what we are experiencing here in the 2017 legislative session is an unprecedented assault on open government in Arkansas.

Conversations with legislators sponsoring a bill that would amend the FOIA all go pretty much the same. They can’t see that their bill would do much damage and it would fix a petty annoyance they have about the FOIA, or that someone has for whom they carry the bill.

It’s true some of them don’t seem to see a big deal on the surface, but most of the bills are written so broadly so as to leave way too much room for interpretation, and with that interpretation most often come the dreaded unintended consequences. You know, those things that amendments to the FOIA create as a “side effect” of the intended purpose. These are rarely good things for the FOIA. In fact I can’t recall an example of an unintended consequence that turned out well for the FOIA.

But while some individual bill may or may not do much damage to the FOIA, in the aggregate of all these bills turns the FOIA into something totally unrecognizable to those familiar with it.

The deal is, we’re either going to have open government in Arkansas or we are not. We’re either going to have transparency in government and accessibility to government at all levels in Arkansas—or we are not.

We have all of the above in the present law. Amended only 23 times since it was signed into law 50 years ago is testament to how well and how efficiently the law has served the people of Arkansas.

You need to know that we’re in this fight to save the FOIA on our own. There’s nobody else out there working with us. The APA and the FOI Coalition are it. It’s pretty much always been that way and that’s not getting any better.

My concern is that people don’t care as they once did. They’ve forgotten how it was before Feb. 14, 1967. In fairness, a lot of them likely weren’t even born.

But some of us were. Some of us remember the giddy days in the wake of the FOIA’s passage and its enactment into law. Now, 50 years later, there seems to be a presumption in the legislature that 50 years is long enough, and that the multiple bills filed to amend the FOIA are really no big deal.

Don’t you believe it. Don’t buy into that and don’t let anybody tell you that’s the case because it is not. Far from it.

Every newspaper and just a whole lot of citizens know how frustrating it can be to get information from government. They know how frustrating it is when elected officials at various levels of government play fast and loose with the FOIA. It’s like a sport for some of them to find ways to skirt the law.

The last thing we need to be doing is to empower them to make even more inroads into the protections and the rights guaranteed by the Freedom of Information Act. But that’s exactly what the 2017 general session of the legislature is doing.

Open government is under attack. It’s open season on transparency in government. Government records are also a target. This time it’s just a small part of them, but you can bet there will be more targeted for government secrecy.

These are our rights...YOUR rights...being messed with and it won’t stop if we don’t all act together to bring it to an end. Don’t feel like you’re powerless in this because you are not. In fact, you’re far from it.

Don’t ever miss an opportunity to collar your local legislators and make sure they understand how important the FOIA, open government and accessible government records, are to you. And not just once. Bring it up on every encounter and drive the points home at every opportunity.

Make it clear to your legislators that if they see any bill that seeks to amend the FOIA or that seeks to remove public notices from newspapers, they need to give you a call and get your take on it. If they don’t, then you need to call them.

They need to be hearing from our newspapers at every opportunity. This is the only way we have of countering the present trend of undermining the FOIA one little piece of legislation at a time, or removing a few public notices at a time.

These are all about government transparency. Ask them what they’re trying to hide. Ask them why they support secrecy in government.

There is presently an anti-media bias in the legislature the level of which I’ve never seen. No doubt a certain amount of it, perhaps the bulk of it, is coming from the present attitudes toward the media in Washington.

Wherever it comes from, the attitude compounds the difficulty we face in working to protect the FOIA and in protecting public notices in newspapers.

The fight won’t end, it’s just more of a challenge. We’re up for it, but you can play a big part.

Don’t hesitate to do your part.

Have a great week!

—

Tom Larimer's Potpourri

February 9, 2017
Oscar “Okie” Boyd


Known affectionately as “Okie” because he grew up in Oklahoma, Boyd was publisher of The Morning News, formerly known as the Rogers Daily News, for 32 years. During that time he gave starts to and tutored several newspaper managers, many who remain in the business today.

Funeral services were held January 4 with burial in the National Cemetery in Fayetteville.

ARKANSAS LEGISLATOR 2017

The editorial cartoon above was created by APA graphic designer AJ Wallace, and is available for use by APA member newspapers. The cartoon calls attention to a growing sentiment in the legislature that the state’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) needs considerable amendment, but what several bills filed in this legislation session do is to erode the FOIA and weaken it beyond its present identification. The cartoon can be found on the APA web site ad clearinghouse along with other ads and graphics commemorating the 50th anniversary of Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller signing the FOIA into law on Valentine’s Day, 1967.

Nominating committee seeks candidates for board vacancies

The APA nominating committee will meet in March to select three nominees to fill vacancies that have either occurred or will occur in the near future.

Those interested in being considered for a position on the APA board should contact either nominating committee chairman, Rusty Fraser, at rusty@stonecountyleader.com, or Tom Larimer, APA executive director at tom@arkansaspress.org.

One of the nominees will fill the seat of Rusty Fraser who will be leaving the board at the conclusion of his year as immediate past president. The other two vacancies were created by the resignations from the board by David Mosesso and Shane Allen.

There are 11 APA board seats that are divided between daily and non-daily newspapers. The board is a policy-making board that meets three or four times per year, two in two-day retreats held in the spring and fall at various locations around the state.

The other present board members include Nat Lea, president; Byron Tate, vice president; Tom White, second vice president; Jay Edwards, John Bland, Rusty Turner, Ellen Kreth and Sue Silliman.
Editorial: FOIA at 50

This month we observe the 50th anniversary of the state’s “Sunshine Law,” a significant piece of legislation that changed the way public officials do business, forcing them to discuss and decide matters in the open and within the public view rather than in private sessions as had been common practice.

The day the sun shone in was Feb. 14, 1967, when then Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller signed the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) into law. It has since been deemed one of the strongest Sunshine Laws in the country and it is the envy of many states – states that adopted similar laws only to have them amended so heavily that they no longer served their intended purpose.

The Arkansas FOIA has been amended only 23 times to offer exemptions for things such as grand jury minutes, child adoption records, prison blueprints, and other reasons that can be easily justified. Only 23 times in 50 years, but it’s not for lack of trying.

The FOIA anniversary falls during a legislative session in which lawmakers once again are attempting to close the shades against that bright sunshine. During every legislative session, our state press association leads the effort to monitor proposed bills as they are presented in Little Rock and lobby against those that are unreasonable efforts to weaken the law.

The old days of routine closed-door meetings in smoke-filled rooms are gone, and we take for granted the tenets of open government. In general, we don’t have to worry that significant actions are being taken in secret. But we must remember that is entirely the result of the FOIA that Rockefeller championed. Without the FOIA, Arkansas residents would remain in the dark about many actions of public officials at every level – from state government down to city and county, school boards and public agencies.

We expect our legislators and other public officials to put on their sunglasses and enjoy the sunshine. It has been the public’s right for the past 50 years and we will not be forced back into the dark.

Guest Column:
The Printed Paper Still the Publisher’s Best Asset
Peter Wagner

“Am I the only one who believes the traditional print version of our community newspaper still provides the best economic future?”

Peter W. Wagner, Founder, The N’West Iowa REVIEW

I don’t understand the logic of moving local news coverage from the long-established and highly respected printed newspapers to the Internet. Any egomaniac with a home computer can create a local website or blog. But it takes a community newspaper — with credible reporters, editors and well-deserved reputation — to provide direction and consensus to the community.

“What if almost the entire newspaper industry got it wrong?” asked Jack Shafer recently on Politico.com. Printed papers, he says, have struggled the last two decades to reinvent themselves for the digital age. Few have seen any real revenue and there has been almost zero growth since 2007. Surveys show, he says, that most readers still prefer the print version of their newspaper to the web version. “Maybe newspapers should focus on what they’re good at,” he says, “instead of fighting a digital war they can’t possibly win.” My son, Jeff Wagner, says nobody can save their way into business success. The industry cutback in newsroom staff, editorial hole, circulation promotion and community involvement has deflated the image and value of newspapers overall. Some local newspapers attempt to get by printing mostly news releases that are nothing but self-serving, poorly written, boring collections of “who cares” facts. Worst, most of those releases also available in every other newspaper in your area. If press releases are used at all they should be rewritten and expand with fresh information and a local spin.

I used to think readers wanted their stories USA Today style, short and to the point. But while in San Francisco recently I found myself devouring exciting, enticing, full-page newsworthy features in The Examiner. But being short or being long does not make story or feature article worthy of printing. Each article needs a “hometown” connection.

Here are some recent innovative stories published in my The N’West Iowa REVIEW:

“WHERE’S SUPERMAN SUPPOSED TO CHANGE?” (See attached illustrations) told our readers that most Northwest Iowa telephone booths have disappeared. You’ll find them in backyards, basement rec rooms and providing character to locally owned businesses.

“SEVEN FOR 7” featured seven articles in our OKOBOJI Magazine highlighting seven of the best places, interesting faces, restaurants, boat dealers, recreational trails and events around our nearby seven-lake Okoboji resort area.

“FULL-TIME PIG FARMER AND PART-TIME PASTOR” shared the journey of a man called to the ministry from his hog lot. Today, with much training, he both farms and preaches.

And finally, “TAKING A FLING AT MATH” explained how a Sheldon Middle School sixth-grade teacher was using the trebuchet, an ancient weapon of war, to teach math to his students.

There are endless worthwhile stories breaking around every community every day. The resourceful reporter will discover them while at church, listening in on the conversations at the city council meeting or simply by visiting with a local community leader. They are the stories readers remember. They just require an inquiring mind and an interest in the community.

Let’s not write print’s obituary yet. The printed newspaper is going to be around for a long time. All it needs is the love and care of an enterprising publisher and powerful, exceptional writing.

(Peter W. Wagner is founder and publisher of the award-winning N’West Iowa REVIEW. He is a regular presenter at State Press Association Conventions and Group Seminars. You may contact him with questions regarding your newspaper at pww@iowainformation.com or (cell) 712-348-3550.)
GOVERNOR SIGNS PROCLAMATION - FEB. 14 FOIA DAY

It was difficult not to see the irony when Gov. Asa Hutchinson signed a proclamation naming Tuesday “Freedom of Information Act Day” in Arkansas, but choosing to do so behind closed doors.

Tuesday, Valentine’s Day, was the 50th anniversary of Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller signing into law the state’s Freedom of Information Act. He did so in front of Robert McCord, Sigma Delta Chi president at the time, and Sen. Ben Allen and Rep. Leon Holsted, sponsors of the bill that would become the FOIA.

No explanation was offered as to why the proclamation was closed to the press or public, but speculation was that the governor did not want it to be seen as influencing pending legislation amending the FOIA now being considered at the legislature.

Several bills have been filed seeking to amend the FOIA in this session. Some would create gaping holes in the law seriously limiting its usefulness to the people of Arkansas.

“When I asked for the governor to sign a proclamation for us, I thought he would think it was a good idea to be identified with the now 50-year-old law,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “Apparently showing support for the FOIA is not politically correct for the time being. Hopefully that’s just a temporary situation.”
The irony continues at the 91st General Assembly where it remains open season on the state’s Freedom of Information Act.

The irony continued Tuesday, 50 years after Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller signed the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) into law opening government at all levels to the people of Arkansas, when Gov. Asa Hutchinson signed a proclamation designating Tuesday, February 14, 2017 “Arkansas Freedom of Information Act Day.”

The irony? The signing took place with no press, no photos and behind closed doors. It was as if the signing of the proclamation or the proclamation itself was an imposition, something the governor only reluctantly agreed to do because to not do it would look bad, too.

So now we have a nice proclamation. We’ll reproduce it in this Arkansas Publisher Weekly, but beyond that it won’t likely see much of the sunshine the FOIA was designed to shed on Arkansas government at all levels.

Rep. Laurie Rushing of Hot Springs had filed House Resolution 1024 declaring Tuesday, Feb. 14, as FOIA Day in Arkansas. The resolution was the topic of discussion at a House Management meeting Monday afternoon. They unanimously approved the resolution with no discussion except a comment by one of the committee members that they may as well pass the resolution because it (the FOIA) won’t be around after the session.

Sadly, he’s right. At the present pace there are sufficient FOIA bills pending in the legislature to render the FOIA pretty much useless.

It is also beyond ironic that in a week when we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the state’s Freedom of Information Act, the legislature continues to do their best to destroy it.

And honestly there’s not really one bill to point to that does the most damage. By themselves none of them do much damage, but in the aggregate they’re devastating to the FOIA.

There is a serious loss of interest in maintaining open government in Arkansas up on Capitol Hill. There is keen interest in closing as many records as possible and in doing so reducing the FOIA to ashes. It is disappointing to the max, and it is disheartening.

For many years, the Arkansas Press Association has taken the lead on defending the FOIA. We have faced in recent general sessions some bills that would in some way impact the FOIA, but nothing like we’ve seen in the current legislation session.

It comes down to this: we’re either going to have open government in Arkansas or we are not. We’re going to have government transparency and accountability at all levels of Arkansas government, or we are not. The really disheartening thing is that there are those who really don’t see the need for either.

There has always been that sentiment among the few that the public’s business is really no business of the public; that elected officials can do a better job running government without the meddling of the public.

Even with the FOIA, we’ve had instances of scandal. Even with a strong FOIA, there are those who think they’ve found ways to skirt the law. More often than not they get caught resulting in public embarrassment, but not much more really.

Can you imagine the skullduggery that will go on with no FOIA in place? I guess there will always be a FOIA, but with the blasé attitude currently toward the people’s law up on Capitol Hill, it won’t have much bearing on the operations of government at all levels in Arkansas. That will make a select few in this state really happy.

I can’t help but wonder what the late Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller would think if he were still around to see this change of attitude toward his signature law. The FOIA was his baby; it was his legacy. Now it’s trampled on like a worn out doormat.

These are dark days for the citizens of Arkansas. Sadly, they’re likely to get darker before this legislative session ends.

I will say this, the leadership at the legislature, some of it at least, has recognized the onslaught of bills that would undermine the FOIA and have applied the brakes. They want to get a better handle on just which records would be closed with the myriad bills attempting to do so.

The problem with that is determining just which records that would be. Some of the bills are written so broadly that tons of records could be closed to the citizens of Arkansas. It’s irrelevant what the sponsors of the bill intend, when bills are written this broadly they turn into bad laws, laws that lead to a broad interpretation. That, of course, can lead to the closing of records the bill likely never intended.

Attempts to amend the FOIA have always been with us but not like we’re experiencing in the 91st General Assembly. It’s like a lot of harbored animosity toward the law is being unleashed at one time.

Some public officials have found objection to the FOIA over the years. That usually occurs when compliance to the law, or the lack of it, has led to some embarrassing headlines. But there’s never been this much open hostility to the law that has protected the public’s right to know for 50 years now.

When the legislative session is ongoing you are likely to get a breathless email from me requesting you contact your representative or your senator about a piece of proposed legislation we’re fighting. I know most of you respond to those pleas because I hear from legislators when they hear from folks back home.

Some get a little testy about it, as in “who are you to get a bunch of my people calling me from home?” Apparently some don’t need…or want…the input. Some get it and do what they darn well please anyway.

But your contacts do make a difference. Without some input legislators are left to their own reasoning in deciding how to vote, and that’s not always in our best interest.

So thanks to those who are so diligent about making the contacts with legislators. It sure helps us represent you at the Capitol.

Have a great week!
Johnson named publisher at *Times-Herald* in Forrest City

Tamara Johnson has been named publisher of the *Times-Herald* in Forrest City, according to an announcement from the new owners of the newspaper, Argent Arkansas News Media.

Johnson is a long-time staff member of the *Times-Herald* dating back to 1990 when she signed on as a general assignment reporter/photographer. She was named managing editor in 1996.

Argent Arkansas News Media purchased the newspaper in November from Weston and Kevin Lewey.

The winner of the 2017 Arkansas Media Directory cover photo contest is Frank Fellone, shown here holding a copy of the new directory alongside Tom Larimer, APA executive director. Bobby Burton took second in the contest, and Debbie Kelly and Bobby Burton tied for third in a blind judging of the photos submitted for consideration. The directories were distributed Wednesday to APA Members.

### APA Advertising Conference

Several APA members are regulars at the annual APA advertising conference. Some have come for years.

This year’s ad conference is March 9-10 at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs. The featured speaker is Ryan Dohrn, a veteran sales trainer who brings a unique approach to sales that will benefit APA member ad people.

Here’s what some of those regular attendees of the APA ad conference have to say about the annual event:

“The APA Ad Conference is a terrific opportunity to make contact with industry peers, share revenue ideas and learn new perspectives that can help positively impact our operation. We are always excited to participate.”

— Todd Frantz, GM, The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs

“I’ve been in the newspaper business for over 35 years and even with all the changes, a lot has remained the same. I value my time at the press convention to network with my fellow “old timers” as well as to try to introduce myself to as many new faces as possible. Trying to share my experience while learning some new approaches to getting the job done makes APA worthwhile for me.”

— Jim Perry, publisher, Harrison Daily Times

“The only reason not to send your sales staff to the APA ad conference is you don’t need any more revenue this year. Our staff always comes away from the conference energized and with enough good ideas to more than pay for the trip.”

— Tom White, publisher Advance-Monticellonian

These are all good reasons to consider attending the annual APA Advertising Conference. If you’re not there, you’re missing out on some great revenue ideas and some truly great networking with some of the best ad people in the state.
Guest Column: Into the Issues

Al Cross

Big changes in Washington will mean big changes in your county, and we’ve been covering them on The Rural Blog.

President Donald Trump’s pledge to deport undocumented workers could lead to a labor shortage in agriculture, in which an estimated 16 percent of the work is done by people who are in the U.S. illegally, The Associated Press and CNN reported. Our blog item is at http://bit.ly/2kIGxs1.

That’s just one farm-and-food issue that could spark disputes between Trump and other Republicans, NPR reported. Those include breaking nutrition legislation out of the Farm Bill, the bill’s conservation-compliance rules, regulation of confined animal feeding operations, and protection of bees and other pollinators. See bit.ly/2jL91g3.

Trump has talked about an Obamacare replacement that would allow insurance companies to sell across state lines, but that’s more complicated than it sounds, and it might be bad for rural buyers, Jackie Farwell reported for the Bangor Daily News. We excerpted it at bit.ly/2jVY0L6.

Repeal of Obamacare could also quash a program that is penalizing 769 hospitals this year for shortcomings on patient safety, Trudy Lieberman wrote for the Rural Health News Service at bit.ly/2kbbUX9. For our blog item with a link to the list of penalized hospitals, see bit.ly/2Jljubb.

More importantly, depending on the replacement, repeal could hurt or kill struggling rural hospitals, many in areas that Trump carried, Kaiser Health News reported, and we excerpted it at bit.ly/2jqX4Lr.

Kaiser’s main example was a hospital in Pennsylvania, a state that just started a pilot project to pay six rural hospitals a set amount each month instead of reimbursing them for federally covered care, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported. Read about it at bit.ly/2rMg1A.

Trump’s key landslide in rural areas, and major news outlets’ failure to anticipate it and its effect on the election, prompted The Washington Post to add a reporter who will focus on the divides between rural and urban Americans. Jose DelReal, Alaska native and Harvard grad, might appreciate some competitive help from rural papers; read about his assignment at bit.ly/2jLrsRE.

One last Trump note: Jim Stasiowski is known among community journalists for his column on newspaper writing, but his latest effort warned that Trump’s success could prompt local candidates who use the “Trump approach of loud, bold, insulting statements to gain early attention for an otherwise long-shot campaign.” Read it on one of our blog pages: bit.ly/2jk6Ql2.

Drug abuse: Why is opioid addiction so rampant in rural areas? A story by Luke Runyon of Wichita Public Radio suggested that rural areas are the perfect breeding ground for opioid addiction. We paired it with a New York Times county-by-county map showing drug-overdose rates at bit.ly/2kbv1z6.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified 255 counties, mostly rural, that are the most vulnerable to an outbreak of HIV or hepatitis C from intravenous drug use. Many local officials have resisted establishing syringe exchanges as a way of heading off such outbreaks, but in several counties, they have changed their minds, reports Mary Meehan of Ohio Valley ReSource, a regional journalism collaborative of public broadcasters in Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia: bit.ly/2iYvPeM.

In Kentucky, which has many “dry” counties, a study of meth-lab discoveries boosted the case that drug use is less prevalent in areas where alcohol sales are legal: bit.ly/2W8gwmw.

Drug use is discouraging economic development in some rural and micropolitan counties because too many prospective employees can’t pass a drug test. The Washington Post reported on that phenomenon in a story about how U.S. manufacturing has changed: bit.ly/2jfxvD.

Newspapers: The Rural Blog is also about journalism and community newspapers, which are threatened in most states by local officials’ efforts to get legislatures to slash public-notice laws. The Public Notice Resource Center noted how the Georgetown (Ky.) News-Graphic presents public notices like news stories on a special page “designed to capture readers’ attention and promote the kind of serendipity that distinguishes newspaper from electronic formats.” We picked it up at bit.ly/2jYV0l6.

You may have seen the New York Times story about the Enid (Okla.) News & Eagle catching hell from readers and some advertisers for endorsing Hillary Clinton; we picked it up at bit.ly/2kYw1s.

The rise of fake news has proven, that now more than ever, quality reporting is essential to keep people informed, especially in smaller communities. That was a key point of an article that longtime journalist Kathy Kiely wrote for (Bill) Moyers & Co., citing some local news startups: bit.ly/2ikGSKT.

The editor-publisher of the paper judged the state’s best weekly for the last nine years became president of the Kentucky Press Association and immediately challenged his colleagues to do better. We wrote it up at bit.ly/2kEp3T.

Potpourri: One of the most republished or adapted Rural Blog items recently was one about a New York Times analysis of TV-show followers, with a neat map. It showed that television, which once unified American culture, now defines its divisions: bit.ly/2hOnt47.

Portable wi-fi devices at libraries allow patrons to “borrow the Internet,” the Daily Yonder reported, and we picked it up at bit.ly/2jkaUSe.


Abusive teachers are able to skip from state to state as local schools cover up their misdeeds, USA Today reported: bit.ly/2j7AGK.

State police are an important part of law enforcement in rural areas, but low pay and aging officers are creating shortage of troopers in many states, reported Therese Apel of The Clarion-Ledger in Jackson, Miss. We excerpted her story at bit.ly/2jkcUde.

If you do or see stories that resonate 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.
APA Ad Conference Offers Benefits Variety

If you’re looking for more reasons to attend the annual APA Advertising Conference March 9-10 at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs, here’s more on the subject.

“When I worked at the Times Record in Fort Smith I had the opportunity to serve as the chair person for the Advertising Task Force for the Arkansas Press Association and as a result helped with a number of ad conferences. I found them to be more than helpful in sharing and learning about ideas other newspapers were utilizing to make the most of untapped revenue opportunities. I always got more than I bargained for. In the current economy and today’s constantly changing environment I think it more important than ever to have access to ideas from others and the APA ad conferences certainly provide that. Not to mention that it provides an opportunity to network and get to know other people in the business you can reach out to as a resource.”

– Ronnie Bell, general manager, El Dorado News-Times

“At the 2013 Ad Conference a Central Arkansas newspaper (I believe it was the Saline Courier) presented the idea to sell ads around your “Readers’ Choice” ballot. I took that idea back to Monticello and in the last 4 years we have added $23,219 in revenue from that one simple idea. I doubt we spent $500 attending that conference. How about that for ROI? I think small papers with limited resources, like ours, stand to benefit more from the conference than larger papers with more resources. Sadly a lot of the smaller weeklies don’t take advantage on APA conferences.”

– Tom White, publisher, Advance-Monticellonian

So one might say it doesn’t cost to attend the APA’s annual advertising conference. It pays to attend.

Don’t miss this chance to mix and mingle with other advertising people at Arkansas newspapers, and to hear their ideas and innovations in their approach to advertising in the new era.

As an added bonus, you’ll get to hear Ryan Dohrn, a top presenter on advertising sales.

It all adds up to being another stellar gathering of APA member newspaper advertising people, and an event you will not want to miss.

Media Directory Released; Fellone Wins Cover Shot

The 2017 version of the Arkansas Media Directory is hot off the press and has been distributed to APA members and associate members.

The Directory is the lone publication of its kind in the state, listing all media contacts in the state. That includes print and broadcast media outlets.

You may note some changes in the Directory format. It was re-designed from front to back by APA graphic artist Ashley “AJ” Wallace. The traditional standing features are all still there, it’s just packaged in a slightly different and we think more aesthetically pleasing format.

As has been the tradition for the past several years, the cover features a photo selected from the dozens entered for consideration. This year the winning photo that appears on the cover was taken and submitted by Frank Fellone, former deputy editor and now staff writer at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. He is also an APA past president having served in that capacity in 2013.

Bobby Burton of The Daily Record took second in the photo contest, and also shared third place with Debbie Kelly. The runner-up photos are featured inside the new Directory.

The Arkansas Media Directory has a sticker price of $40. APA members and associates who receive one with their membership may purchase additional copies at $20 per.

Who’s Coming?

Here’s the list to date of those already registered to attend the annual APA advertising conference March 9-10 at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs. There’s still plenty of time to add your name to this group of advertising professionals.

You can find registration forms and even register online at http://www.arkansaspress.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=91254.

Those already registering include:
Steve Knox, The Osceola Times
LeAnn Brown, Millie McClain, The Sheridan Headlight
LaVonna Ables, Batesville Daily Guard
Rusty and Neal Fraser, Daphne Morton, Ed and Lisa Coates, Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Terri Coleman, Stacy Riley, Courier News, Blytheville
Suzie Winn, Linda Hostetter, Kelly Freudensprung, Pat Stuckey, The Saline Courier, Benton
Vicki Agee, Linda Dollar, Paige Henley, The Mena Star
Jennifer Allen, Summer Benedict, Stephanie Dodson, Village Voice, Hot Springs Village
Jay and Kathy Edwards, The Daily Record, Little Rock
Shantelle Redden, The Times Dispatch, Walnut Ridge
Sue Silliman, Camden News
Ronnie and Greta Bell, Lance King, El Dorado News-Times
Jim Perry, Todd Edwards, John Claude and Gena Whitlock, Harrison Daily Times
Neil McConnell, Rebecca McGraw, Ashley Wallace, Ashley Wimberley, Terri Cobb, Tom Larimer, Arkansas Press Association, Little Rock
Ryan Dohrn, Brain Swell Media, Tulsa, OK
Let’s begin this week with a big thank you to those APA member newspapers that devoted space in their newspapers last week for the 50th anniversary commemoration of the Arkansas Freedom of Information. I won’t begin to name them because there were so many and I wouldn’t want to leave anyone out. Suffice it to say there were several.

Thanks also to Brenda Blagg, veteran Arkansas journalist, defender of the FOIA, and two-time honoree with the APA’s Freedom of Information Act Award, who wrote an excellent column reiterating the history of the FOIA. We distributed the column to newspapers in the state and I know several of you published it. So thanks both to Brenda and to those APA members who published the column.

I also saw several reproductions of the FOIA 50 logo we created for the occasion published in APA newspapers, and several re-published the FOIA 50 editorial generously shared by Lori Freeze of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View.

The 50th anniversary of Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller signing the FOIA into law on Valentine’s Day, 1967, was an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the law that has served the people of Arkansas so very well for the past 50 years. The FOIA remains a very strong law as these sorts of laws go, and is consistently rated as one of the best in the country. By “best” you can read that as strongest in keeping government at all levels in Arkansas open and accessible to the public. That was the original intent of the law, and it has served the state very well for a half-century now.

There continue to be those who are not big fans of the Freedom of Information Act. There are those intent on seeing it amended. There are those who want to heavily amend it, and by that I mean they desire to blow holes through the FOIA that would re-slam the doors of government.

This makes absolutely no sense to me. Government transparency and accountability serve all of us very well. It is just that scenario that is insured by the FOIA. Weakening the law by amending it to the point of uselessness to the people of Arkansas has become sport for some in the legislature.

They actually joke about it. One legislator even “joked” about the FOIA not being around after this legislative session. At least I think he was joking. Maybe not. Either way, it wasn’t funny.

I am at the Capitol almost every day during the session. I’m there along with dozens of other lobbyists representing their respective constituencies just as I do for the newspapers of Arkansas. And almost everyday one or more of those lobbyists will ask jokingly, “Do we still have a FOIA?” or words to that effect. They all recognize that the FOIA is under siege and in great danger of being undermined in this legislative session.

It is a frightening pattern. The attitude in the legislature that the FOIA is no longer relevant in this day and time is disturbing. My concern is that the current school of thought in the legislature regarding the Freedom of Information Act sets the tone for future sessions. What doesn’t get done in the way of “amending” the law in this session will be back to continue or to finish the job in the next one.

It is apparent that some of the attitude in the legislature toward amending out of existence the FOIA comes from the current attitude toward the media in Washington, D.C. and in the fledgling Trump administration. It’s open season on the media in D.C. What we’re seeing at the Capitol in Little Rock seems to be an outgrowth of that sentiment and they’re taking it out on the FOIA.

Here’s the thing: the FOIA isn’t about the media. It’s about the rights of the citizens of Arkansas to have access to their government at all levels. Period. End of story. So when a legislator thinks he or she is sticking it to the media by promoting an amendment of the law, it’s hardly that. What it is an affront to the people of Arkansas who have enjoyed access to their government and to their government records since the FOIA was signed into law 50 years ago now.

The people of Arkansas should take that personally. They should take it very personally. My concern is that most do not take it personally. Even more troubling is that my concern is that most just don’t care one way or the other. That is a truly disturbing thought.

Perhaps they think that because they feel like the government is going to do to them what it’s going to do to them, and they feel powerless to do much about it. What they need to think about is what it was like before the FOIA when the public was truly shut out of the decision making process.

I hope we don’t get a chance to re-visit how things were before the FOIA was signed into law by Gov. Rockefeller. That would indeed be a dark day, the opposite in fact of February 14, 1967, the day the sun shined on the people of Arkansas.

Congratulations are in order for Frank Fellone whose photograph was selected as the cover photo for the 2017 edition of the Arkansas Media Directory. The photo will be there on the cover for a year, remind us each time we see it what a great amateur photographer Frank is. Who knew?

The Media Directories were mailed out last week to APA members and associate members. If you didn’t get yours please let us know. And of course if you need additional copies they’re $20 per, half off the cover price.

APA members and associates get one copy with their membership.

We, meaning the APA staff, are happy to see it go out the door. It is truly a staff project as almost everyone in the building plays a part in getting it pulled together. It was all pulled together by APA graphic artist Ashley “AJ” Wallace who did a stellar job tackling this huge project for the first time this year.

Have a great week!
ANF seeking host newspapers for 2017 newsroom interns

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF) is in search of APA member newspapers to host an intern as part of the 2017 ANF Internship Program.

ANF has four openings for the paid internship program, with ANF providing four matching grants of up to $1,500 for host newspapers lucky enough to get one of the interns.

“The internship program has really taken off and provided both the host newspaper and the student intern, with valuable experience,” says Karen Brown, ANF executive director.

“For some newspapers, the summer intern has become their next hire.”

The host newspapers are selected on a first-come first-served basis. 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.

Applications and deadlines are detailed in the information posted on the APA website at http://www.arkansaspypress.org/internships as well as, the ANF Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/Arkansas-Newspaper-Foundation-157891060935155/.

If you are interested in participating in this year’s program, please contact Karen Brown, at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

Several states report assault on public notices

One bill has been filed in the current Arkansas legislature to remove a public notice requirement for publishing in newspapers, but that pales to the plethora of bills reportedly filed in other states.

At least 62 bills relating to public notice in newspapers have been introduced in 25 different states through the first week of February, according to a review of bill-tracking software used by the Public Notice Resource Center. In addition, no fewer than 16 other bills targeting public notice in three states carried over from 2016 and are still active.

Many of the new bills merely add or change requirements for particular categories of notice, but at least 12 states are considering legislation that would move all or most of their official notices from newspapers to websites operated or controlled by government units. The potential that any of these bills will become law varies by state, according to newspaper lobbyists, but nobody is taking any of them lightly.

The one bill in Arkansas, SB 114 by Sen. Bart Hester and Rep. Kim Hammer, would remove the requirement for publishing delinquent taxes on mineral interests and instead allow this public notice to be “published” on a website.

The bill passed the senate and is presently in the House Revenue and Taxation Committee.

“Judging by the number of bills filed in the respective legislatures across the country, including Arkansas, I’d say it’s clear there is an outright assault on keeping the public informed of what their government is for and to them,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director.

The states facing the public notice challenges in their legislatures are not limited to any one area of the country. Presently, press associations in Connecticut, Michigan, Kansas, Missouri, Virginia and New Jersey among others are dealing with pending legislation that would remove public notices from newspapers.

In New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie has made it clear that the bill he favors is a “revenge bill” against newspapers that he believes have not treated him or his administration fairly.

“It’s not about fairness,” Larimer said. “It’s about keeping the public informed. Moving public notices out of newspapers in favor of secreting them on a government website is the same thing as hiding what the government is up to.”

For more information on these bills and where they are filed, go to www.pnrc.net.

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

February 23, 2017

Members In the News

Pearson joins Hope, Prescott reporting staff

Jeri Pearson, a native of Minden, LA, has joined the staff of the Hope Star as a reporter. She previously held a staff reporter position at the Minden Press-Herald.

Pearson is a graduate of Minden High School and she also studied at Bossier Parish Community College in Bossier City, LA.

In addition to working at the Hope Star, Pearson will be reporting for the Nevada County Picayune in Prescott, covering the Prescott City Council, the Nevada County Quorum Court and Prescott School District.

Pearson is a graduate of Minden High School and she also studied at Bossier Parish Community College in Bossier City, LA.

In addition to working at the Hope Star, Pearson will be reporting for the Nevada County Picayune in Prescott, covering the Prescott City Council, the Nevada County Quorum Court and Prescott School District.

White Hall Journal adds new staff members

The White Hall Journal recently announced new additions to the newspaper’s staff.

Dawn Yeer joins the Journal staff as a reporter and columnist. She brings reporting experience from covering beats in Stuttgart, DeWitt, Gillett and Humphrey for the Stuttgart Daily Leader.

Keanon Reep joins the Journal as an account executive, and John Worthen will serve as the Journal’s managing editor. He also holds that title at the Pine Bluff Commercial.

Reep is a Warren native. He’s a graduate of Warren High School and from the University of Arkansas-Monticello.

Worthen graduated from high school in Texas before graduating from Henderson State University in Arkadelphia.

Nashville chamber names Schirmer ‘Man of the Year’

The Nashville Chamber of Commerce has named John Robert Schirmer, owner of APA member newspapers in Nashville, Mt. Ida, Glenwood and Murfreesboro, “Man of the Year.”

Schirmer received the honor Monday evening at the Chamber awards banquet in Nashville. The honor cited his church and school involvement, as well as his mentoring, cattle farming and for being publisher of the local newspaper.

The APA named Schirmer “Journalism Educator of the Year” in 1997.
Gatehouse parent selling to Japanese bank

Gatehouse Media, Inc. parent company, Fortress Investment Group, a huge American private equity company, is reported to be selling to SoftBank, a Japanese conglomerate. The deal is reported to be for $3.3 billion cash.

The sale is pending approval by regulators, but reports of the closure of the deal could come as early as June or before the end of the year.

It’s really unclear what if any impact the sale will have on Gatehouse, the company that operates about 30 newspapers in Arkansas, all APA members.

More details will surely follow in coming weeks.

Mark Your Calendar!

March 9-10: APA Advertising Conference

March 31: APA Editorial Contest Entry Deadline

Guest Column:
The Business of News in the Trump Presidency
By David Chavern, President & CEO, NAA

I am often asked what it’s like to represent the news media business in the age of President Trump. On the one hand, the President would be hard pressed to be more disdainful of the press and the role it plays in our society. He routinely calls us liars and manipulators – and Trump and his senior strategy adviser have even branded us as “the opposition party.”

On the other hand, President Trump is also clearly obsessed by what the news media has to say and, in effect, constantly reemphasizes its central importance to our public life. After all, if the news media really didn’t matter, then he wouldn’t talk about us at all.

There is, though, one particularly pernicious untruth that he and his advisers tout about the news media that needs to be addressed directly – and that is the idea that the industry is “failing.” He has said this numerous times about the New York Times and Washington Post. Note this tweet, by way of example:

“Somebody with aptitude and conviction should buy the FAKE NEWS and failing @nytimes and either run it correctly or let it fold with dignity!”

Kelley Anne Conway said this recently: “If the mainstream media were a thriving private sector business that actually turned a profit, which is not true of many newspapers, 20% of the people would be gone. They embarrassed, they failed to protect their shareholders and the board members and their colleagues.” (This is a particularly strange argument since it implies that if news organizations made more money, they would fire more people.)

In short, aside from complaints about bias and supposed inaccuracies; this line of argument suggests that the news media shouldn’t be listened to because it is failing as business. “Don’t listen to them because they aren’t making enough money!”

That is logically misguided – but also factually wrong. Yes, the print and digital newspaper business isn’t what it used to be, financially. The internet has done a number on a lot of bottom lines across many industries, and the news business is going through a difficult transition to new business models.

But in no event does that mean that the industry is “failing.” The public has an insatiable demand for (now more than ever), and we have huge, engaged – and growing – audiences. Plus, 74 percent of respondents say they mostly or always trust print newspapers. This is higher than any other news distributor, including Twitter.

Many news properties are actually doing fine, thank you very much. The Post is adding 60 new jobs, an astounding number. CEO Fred Ryan sent a memo that they were profitable and growing. With the new jobs, the newsroom will number more than 750 journalists.

The Times surged to 2.5 million subscribers, accredited largely to the “Trump Bump.” In Q4, they saw 276,000 net growth in digital subscriptions. This could add at least $30 million a year to the company.

In a conference call, Times CEO Mark Thompson said, “President Trump was once again busy tweeting this weekend that our audiences and our subscribers were, to use his word, ‘dwindling.’ Well, not so much, Mr. President.”

There was no post-election lull in numbers, either. Thompson reported strong growth continuing into the New Year.

And that doesn’t even count the thousands of local newspapers that are profitable because they produce content about communities that no one else does. They are also still uniquely able to connect local advertisers to their local consumers in ways that larger news properties can’t.

The bottom line is that it may come as a disappointment to President Trump, but the print and digital news business isn’t failing at all. It is, in fact, going to be around long after the Administration: holding the powerful to account, and being the eyes, ears and voice that the public wants and demands.

(David Chavern serves as President & CEO of the News Media Alliance. Chavern has built a career spanning 30 years in executive strategic and operational roles, and most recently completed a decade-long tenure at the United States Chamber of Commerce.)
APA is monitoring the following bills of interest to our industry and the public:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill No. / Sponsor</th>
<th>Short Description</th>
<th>APA Position</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SB 12 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>An act to close security records or other information for a public school or state supported institution of higher ed.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed the Senate; Awaiting amendment in House Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 114 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>An act to remove newspaper publication requirement for notice of delinquent taxes on mineral interests</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed the Senate; On Agenda of House Revenue and Taxation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 131 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>An act to exempt from FOIA records of the state Capitol Police and other purposes</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in Senate State Agencies and Government Affairs Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1236/SB 152 Rep. Gazaway/Sen. Johnson</td>
<td>Companion bills to create an act to protect the privacy of surviving family members of a law enforcement officer who dies in the line of duty; creating an FOIA exemption</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Both bills await initial hearing in House/Senate Judiciary Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1248 Rep. J. Williams</td>
<td>An act to create an exemption to the FOIA for certain law enforcement investigative records and other purposes.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in House Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1403 Rep. Boyd/Sen. Irvin</td>
<td>An act closing public access to vehicle accident records for 30 days.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in House Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1469 Rep. Tosh</td>
<td>An act concerning the confidentiality of emergency preparedness documents at Dept. of Community Corrections.</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed full House; headed to Senate Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 261 Sen. Hester/Rep. Davis</td>
<td>An act to exempt attorney records related to litigation at state support institutions of higher education or its officers or employees.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in Senate Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1225 Rep. Magie</td>
<td>An act to repeal the exemption for certain advertising and promotion tax records under the FOIA; to subject certain advertising and promotion tax records to disclosure under the FOIA.</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in the House Revenue and Taxation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1571 Rep. Dalby</td>
<td>An act to amend the law concerning copying of public records and for other purposes</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Referred to House City, County and Local Affairs Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 364 Sen. Sanders</td>
<td>An act to allow ADEQ to choose to post public notices in newspapers or on their website.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in Senate Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 373 Sen. Hester/Rep. Davis</td>
<td>An act to create an FOIA exemption for attorney-client communication and attorney work product.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in Senate State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1588 Rep. Vaught/Sen. Hester</td>
<td>An act to exempt Ark State Police records concerning the Governor’s Mansion and Mansion Grounds from the FOIA.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1622 Reps. Johnson, Lowery, Brown; Sen. English</td>
<td>An act address the length of time a records custodian may take in complying with a records request; addressing burdensome requests for disclosure</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Reps. Johnson/Lowery Brown Sen. English</td>
<td>An act to amend the FOIA to allow records custodians to post records on the internet and consider that compliance with reecords request under the FOIA.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to House State Agencies Committee</td>
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Registrant list continues to grow for Ad Conference

The list of registrants for the APA’s annual advertising conference continues to grow with more registrations coming in every day for the March 9-10 event at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs.

The featured presenter for the conference will be Ryan Dohrn, a veteran sales trainer who brings a unique approach to sales that will benefit APA member ad people.

The conference will also include a “hot ideas” sharing session and a round table discussion featuring several topics. As usual the conference will conclude with the presentation of the annual Better Newspaper Advertising Awards.

It all takes place next week in Hot Springs. Don’t miss this opportunity to mix and mingle with your colleagues in the newspaper advertising business, and to learn what’s working at newspapers from an advertising perspective, and perhaps what is not.

“It will all be there for those attending and I encourage all newspaper advertising people to attend,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “It will be a great time of learning and sharing.”

Editorial Contest rules, forms distributed for ’17 honors

A package of information on the 2017 Better Newspaper Editorial Contest has been distributed to APA member newspapers that will have until March 31 to get entries posted to the APA contest site. Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will be judging the contest this year.

Included in the package are rules for entering the contest as well as the instructions for participating and categories for the 2017 contest, which recognizes excellence in editorial products in APA newspapers.

New to this year’s contest is a category for news stories which originated from information in a public notice in the newspaper. The addition of this brings to 29 the number of categories in the contest that may be entered.

The editorial awards will be presented Saturday, July 8, at the closing luncheon of the 2017 SuperConvention to be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton in downtown Little Rock.

For the second year, the APA contest will be conducted online. Entries are submitted to the APA contest site by pdf. Entries will be judged online.

If you have not received your editorial contest package, or if you have questions concerning the contest, contact Terri Cobb, APA contest coordinator, at 501-374-1500 or by email at terri@arkansaspress.org.
Working with the Arkansas legislature is never what you would call “easy,” but the 91st General Assembly now convened in Little Rock will stand out as one for the books as far as we are concerned.

By “we” I mean the newspaper industry in Arkansas. By “we” I mean advocates for open government, transparency and accountability.

There is a decided hostile attitude toward “the media” in general at the legislature and since technically “we” are part of the media we’re taking the brunt. I had speculated, at least to myself, that the present animosity toward government transparency has been fueled by the present anti-media sentiment in Washington, D.C.

Shucks, it’s gone well beyond sentiment. It’s an all-out shouting match, and a one sided one at that, in our nation’s capital.

So anyway, I had speculated that this might be the case that some perhaps most of the current legislature, are just echoing what they’re hearing out of D.C., and it is now not so much nuanced in the Arkansas legislature as it is an openly hostile attitude.

Sen. Gary Stubblefield, who has apparently dedicated himself to dismantling the state’s Freedom of Information Act, confirmed my speculation in an interview immediately after SB 131 was voted out of the Senate State Agencies Committee with a do-pass. I was there testifying against this bill which will close to FOIA all “records and information” about the State Capitol Police.

A reporter asked him if he felt like the bashing that the FOIA is taking in this legislature comes from the present anti-media attitude in Washington. He allowed as how it did.

There was more evidence in the question and answer session following my testimony last Thursday. Sen. Terry Rice of Waldron cited a state newspaper publishing the list of concealed carry permit holders in the state several years ago. It seems he and his wife were both listed, apparently much to his chagrin.

Those concealed carry files were closed by the legislature shortly after that episode and as a direct result of the list being published. It was an ugly and protracted fight at the State Capitol. Perhaps we should have seen the signs then that it was payback time.

It was apparent that Sen. Rice’s vote in favor of SB 131 closing to the FOIA records and information that should be readily available to the public was payback for his name and that of his wife being published on that list. But don’t bother looking now. Those records are now secret, just as the “records and information” of the State Capitol Police will be if SB 131 becomes law. At this point that looks like a sure thing.

It doesn’t end there. There are several other bills making their way through the process at the legislature that seek to amend the FOIA. Some have momentum and will be difficult if not impossible to stop given the present attitude and mindset in Little Rock.

Perhaps this renewed assault on the FOIA can be dated to that legislative fight over closing the concealed carry permit records. Since then it’s been open season on the FOIA and on government transparency in Arkansas. We know going into every session that we’re going to have these fights to preserve the public’s right to know in Arkansas, but nothing could have prepare us for the open hostility we’ve encountered.

We often talk about the proverbial “slippery slope” when it comes to amending the FOIA, meaning that once it begins it will be difficult to stop. Well, it’s not so much proverbial any more. It is a cold reality in Little Rock, and we’re sliding head first down that slippery slope.

We have no idea where the plateau will be, even if there is a plateau where we can find a place to stand without sliding further. My fear, my concern is that it won’t. My concern is that that slippery slope, once you’re on it, doesn’t slow down or stop until you’ve hit rock bottom. That’s where our present legislature is taking us.

Keep in mind these are elected officials voted into office from all over the state to represent the best interests of the people of Arkansas. Believe me what is presently happening at the State Capitol is not in the best interest of the people of Arkansas.

When you’re closing doors that have been and should be open to the public, you’re not keeping the best interest of the people of Arkansas in mind. When you’re shrouding in secrecy more and more public business in Arkansas, you’re doing the state’s citizens no favors.

Lest you are thinking I’m over-dramatizing the present attitude at the legislature you owe it to yourself to pay a visit to the capitol during this session. Join the conversation as we visit legislators, maybe even your legislator, about why gutting the FOIA is a bad idea, and then listen to the responses we’re getting.

There’s no mistaking the hostility. There’s no over-looking the “payback time” attitude against the newspapers of Arkansas. The media may be the intended target, but it is the citizens of Arkansas that will pay the price and they may not even know it or frankly even care at this point.

My fear is they will care the first time they’re denied access to something that’s been open and available to them since the FOIA was enacted 50 years ago. The actions of this legislature will hit home very quickly.

There is a cloud forming over Arkansas and it is slowly but surely blocking the sunshine that we have enjoyed in this state for 50 years. The sad thing is it is not likely to get better anytime soon.

So what can you do? Tell your readers what’s going on. Keep them informed of how their legislature, their very own elected representatives, are working swiftly toward making government secret in Arkansas. They really need to know. We need to do what it is we do best, and that is to keep your readers informed of what their government is doing for them as well as what the government is doing “to” them.

This is what we’ve always done. It’s just that now it’s needed more than ever. There is more at stake, and the last thing we need is to be criticized by our readers for not telling them what their government is doing to them.

Have a great week!

Tom
Special awards nominations open; deadline March 31

It’s time once again to be making nominations for the annual APA “special awards” to be presented Friday, July 7, at the annual SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock.

The nomination forms can be found on the APA website at www.arkansaspress.org

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 of a single act or for ongoing efforts.

Nominating forms are available on the APA website. The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 31. The APA Board of Directors will select the honorees from the nominations submitted at their annual spring retreat April 6-7.

‘Sunshine Week’ observance set; materials offered

The annual observance of “Sunshine Week,” a week set aside annually to call attention to the importance of public accessibility to public records and government in general, is set for March 12-18 this year.

The American Society of Newspaper Editors and the Reporters Committee on Freedom of the Press co-sponsor the annual event, and encourage newspapers across the country to call attention to the week and the importance of open government.

“This is especially relevant for APA newspapers this year considering the assault on open government presently being exhibited at the 91st General Assembly of the Arkansas Legislature,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “It isn’t clear just yet what the state’s FOIA will resemble when the legislature adjourns, but it is clear that it will not be the same going forward.”

Several bills have been filed in the legislature that would close various government records to public scrutiny. Most of the bills are an effort to promote government secrecy at a time when a majority of the public is demanding more access to expose corruption and other misfeasance in government.

A toolkit has been produced to assist newspapers in observing Sunshine Week in their newspapers. The toolkit can be found on the Sunshine Week website at http://sunshineweek.rcfp.org.

Nominations open for NNA’s Amos/McKinney/Phillips Awards

Nominations are now being sought for the National Newspaper Association’s annual Amos and McKinney awards, considered by many to be the top awards in the community newspaper industry, and for the Dan Phillips Leadership Award.

The deadline for nominations for each of these awards is May 15. The nomination forms and other information on the awards, including the criteria and past recipients can be found at http://www.nnaweb.org/contests-awards. The recipients will be notified in July and the awards will be presented at NNA’s annual convention this fall in Tulsa.

Previous recipients of the Amos award include Ray Kimball of De Queen (1992). Arkansas recipients of the McKinney award include Charlotte Schehnayder of Dumas (1980), and Betty Magie of Cabot (1988).

The awards are named for General James O. Amos and Emma C. McKinney. The Amos award, first presented in 1938, is named for the pioneer Ohio journalist and early member of the National Editorial Association, now the National Newspaper Association.

The McKinney Memorial Award was created in 1966 to honor Emma C. McKinney, co-publisher and editor of the Hillsboro (OR) Argus for 58 years. In 1954 Mrs. McKinney was named dean of Oregon newspapermen and women and in 1957 received the Amos Voorhies Award, the highest state honor that can be awarded to an Oregon newspaper person.

Nominees for the Amos/McKinney awards 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 Dan Phillips Leadership was established 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 Democrat before taking the job of managing editor for The Russellville (AL) Times. He returned to his family’s newspaper, The Oxford (MS) 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.

More information on the criteria for the awards along with the nominating forms and other past recipients can be found at the above link.

Members

In the News

Peters re-joins staff of Fairfield Bay News

Jonathan Peters is once again working at the Fairfield Bay News in advertising sales.

He previously worked for the News 2001-2006 before moving to the Sun-Times in Heber Springs.

He has over 15 years experience in business-to-business sales.

Peters lives in Quitman with his wife, Summer and son, Jaxon.
**Guest Column: Just Doing Our Jobs**

By David Chavern, President & CEO, NAA

It’s not breaking news that the media is not always popular. It is breaking news that even those who dislike the media are coming to the defense of the journalists and publications in light of recent attacks the Donald Trump administration has launched.

Senator John McCain is not a fan of media, he admitted as much, saying, “I hate the press. I hate you especially. But the fact is, we need you. We need a free press. We must have it. It’s vital. If you want to preserve — I’m very serious now — if you want to preserve democracy as we know it, you have to have a free and, many times, adversarial press. And without it, I’m afraid that we would lose so much of our individual liberties over time. That’s how dictators get started.”

I do not care if Donald Trump loves or hates the press. I care that he respects the First Amendment and that he acts with dignity.

Recently, in a statement, senior adviser Steve Bannon said “every day is going to be a fight’ between the media and the Administration. This is unacceptable that the highest elected office is treating the media like an enemy.

Washington Post editor Marty Baron addressed this rhetoric with, “The way I view it is, we’re not at war with the administration, we’re at work. We’re doing our jobs.”

This week President Trump tweeted that members of the media were the “enemy of the American people”. This is, frankly, the type of rhetoric usually reserved for terrorists.

The Trump Make America Great Again Committee (“TMAGAC”) — a joint fundraising committee composed of Donald J. Trump for President, Inc. (“DJTP”) and the Republican National Committee (“RNC”) — has sought to raise money through a “survey” that directly disparages media organizations.

In his address to CPAC, President Trump said he wanted to “do something” about the ability of journalists to quote an anonymous source. “Do something” being amending the First Amendment? This type speech is dangerous.

But in a truly baffling and backward move, on Friday afternoon, press secretary Sean Spicer barred CNN, New York Times and POLITICO from entering a presser. He barred three trusted media organizations from doing their jobs, and millions of Americans from getting the news.

We are in uncharted times. Republicans and Democrats alike are adding their voices in protest to these attacks on the media.

“I’ve had some rather contentious times with the press,” Secretary of Defense General Mattis said in response to a question about whether he saw the media as an enemy. “But no, the press is a constituency — as far as I’m concerned — that we deal with and I don’t have any issues with the press, myself.”

“The backbone of democracy is a free press and an independent judiciary,” Senator Lindsey Graham told CBS host John Dickerson. “And they are worth fighting and dying for.”

“Look, we’re big boys. We criticize presidents. They want to criticize us back, that’s fine,” Chris Wallace said Sunday morning on “Fox & Friends.” “But when he said that the fake news media is not my enemy, it’s the enemy of the American people, I believe that crosses an important line.”

Add your voice. The media is not the enemy and we are just doing our jobs.

(David Chavern serves as President & CEO of the News Media Alliance. Chavern has built a career spanning 30 years in executive strategic and operational roles, and most recently completed a decade-long tenure at the United States Chamber of Commerce.)

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**Moll pens book on religious doctrine**

**Randy Moll**, managing editor of the *Westside Eagle-Observer* in Gravette, has authored a book entitled “A Simple Explanation of Christian Doctrine.” The book has been a work in progress for several years before the December release.

In addition to his newspaper duties, Moll has pastored small churches for over 30 years. The book also covers topics such as angels, Christian Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, scripture, God’s judgment, the resurrection and other topics.

The book is available through Amazon’s Kindle Store.

**White promoted to GM at Ashley News Observer**

**Whitney White** is the new general manager of the *Ashley News Observer* in Crossett.

A Crossett native and daughter of Publisher Barney White, Whitney has worked at the *News Observer* and its sister newspapers in accounting, news writing, editing and general operations since joining the newspaper in 2003.

She holds a bachelor of business degree from Virginia Commonwealth University.

**Kelli White re-joins News Observer staff**

**Kelli White** is back at *The Ashley News Observer* as marketing and advertising director after taking a few years off to work in bank marketing and fund-raising in El Dorado.

She had earlier served the newspaper from 2000-2008 as ad director. She has held similar positions at newspapers in Arkansas, Virginia and Kansas.

Kelli is the daughter of Publisher Barney White and a sister of newly named *News Observer* general manager, Whitney White. She has three children of her own, a daughter who is a senior at UCA, a son who is a freshman at UAM, and another son who is a high school student.

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**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.
**91st Arkansas General Assembly**  
**Legislative Report**

*APA is monitoring the following bills of interest to our industry and the public:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill No. / Author</th>
<th>Short Description</th>
<th>APA Position</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SB 12 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>An act to close security records or other information for a public school or state supported institution of higher ed.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed the House Education Committee; Headed to full House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 114 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>An act to remove newspaper publication requirement for notice of delinquent taxes on mineral interests</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed Senate &amp; House Revenue and Taxation Committee; Headed to House floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 131 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>An act to exempt from FOIA records of the state Capitol Police and other purposes</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House State Agencies Committee; Headed to House floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1236/SB 152 Rep. Gazaway/Sen. Johnson</td>
<td>Companion bills to create an act to protect the privacy of surviving family members of a law enforcement officer who dies in the line of duty; creating an FOIA exemption</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House Judiciary Committees; Headed to House floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1248 Rep. J. Williams</td>
<td>An act to create an exemption to the FOIA for certain law enforcement investigative records and other purposes.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Placed on deferred list by sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1403 Rep. Boyd/Sen. Irvin</td>
<td>An act closing public access to vehicle accident records for 30 days.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Heard in House Transportation Committee; pulled down by sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1469 Rep. Tosh</td>
<td>An act concerning the confidentiality of emergency preparedness documents at Dept. of Community Corrections.</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed both houses; awaits signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 261 Sen. Hester/Rep. Davis</td>
<td>An act to exempt attorney records related to litigation at state supported institutions of higher education or its officers or employees.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in Senate Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1225 Rep. Magie</td>
<td>An act to repeal the exemption for certain advertising and promotion tax records under the FOIA; to subject certain advertising and promotion tax records to disclosure under the FOIA.</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in the House Revenue and Taxation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1571 Rep. Dalby</td>
<td>An act to amend the law concerning copying of public records and for other purposes</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to House City, County and Local Affairs Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 364 Sen. Sanders</td>
<td>An act to allow ADEQ to choose to post public notices in newspapers or on their website.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in Senate Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 373 Sen. Hester/Rep. Davis</td>
<td>An act to create an FOIA exemption for attorney-client communication and attorney work product.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House State Agencies Committee; Headed to House floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1588 Rep. Vaught/Sen. Hester</td>
<td>An act to exempt Ark State Police records concerning the Governor’s Mansion and Mansion Grounds from the FOIA.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1622 Reps. Johnson, Lowery, Brown; Sen. English</td>
<td>An act addressing the length of time a records custodian may take in complying with a records request; addressing burdensome requests for disclosure</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Reps. Johnson/Lowery/ Brown Sen. English</td>
<td>An act to amend the FOIA to allow records custodians to post records on the internet and consider that compliance with records request under the FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 41 Sen. Clark/Rep. Gates</td>
<td>Makes data compiled by an entity authorized to perform public services for children that is related to child maltreatment investigation and the unlawful conduct or suspension of an employee subject to FOIA disclosure.</td>
<td>Monitor-Support</td>
<td>Awaits hearing in Sen. Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 364 Sen. Sanders</td>
<td>Allow online posting of proposed actions.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaiting initial hearing in Sen Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 515 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records compiled by the State Police related to the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaiting initial hearing in Sen State Agencies committee</td>
</tr>
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HB 1836 would remove newspaper Public Notices

HB 1836 filed late last week seeks to remove the requirement for cities and counties to publish their public notices in newspapers and allow them to post the public notices on their respective city and county websites.

“We’ve seen this bill before and the arguments against it are still the same,” said Tom Larimer, executive director of the Arkansas Press Association. “Internet connectivity remains sparse in large portions of the state. Posting these public notices to a web site would disenfranchise a large chunk of Arkansas’ population.”

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Karilyn Brown of Sherwood, has been assigned to the House City, County and Local Affairs Committee. Chairman Tim Lemons of Cabot said Monday that the bill could come up as early as this week, but more than likely it would be next week.

“The time is now to be contacting your state representative and let them know you are opposed to this bill,” Larimer added. “You can contact your senator too, but the House will be hearing the bill first and that’s where we’d like to stop it.”

He also pointed out that if the goal is to put public notices online, they are already online at www.publicnoticeads.com/AR. That’s the searchable database site that can be found on the APA website at www.arkansaspress.org.

“The public notices are on there and at no cost to government at any level,” Larimer concluded. “They’re not going to find a better bargain.”

Nominate now for APA ‘Special Awards’

It’s that time of year again; time to recognize the special achievements of those in the year just passed.

The APA “Special Achievement Awards” will be presented at the annual “Honors Banquet” Friday evening, July 7, at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock, site for the annual SuperConvention.

Nominations are now open. The deadline for nominations is March 31.

Nomination forms can be found on the APA website at www.arkansaspress.org. Along with the nomination forms you can find a list of past winners of the respective awards that might give you inspiration for a nominee.

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 a single act or for ongoing efforts.

The APA Board of Directors will make the honoree decisions from the list of nominees at the annual spring retreat April 6-7 at Gaston’s Resort.
There could be little argument now that the 91st General Assembly of the Arkansas Legislature will go down in history as the session that ended the 50 years of sunshine brought to the people of Arkansas by the Freedom of Information Act.

Signed into law on Valentine’s Day 50 years ago by the late Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller, the FOIA blew the dark clouds of corruption that shrouded government in Arkansas in favor of the cleansing sunshine that exposed bad practices to public view.

This session of the legislature, after recognizing the FOIA on its 50th anniversary on Valentine’s Day, has then proceeded to gut the law on several fronts. The actions at the legislature to date will remove any resemblance of the law going forward.

The really discouraging thing about all of this is that it has been done gleefully by the legislature, as if they’re finally getting their payback for whatever perceived discomfort or offense the law has caused them or someone of their acquaintance over the years. In short, they just don’t care about the public’s rights in this regard, or the fact that they are removing big chunks of those rights with the passage of every bill aimed at doing just that.

The FOIA is all about exposing corruption in government. Without the FOIA it is unlikely we would have ever known about the alleged kickbacks to a pair of Northwest Arkansas legislators, one of who has already pleaded guilty to accepting thousands of dollars under the table.

The prudent individual might think that would be sufficient to mess with a law that has served the people of Arkansas so well for 50 years. But that’s not the case with this legislature.

There is a palpable animosity toward the FOIA in discussions on the legislative committee level. It is as if the majority of the legislators have had enough of being forced to do the public’s business in public. They’ve had enough of bureaucrats at every level of government being required to do the jobs they were hired on to do.

If this session is any indication, the FOIA and the rights of the people of Arkansas to an open government do not have a bright future.

The actions of the 91st General Assembly have not resulted in an outright repeal of the FOIA, but it has sure started us down that road. Rather than actually going for a repeal of the law, they’ve chosen a strategy of a slow erosion of the law, nibbling away at the tenets of open government and government transparency in favor of government secrecy.

These are dark days for both the Freedom of Information Act in Arkansas and for the people of Arkansas who for 50 years have enjoyed almost complete access to their government at all levels, from their public schools, to city hall, to the county courthouse and beyond. It is not an overstatement that this is on the road to coming to a complete end in Arkansas.

Normally we would look to the governor’s office to inject some sanity into the proceedings, and to help put the brakes on a movement to end open government in Arkansas. We haven’t gotten that. In fact, some of the more critical bills doing damage to the FOIA have come from the governor’s office. So much for expecting much help there.

In their defense, the leadership of both houses of the legislature tried to slow down the onslaught of FOIA bills, but their actions proved to be nothing more than a hand-aidid seeking to stanch the flow of an opened artery. When the restrictions on FOIA bills was lifted, it became a torrent of bills running in committees, often simultaneously, making it very difficult to raise an objection to each bill.

This legislature came to town apparently intent on ending the Freedom of Information Act as we know it, and they have banded together to see it done, or to see the law un-done, and they don’t see that it’s really any big deal. They like saying that the world has changed since Gov. Rockefeller signed the FOIA into law. Of course the world has changed, but corruption is still corruption.

Honestly the legislators behind gutting the FOIA see it more as gigging the media, taking away access that’s been guaranteed by the FOIA. They may think they’re gigging the media but the group their really gigging in their actions to undermine the FOIA is the citizens of Arkansas. It was for the citizens that the law was originally supported by and signed into law by Gov. Rockefeller. The media has over time assumed the role of “watchdog” for the FOIA. Our interest is in government transparency. The FOIA only works for us when there is reluctance on the part of government agencies to do what they’re supposed to do, what they were elected or hired to do.

Without those protections they will be able to do as they please and the public can just lump it.

Yet when we testify against legislation that would erode the FOIA, we’re treated like we’re making our living off the law. It is obvious that some legislators actually believe they’re hurting the media by undermining the FOIA. What they can’t apparently see is it is the public, their constituents, who will be hurt by a weakened Freedom of Information Act.

It is a sad day indeed for the people of Arkansas when their state legislature so willingly usurps their rights granted under the FOIA. But that’s exactly what’s happening and what will continue to happen if we don’t remind our elected legislators at every opportunity that undermining of the FOIA is a really bad idea.

House Bill 1836, filed late last week, would allow cities and counties to post their public notices on their website INSTEAD of in a newspaper of general circulation in the county as presently required by state statute. If you haven’t contacted your legislators about this bill, please do so now. It’s a bad bill that would make bad law and basically disenfranchise a large chunk of the Arkansas citizenry who have no access to the internet.

The local paper is still the best place for these notices. Just ask the Arkansas Department of Environmental Protection who failed to post a notice of the hog farm application on the Buffalo National River watershed. A few bucks for that notice could have saved hundreds of thousands in litigation costs.

Have a great week!
APA tracking 32 bills as filing deadline passes

If you check the list of bills in this edition of the APW being tracked by the APA lobbying team in this session of the legislature, you’ll note there are a total of 32 bills. The deadline for filing bills to be considered in this session was Monday.

“That number includes a number of ‘shell bills’ that can turn into just about anything,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive direction. “Shell bills are just place holders and can be amended to address any number of things.”

This is an extraordinary number of bills being monitored by APA. Most of the bills deal with amending the Freedom of Information Act, but there are at least three dealing with the newspaper publication of public notices.

APA is represented at the session by the Wills Law Firm, namely Robbie Wills, Dana Wills and Rick Green. Larimer is also a registered lobbyist for the Press Association, bringing to four the number monitoring these bills.

“Sometimes that’s not even enough,” Larimer said. “There are so many bills it’s really difficult to keep up with all of them.”

At least now there will be no more bills filed as the legislature enters its last weeks of the 91st General Assembly.

SPJ event will address campaign finance reporting

The Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) and Arkansas Public Media are hosting a discussion on proposed legislation to require electronic filing of campaign donations, Tuesday, March 14, in the Old Supreme Court building in Little Rock. The event will be from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Featured speakers at the event will include sponsors of the proposal House Bill 1427, Rep. Jana Delia Rosa of Rogers, and Rep. Clarke Tucker of Little Rock. Joining them on the panel will be Alicia Bannon, senior counsel at the Brennan Center for Justice, a Washington-based law and policy center that advocates against mass incarceration, open democracy and transparency in campaign financing and elections.

There is no admission to the event which is open to the public. For more information on the event, go to the SPJ Arkansas Pro Chapter Facebook page at http://tinyurl.com/gsnomvv.

Engaging Readers Through Your Editorials Webinar Topic

Here’s how to engage your readers through your editorial page all wrapped up in a Webinar from the Online Media Campus Thursday, March 23, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Michael Smith, executive editor of the Spartanburg (SC) Herald-Journal as well as three North Carolina newspapers, will explain how he crafts editorial and offer pointers for keeping the community conversation vibrant, all which maintaining a fast-paced newsroom.

Saturday, March 20, is the deadline to register for this webinar, another in a series offered by the Online Media Campus. The Arkansas Press Association is in partnership with the Online Media Campus, which allows APA members to register at a discount. The regular register fee for this one is $35.

Guest Column:
Sunshine Week
Democracy dies behind closed doors
By Brian J. Hunhoff, Yankton County Observer

Democracies die behind closed doors. Those were the words of federal judge Damon Keith about secret deportation hearings after the 9/11 attacks. Judge’s Keith’s eloquent phrase could also be applied to thousands of back room government meetings in town halls, courthouses and statehouses across this country.

Many candidates preach transparency on the campaign trail, but fail to practice it in office. The issue can expose a canyon between a politician’s words and actions.

Some local boards develop a bad habit of gathering as quorums outside their chambers. City commissioners in my town headed for a main street saloon after adjourning. Those sessions lasted longer than their actual meetings.

Our county board had a similar routine. On meeting day, commissioners took a lunch break together. It would be naïve to believe county business did not come up at the café, or city business was not rehearsed in the downtown bar.

Local officials are often criticized when caught breaking laws against secret meetings. Meanwhile, elected officials at the state level roam free to do the same thing.

In bright red South Dakota, Republicans make up 85 percent of the State Legislature. GOP lawmakers meet privately in committee quorums, scripting “kill or pass” strategy for bills before public testimony is even heard. Legal? Yes. Right? No.

Consider the citizens who drive across the state to testify at those committee hearings. Their time and words are wasted when votes are mere “rubber stamps” of pre-negotiated deals. It is a less than transparent system.

After the committee “hearings,” South Dakota’s Republican legislators hold large closed caucus meetings before the afternoon floor session is gavelled to order. As with the earlier pre-meeting meetings, these top-secret gatherings amount to giant executive sessions on the state level because the super majority caucus has a clear quorum.

Some say it’s harmless for a quorum of Republicans lawmakers to caucus secretly. We say it’s a case of too many elephants in the room.

The closed caucus is a place to get those elephants in a row away from public view. It’s a place where decisions are made about teacher pay and taxing food and Medicaid expansion. It’s a place where Democrats and Independents are excluded from meaningful dialogue about issues important to people of all political labels. It’s a place where citizens cannot monitor public policy debates and those who seek to influence them.

Shouldn’t people buying the sausage get to see it made? They have a right to watch the Legislature’s machinery grinding in all its rust and dust and glory. Let them observe the logic, reasoning, horse-trading and arm-twisting that propels all those ayes and nays on the House and Senate floors. Open caucus doors to media and the public!

Those who say private meetings are more productive and efficient do not give citizens enough credit. Officials should have faith that people smart enough to elect them are also wise enough to judge their deliberations.

Meanwhile, legislators pass state laws requiring local boards to conduct the public’s business in public. Hypocrisy anyone?

Wheels of change turn slowly in local government, but some progress has been made. More city and county officials strive to follow open meeting rules. Commissioners in our town no longer meet after meetings for cold beer or hot beef sandwiches. Slow open government beats no open government.

Meetings at the statehouse level are a different story. The addiction to secrecy grows stronger as a majority grows larger. The party in power assumes election success is a license for top-secret business as usual.

Democrats are just as prone to secrecy. One party rule – by either party – is not conducive to open government. It eliminates checks and balances. Genuine transparency is poisoned.

In most states, there are no laws against a statehouse majority’s secret meetings. But there could be and should be. State lawmakers tell local officials, “Do as we say, not as we do.” They should be saying, “Do as we say and we will, too.”

Because democracy dies behind closed doors.

(Brian Hunhoff is a South Dakota journalist who has written extensively about open and closed government. His defense of First Amendment principles was recognized with the Freedom of Information award from the National Newspaper Association.)
APA is monitoring the following bills of interest to our industry and the public:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill No. / Author</th>
<th>Short Description</th>
<th>APA Position</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HB 1225 Rep. Magie</td>
<td>Repeals the FOIA exemption for tax records of hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Stalled in House Revenue and Taxation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1236 Rev. Gazaway, Johnson, Blake</td>
<td>Exempts records that depict the death of law enforcement officers from disclosure under FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>&quot;Do Pass&quot; House Judiciary Committee; headed to House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1248 Rep. Williams</td>
<td>Exempts data recorded by law enforcement body camera or dash cameras from disclosure under FOIA.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Stalled in House Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1403 Rep. Boyd; Sen. Irvin</td>
<td>Exempts traffic accident reports from FOIA until 30 days after accident; restricts recipients list</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Stalled in House Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1469 Rep. Tosh</td>
<td>Exempts various aspects of Dept of Community Corrections emergency preparedness plans</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed both houses, awaits signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1588 Rep. Vaught, Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records and information compiled by State Police at the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Withdrawn by sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1590 Rep. Vaught</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records and information compiled by the State Police regarding security at the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed out of Senate State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1622 Rep. Johnson, Sen. English</td>
<td>Creates longer time window for complying with “unduly burdensome” records requests under FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral Pending Amendment</td>
<td>Awaits hearing in House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Rep. Johnson, Sen. English</td>
<td>Allows local government entities to adopt the same FOIA online database requires that govern state agencies</td>
<td>Opposed-Pending Amendment</td>
<td>Awaits hearing in House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1823 Rep. Collins</td>
<td>Authorizes any state agency, court or local government entity required to publish record electronically; allows records to be electronically examined under FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Awaits hearing in House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1836 Rep. Brown</td>
<td>Creates an online publication alternative for various notices and listings that a city or county is required to publish in a newspaper</td>
<td>Strongly Oppose</td>
<td>Awaits initial hearing in House City, County and Local Affairs Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1866 Rep. Lundstrum</td>
<td>Exempts property records of law enforcement officer from disclosure under FOIA if the officer submits request in writing</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Awaits initial in House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 12 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Exempts public school emergency and security records from disclosure under FOIA, including higher education</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>“Do Pass” House Education Committee, 3-2-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 41 Sen. Clark Rep. Gates</td>
<td>Makes data compiled by an entity authorized to perform public services for children that is related to both a child maltreatment investigation under the FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Reps. Johnson/Lowery/Brown Sen. English</td>
<td>An act to amend the FOIA to allow records custodians to post records on the internet and consider that compliance with records request under the FOIA</td>
<td>Monitor-Support</td>
<td>Awaits hearing in Senate Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 131 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for the security operations, emergency procedures and personnel information of the State Capitol Police</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>“Do Pass” House State Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 152 Rep. Johnson Rep Gazaway</td>
<td>Senate version of HB 1623</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 261 Sen. Hester Rep. Davis</td>
<td>Exempts from FOIA records related to pending or reasonably anticipate litigation that involves an institution of higher education</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Education Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
91st Arkansas General Assembly
Legislative Report

APA is monitoring the following bills of interest to our industry and the public:

<table>
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<tr>
<td>SB 364 Sen. Sanders</td>
<td>Would allow Ark Dept of Environmental Quality applications notices to be posted online OR in a newspaper</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Public Health, Welfare and Labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 435 Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Limits availability of information under the FOIA regarding water system customers.</td>
<td>Monitor-Neutral</td>
<td>Filed with amendment 3-2-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 515 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates a FOIA exemption for records compiled by the State Police related to the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1946 Rep. Tucker Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Amends the FOIA regarding access to public information (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1947 Rep. Tucker Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Amends the FOIA regarding access to public information. (Shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2111 Rep. Dotson</td>
<td>FOIA (Law endorsement investigative files; disclosure of information on juveniles (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2132 Rep. Rushing</td>
<td>Creation of FOIA Task Force (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2157 Rep. Douglas</td>
<td>FOIA exemption for Highway and Transportation Dept-held information (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2195 Rep. Shepherd</td>
<td>FOIA (Public Information Format; Internet alone sufficient)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2242 Rep. Davis Sen. Hester</td>
<td>FOIA (Water systems, planning, construction contractors access to customer information</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 373 Sen. Hester Rep. Davis</td>
<td>Exempts from FOIA a record that constitutes an attorney-client communication or attorney work product</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Re-referred to committee for further study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 669 Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Public notices (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 712 Sen. Elliott</td>
<td>FOIA (School compliance, admissions/budget details) shell bill</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HB1836 referred to interim study

House Bill 1836, sponsored by Rep. Karlyn Brown of Sherwood, a bill that would remove public notices from newspapers and allow them to be posted online, has been referred to interim study by the sponsor.

That means it is dead for this session.

Rep. Brown ran the bill in the House City, County and Local Affairs Committee Wednesday morning, citing the expense savings of the measure. It became apparent at the opening of questioning on the bill that it was doomed.

At least three committee members questioning Rep. Brown on the bill suggested she refer it to interim study. That’s generally code for the bill having no shot at getting out of committee.

Interim study takes place between legislative sessions, and gives the sponsor time to do more research on the bill regarding its viability.

“We met with Rep. Brown regarding the bill and expressed our reservations regarding the lack of connectivity in the rural areas of the state among other problems with the bill,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director.

Arkansas remains next to last in the U.S. for connectivity, ahead of only Mississippi. According to the 2013 U.S. Census Bureau data, well over 200,000 homes in Arkansas have no internet connectivity, and of that number over 20 percent don’t even have a computer in their home.

“I want to thank those who made contact with their legislators regarding HB1836,” Larimer continued. “It definitely had an impact. This one was a team effort and a win for the team.”

2017 Ad Conference - Sweepstakes Winners

The 2017 APA Better Newspaper Advertising Contest awards were presented Friday, March 10 at the Clarion Hotel in Hot Springs during this year’s Advertising Conference. The sweepstakes awards were presented to, from left, Jennifer Allen, Hot Springs Village Voice; Kristie Nall and Samantha Walker, Advance Monticellonian, Monticello; Staci Miller Franklin, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock and Kelly Freudensprung, The Saline Courier, Benton.

Don’t forget; Deadline nears for Special Awards

You have until March 31 to make nominations in the APA’s annual “special achievement awards” to be presented Friday, July 7, at the annual SuperConvention at the DoubleTree in downtown Little Rock.

These awards, presented annually at the “honors banquet,” recognize those in our industry who have toiled 50 years or more in newspapers. The “Golden 50 Service Awards” go to anyone who has contributed to a newspaper for five decades. This can be any position at the newspaper, including community correspondents, pressmen, etc.

The “Distinguished Service Award” is presented to someone or some organization that has contributed significantly to the Arkansas newspaper industry. This award recognizes a body of work for an individual, a couple or an organization.

The “Headliner of the Year” award goes to the person who has brought “good headlines” to the State of Arkansas during the past year and/or over the years, and can also be presented to an individual or an organization.

The “Journalism Educator of the Year” recognizes a person who has made significant contributions to journalism education in Arkansas, either at the high school or college level.

The “Freedom of Information Act” award goes to a person who has defended the Arkansas FOIA in some way, either a single act or for ongoing efforts.

Forms for making nominations for these awards along with a list of past recipients of the awards can be found on the APA website at www.arkansaspress.org.
The 2017 version of the APA’s annual advertising conference is in the books and it was a good one. Of course I would say that, but several others also said it, too. It’s always good to get that positive feedback on any event we do. It’s how we continue to improve upon our events.

The numbers were up some this year, too. We had over 50 in the Thursday afternoon sessions for the lively discussion on newspaper advertising trends and sales techniques. Presenter Ryan Dohrn did a good job connecting with those attending. You can tell that because of the inter-activity with the audience. There were a lot of questions and comments, which always makes for a better session.

The advertising conference returned to the Clarion Hotel on Lake Hamilton in Hot Springs, and all of the events were held on the top floor ballroom affording some excellent views of the lake and surrounding area. The event had been held the past several years at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain but they didn’t hold our dates for the event this year so it was moved back to Hot Springs.

Judging by the reviews it may well return there.

There were over 80 attending the Better Newspaper Advertising Awards luncheon that brought the affair to an end Friday afternoon. That’s up some from previous meetings. That’s also encouraging.

Thanks to all those who participated and learned ways to create more revenue opportunities for your newspapers, and thanks for sharing some really creative ways of doing that in today’s competitive environment.

Congratulations also to those who won awards in the annual advertising contests. The competition was tough this year with more and frankly better quality entries than in recent years. A big reason for continuing the contest is to recognize good work for sure, but it’s also to help raise the bar on creative advertising, marketing, promotions and events. There were some excellent examples of each of these on display at the advertising awards luncheon.

Check out the list of winners in this Arkansas Publisher Weekly.

If you missed this event don’t worry. There will be another one next year.

Before that, however, you’ll have another chance to mix and mingle with your counterparts in the Arkansas newspaper industry when the SuperConvention convenes for its annual run July 5-8 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in downtown Little Rock. The programming is shaping up to be something you won’t want to miss.

Be watching for more on the SuperConvention programming in coming editions of the Arkansas Publisher Weekly.

Next up for big deadlines is the March 31 deadline for entering the APA’s annual Better Newspaper Editorial Contest. Once again this year the entries will be submitted by pdf and the judging will take place online.

Last year was the first year of this transition and I was pleased that we had just as many entries in the new age approach as we did when tearsheet entries were submitted. We are in hopes that number will continue to grow this year.

Information on the contest, along with the rules, divisions and categories, can be found on the APA website at www.arkansaspress.org. If you have questions on the contest they can be directed to Terri Cobb, APA contest coordinator.

These awards will be presented at the closing luncheon of the SuperConvention on Saturday, July 8. You can’t win if you don’t enter, so get those entries ready for submission by March 31 and make plans to attend the awards luncheon in July.

The FOIA battles continue at the Arkansas legislature with several bills remaining in the pipeline that would undermine the state’s Freedom of Information Act, some of them dramatically so.

I appreciate being copied by our members on correspondence sent to legislators. I’ve had several of those this year, and it is helpful. For one thing it’s helpful to know a particular legislator has been contacted. It helps us in making our case to prevent serious damage being done to the FOIA.

The APA has for years fallen into the role as the watchdog group on the FOIA at the legislature. That cause is aided significantly by the FOI Coalition group, a loose knit organization also providing FOIA watchdog duties.

The Coalition is “loose knit” because it has no real structure. We collect no dues, elect no officers and hear no speeches. In other words it is a strictly volunteer group dedicated solely to preserving the FOIA from those who would wish it gone. What we do is to vet attempts to undermine the FOIA and work toward raising awareness of the importance role the FOIA plays in maintaining transparency in government.

I act as the ex-officio chairman of the group simply because I call the meetings and we convene at the APA building which is handy to the State Capitol as we only meet during legislative sessions.

I appreciate the efforts of this group and several others actually who have shown up at the Capitol to help us make the case against some of the worst legislation we’ve encountered aimed at undermining the Freedom of Information Act. We’ve had our successes, but in this session I’m afraid those in the legislature who prefer government secrecy to open government are in the majority in this session.

Speaking of the FOIA, Larry Killian of the South Arkansas Sun in Hampton has modified the “FOIA 50” logo we created to observe the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the FOIA on Valentine’s Day and made it into an editorial cartoon. It’s pretty creative and spot on regarding the clouds that loom over the state in these dark days for the FOIA.

Larry has authorized the use of the cartoon and it can be found in the FOIA folder on the APA ad clearinghouse. So help yourself and be sure to thank Larry when you see him.

You might see him at the SuperConvention. Larry hasn’t been in the newsletter business long since purchasing the Sun, but I don’t think he’s missed an APA event since becoming a member.

Have a great week!
Potter Conference, others upcoming at Reynolds Institute

The Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute (RJI) has a number of upcoming events that could be of interest to journalists, including the Potter Conference coming up on April 6. Check out the link below for more events and education opportunities.

https://www.rjionline.org/rji-links-live

RJI is headquartered at the University School of Journalism on the University of Missouri campus in Columbia, Mo.

Fairfield Bay News changing name

The Fairfield Bay News, in print since 1967 covering the Fairfield Bay area, is changing its name, according to a story in a recent edition of the newspaper.

As of the March 15 edition, the new name of the publication will be Lake Area Weekly.

The newspaper is also working on a redesign of the newspaper.

Fairfield Bay is a 14,000-acre community located in Van Buren County adjacent to Greers Ferry Lake.

Two join sales effort at Forrest City Times-Herald

Two advertising staff members have been added to the Times-Herald in Forrest City.

Stacy Kilgore, a Forrest City native, rejoined the Times-Herald while Bill McLoud joined the staff for the first time. He does, however, bring newspapers advertising experience to the job.

McLoud, a Colorado native, moved with his family to Forrest City in 2008. His wife is from Forrest City. The couple have a son.

Kilgore grew up in Forrest City and attended college at Arkansas State University. She previously worked at the Times-Herald from 2003 to 2006, according to a recent story in the newspaper.

New leadership at Log Cabin Democrat

Three women will be in charge of the 138-year-old Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, according to a front-page story in the Friday, March 10 edition of the newspaper.

Group Controller Cynthia Crabb, Vice President of Sales Betsey Barham, and Vice President of Audience Kelly Sublett, who have been overseeing the newspaper since last summer, will now be fulfilling those roles on a permanent basis.

Crabb has been with the Log Cabin for 15 years as business manager, while Barham, a 12-year veteran, began as a graphic artist before moving in to sales and sales management. Sublett joined the newspaper in 2014, bringing 16 years of newspaper editorial, sales and community involvement experience.

The day the sun shined on the people of Arkansas.
February 14, 1967

1967 - 2017

Arkansas Press Association
and this newspaper.

HB 1248
Legislative Clouds Loom
L.D.Killian
SB 261
SB 373
SB 515
SB 12
SB 131
HB 1836
HB 1623
SB 2148
SB 373
SB 12
SB 131
HB 1623

Editorial cartoon available for use

We are looking for a theme / hashtag for this years SuperConvention being held in Little Rock July 5-8!

Submit your patriotic or newspaper themed ideas to Tom Larimer, tom@arkansaspress.org, and be entered for a chance to win an extra APA convention tee or new front license plate!
Some print newspaper ads don’t work, because the ad doesn’t attempt to sell anything.

By Peter W. Wagner, Founder, The N’West Iowa REVIEW

Have you noticed the number of elaborate process color but totally meaningless ads in today’s newspapers? They’re a designer’s delight and a reader’s nightmare. Colored type is laid into colored backgrounds. Images are often printed on top of images. But most disappointing is no clear “call to action” being presented to the reader.

Print newspaper ads are simply salesmanship in print.

An effective print ad does its job the same as a professional ad salesperson does his. The five necessary points of an ad should emulate the five steps taken by the local advertising salesperson every time he or she calls on a potential client.

1. It is necessary to get the buyer’s attention.

A salesperson can accomplish this with a confident greeting, a solid handshake and a bit of new information. News of a special promotion, for example, or an increase in paid circulation numbers.

A print ad does the same thing with a creative, commanding headline. Some headlines depend on power words like “new”, “free” or “guaranteed” to command readership. But the most effective attention getters involve an effective play on words like “You’ll flip over our weekend pancake special.”

Here is a half-page ad that meets most of the points discussed. The headline is a combination of the name of well-known annual event coupled with that of one of the contacted lead performing artists. There is a price point. The use of blue to tie everything together gives balance to the black and white and color performer’s photographs. But the light blue copy in the black background is difficult to read in the printed version.

2. There needs to be support for the value of the offer.

An experienced print salesperson reinforces the presentation with handouts and pre-designed ads that reveal all the ad buyer is getting for the dollars being spent. An empowered print ad does this with an illustration of the item or service promoted in the headline such as a drawing of a flapjack soaring above the griddle.

But the better image would be a photo of a mouthwatering stack of flapjacks, on a platter flowing with syrup, hot and tasty, ready for eating. The bigger the photo the greater chance the message will result in a closed sale.

Both the headline (introduction) and illustration (value) play an equal part in a well-planned print ad. Either one can dominate and play the larger role. In designing any ad it is best to do thumbnails both ways to decide which has the most selling power.

Remember, when the headline is larger it should be at the top of the layout. When the illustration is larger it should be above the headline.

And place the headline and illustration into a consistent format and choice of typefaces that the advertiser can be identified even before the reader gets to the firm’s logo.

3. Re-enforce the value with positive decision-making details.

When selling face-to-face final success comes through providing positive buyer-entered details. Those might include the response the promotion is sure to attract, the demographics of the audience and the reach and loyal readership of the paper’s subscriber base.

When the advertiser is selling a product or service in a print ad, the greatest success also come from sharing details. Although body copy can sometimes be too long it can also be too short. A good descriptive paragraph about those flapjacks we discussed earlier might include all the extras that can be added: pecans, strawberries, bananas and blueberries, Or the variety of syrups available including whipped cream. Also important are the exact times the flapjacks are available. Finally, there is always room for an add-on like “For a real meal deal get them with a side of bacon and eggs for just $1.49 more.”

4. Provide price information.

Many businesses prefer to advertise general discounts such as 15% to 25% off. But that means little to readers who have no idea what is the regular price. When percentage discounts are advertised, it is wise to also include information such as “Regular $9.95 to $29.95” as an additional motivator to buy.

Also, don’t let high prices scare you. Many buyers want their friends to know just how much they had to pay for their designer sunglasses, BMW or fancy outdoor patio set. High prices can attract the demanding buyer.

5. Move to the close.

When selling advertising to a merchant the price point is usually followed with an attempt to close. I like the assumptive “Should we start that next week” approach.

The print ad traditionally ends with the advertiser’s logo and contact information at the close as an invitation to make a purchase.

Logos are like a person’s signature at the bottom of a letter. A firm’s logo should convey the personality and unique selection available at the store. It should be solid and lasting. It should never be too cute or trendy to stand the test of time. The design should be easy to read and include the firm’s street address, town, zip, telephone number, hours the store is open, accepted credit cards and email address.

The logo should never be created in any of the traditional typefaces as the paper uses for general advertising. It should be designed so the total package can be enlarged or reduced for any project without losing the readability of the contact information.
### Legislative Report

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<th>Short Description</th>
<th>APA Position</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HB 1225 Rep. Magie</td>
<td>Repeals the FOIA exemption for tax records of hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Stalled in House Revenue and Taxation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1236 Rev. Gazaway, Johnson, Blake</td>
<td>Exempts records that depict the death of law enforcement officers from disclosure under FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House/Senate; awaiting signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1248 Rep. Williams</td>
<td>Exempts data recorded by law enforcement body camera or dash cameras from disclosure under FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Stalled in House Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1403 Rep. Boyd; Sen. Irvin</td>
<td>Exempts traffic accident reports from FOIA until 30 days after accident; restricts recipients list</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to interim study (dead for this session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1469 Rep. Tosh</td>
<td>Exempts various aspects of Dept of Community Corrections emergency preparedness plans</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed both houses, awaits signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1588 Rep. Vaught, Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records and information compiled by State Police at the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Withdrawn by sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1590 Rep. Vaught</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records and information compiled by the State Police regarding security at the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1622 Rep. Johnson, Sen. English</td>
<td>Creates longer time window for complying with “unduly burdensome” records requests under FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Amended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Rep. Johnson, Sen. English</td>
<td>Allows local government entities to adopt the same FOIA online database requirements that govern state agencies</td>
<td>Opposed-Pending Amendment</td>
<td>Awaits hearing in House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1823 Rep. Collins</td>
<td>Authorizes any state agency, court or local government entity required to publish record electronically; allows records to be electronically examined under FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Awaits hearing in House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1836 Rep. Brown</td>
<td>Creates an online publication alternative for various notices and listings that a city or county is required to publish in a newspaper</td>
<td>Strongly Oppose</td>
<td>Referred to interim study (dead for session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1866 Rep. Lundstrum</td>
<td>Exempts property records of law enforcement officer from disclosure under FOIA if the officer submits request in writing</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Awaits initial in House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 12 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Exempts public school emergency and security records from disclosure under FOIA, including higher education</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House/Senate; awaits signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 41 Sen. Clark Rep. Gates</td>
<td>Makes data compiled by an entity authorized to perform public services for children that is related to both a child maltreatment investigation under the FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Reps. Johnson/Lowery/ Brown Sen. English</td>
<td>An act to amend the FOIA to allow records custodians to post records on the internet and consider that compliance with records request under the FOIA</td>
<td>Monitor-Support</td>
<td>Awaits hearing in Senate Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 131 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for the security operations, emergency procedures and personnel information of the State Capitol Police</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Became law without governor’s signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 152 Rep. Johnson Rep Gazaway</td>
<td>Senate version of HB 1623</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 261 Sen. Hester Rep. Davis</td>
<td>Exempts from FOIA records related to pending or reasonably anticipate litigation that involves an institution of higher education</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Education Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APA is monitoring the following bills of interest to our industry and the public:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill No. / Author</th>
<th>Short Description</th>
<th>APA Position</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SB 364 Sen. Sanders</td>
<td>Would allow Ark Dept of Environmental Quality applications notices to be posted online OR in a newspaper</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Public Health, Welfare and Labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 435 Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Limits availability of information under the FOIA regarding water system customers.</td>
<td>Monitor-Neutral</td>
<td>Re-referred to Sen. City, County and Local Affairs Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 515 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates a FOIA exemption for records compiled by the State Police related to the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1946 Rep. Tucker Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Amends the FOIA regarding access to public information (shell bill)</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1947 Rep. Tucker Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Amends the FOIA regarding access to public information. (Shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2111 Rep. Dotson</td>
<td>FOIA (Law endorsement investigative files; disclosure of information on juveniles (shell bill))</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2132 Rep. Rushing</td>
<td>Creation of FOIA Task Force (shell bill)</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Introduced and assigned to House Journal Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2157 Rep. Douglas</td>
<td>FOIA exemption for Highway and Transportation Dept-held information (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2195 Rep. Shepherd</td>
<td>FOIA (Public Information Format; Internet alone sufficient)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2242 Rep. Davis Sen. Hester</td>
<td>FOIA (Water systems, planning, construction contractors access to customer information</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 373 Sen. Hester Rep. Davis</td>
<td>Exempts from FOIA a record that constitutes an attorney-client communication or attorney work product</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Re-referred to House State Agencies committee for further study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 669 Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Public notices (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 712 Sen. Elliott</td>
<td>FOIA (School compliance, admissions/budget details) shell bill</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Members of the Oklahoma Press Association selected winners from 10 daily newspapers submitting 382 entries and 17 weekly newspapers submitting 355 entries.

Single Ad – 10” & Under

Smaller Dailies
First Place - Banner-News, Magnolia
Catherine Martin & Janey Sanders
Hot Dog, It’s Summer!
Riverside Grocery & Catering
Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey
Third Place - Banner-News, Magnolia
Janey Sanders
We Have Jeans!

Larger Dailies
First Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
MerryLee Meeker & Kacey Smith
Cutter Morning Star School District
Second Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Martha Whit & Jimmy Barrow
Wirt’s - Start the New Year with a Yes
Third Place - Texarkana Gazette
Kristin Davis
Barry Insurance

Single Ad – Over 10” - Under Half Page

Smaller Dailies
First Place - Banner-News, Magnolia
Janey Sanders
Say, I Love You
Second Place - Camden News
Robyn Yarbro & Quint Green
Banks Jewelers
Third Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey
Tire Town
Honorable Mention - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Steve Edwards
Woodland Heights Church - Fall Festival

Larger Dailies
First Place - The Times Dispatch, Walnut Ridge
Shantelle Redden
Second Place - The Weekly Vista, Bella Vista
Marisol Cortes & Barbra Smith
Rocky Mountaineer
Third Place - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis
Farmer’s Market
Honorable Mention - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Daphne Morton
We Love Our Builder
Honorable Mention - The Times Dispatch, Walnut Ridge
Shantelle Redden
Santa’s Other Ride is a Chevy

Single Ad – Half Page & Over

Smaller Dailies
First Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Jon-Claude Whillock
Myers Metal - 4th of July Can Special
Second Place - Banner-News, Magnolia
Catherine Martin & Janey Sanders
Star Rating
Third Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey & Linda Hostetler
Enterprise Liquor Store

Larger Dailies
First Place - Texarkana Gazette
Kristin Davis
Dr. Rachael Keilin
Arkansas Publisher Weekly

March 16, 2017

Second Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Wess Daniel & Meagan York
U.S. Pizza Co. - Brunch

Third Place - Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
Debra Ballard & Amber Dicken
War Eagle Cavern

Smaller Weeklies
First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Staff
Chesnaw Springs
Second Place - Dumas Clarion
Jerry Lawrence
Delta Memorial Hospital
Third Place - Sheridan Headlight
LeAnn Brown
Congratulations Kaylee Stewart

Larger Weeklies
First Place - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis
Chris Planagin for District Judge
Second Place - Arkansas Weekly, Batesville
Mandi Curtwright & Rebecca Payne
Cup’d Up Outdoors

Third Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Daphne Morton
Topsy Owens Memorial
Honorable Mention - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Ed Coates
TD Home Center

Best Ad Campaign
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey & Suzie Winn
Saline Audiology - Love Campaign

Second Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Brandon Cone
1929 Hotel Seville - Halloween Spook-tacular

Third Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey & Suzie Winn
Montalvo Interiors & Apparel

Larger Dailies
First Place - Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
Jennifer Doyle & Michelle Harris
Fayetteville Farmers Market

Second Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Martha White & Ric DuVall
Samuel F. Jirk - The Smile of a Lifetime

Third Place - Texarkana Gazette
Aaron Lewis
Miller Bowie Supply

Smaller Weeklies
First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Kristie Nall
Re-Elect Mark Gober

Second Place - Pacesetting Times, Horseshoe Bend
Karen Sherrell & Carrie Johnson
Sonshine Shoppe

Third Place - Texarkana Gazette
Aaron Lewis
Belleview

Larger Weeklies
First Place - Hot Springs Village Voice
J. Kendall Kegley
Remax Full Coverage Campaign

Second Place - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis
Robert Boyd for Madison County Sheriff

Third Place - Hot Springs Village Voice
J. Kendall Kegley
Remax Matters

Multiple Advertiser
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Batesville Daily Guard
Staff
Congratulations Independence Co. Offload

Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Staff
Reader’s Choice Ballot

Third Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo
National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
Honorable Mention - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey
Downtown Benton Business Association

Larger Dailies
First Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Lisa Williams & Staff
Tri-Lakes All Area Basketball Teams

Second Place - Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
Rachel Lipke & NWADG Sales Staff
Valentine’s Day

Third Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Art Production & Sales Staff
Hot Springs Boat, Tackle & RV Show

Smaller Weeklies
First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Kristie Nall
Breast Cancer

Second Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Kristie Nall
Don’t Drink and Drive

Third Place - Weston Eagle Observer, Gravette
Jennifer Doyle & Dani Beeman
All House

Honorable Mention - Washington County Enterprise
Leader, Lincoln
Stephen Xi & Donna Sugg
Farrington Homecoming

Larger Weeklies
First Place - The Weekly Vista, Bella Vista
Terri Frye & Creative/Sales Staff
Countdown to Christmas

Second Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Daphne Morton & Ed Coates
Christmas Open House

Third Place - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis
Huntly Lady Eagles Going to State

Best Use of One Spot Color
Smaller Dailies
First Place - El Dorado News-Times
Joanna Hill & Peggy Cagle
Cole’s Jewelers

Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey & Linda Hostetler
Big Jake’s Tires

Third Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Steve Edwards
Worley Tire - Merry Christmas

Honorable Mention - Banner-News, Magnolia
Janey Sanders
One Year Anniversary

Larger Dailies
First Place - Texarkana Gazette
Kristin Davis
Miss Snowflake Pageant

Second Place - Texarkana Gazette
Kristin Davis
Don’t Drink and Drive

Third Place - Texarkana Gazette
Kristin Davis
Dixie Diner

All Weeklies
First Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Daphne Morton
Anderson’s Propane

Second Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Samantha Walker
Welch Nissan

Third Place - Sheridan Headlight
LeAnn Brown
Sassy Shears - Valentine Special

Best Use of Process Color
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Camden News
Robyn Yarbro & Tina Sams
Learning Under Construction

Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey & Suzie Winn
KB’s - Get Out and Ride

Smaller Weeklies
First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Samantha Walker
J. Kendall Kegley

Second Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Erin Mize & Terry Cody
Holland Bottom Farm

Third Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Erin Mize & Terry Cody
Mountain View

Honorable Mention - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Samantha Walker & John Carter
Munro Footwear

Larger Dailies
First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Samantha Walker
Jones Feed

Second Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Kristie Nall
Bessie’s Frozen Yogurt

Third Place - Arkansas Weekly, Batesville
Mandi Curtwright & Matt Johnson
Celebrate with McDonalds

Honorable Mention - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Daphne Morton
Mountain View Chevy - Who Do You Drive For

Best Special Section – General
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo
Holiday Open House

Second Place - El Dorado News-Times
Staff
Graduation 2016

Third Place - El Dorado News-Times
Staff
El Dorado Shootout

Larger Dailies
First Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Art Production, Sales & Editorial Staff
Peter’s Flooring & Paint - Celebrating 110 Years

Second Place - Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
Terri Frye & NWADG Advertorial/Sales Staff
NWA Life

Honorable Mention - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Samantha Walker & Terry Cody
Red Ribbon Week

Third Place - Blytheville Courier News
Erin Mize & Terry Cody
Letters to Santa

Honorable Mention - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Samantha Walker
Holiday Gift Guide

Second Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Samantha Walker
Red Ribbon Week

Third Place - Blytheville Courier News
Samantha Walker & John Carter
Munro Footwear

Honorable Mention - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Samantha Walker & John Carter
Munro Footwear

Larger Dailies
First Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Erin Mize & Michelle Cothren
Byron’s Black Friday Sale

Second Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Merry Lee Meeker & John Carter
Service Liquor & Wines

Third Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Erin Mize & Terry Cody
Holland Bottom Farm

Honorable Mention - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Samantha Walker & John Carter
Munro Footwear

Smaller Weeklies
First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Samantha Walker
J. Kendall Kegley

Second Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Erin Mize & Michelle Cothren
Byron’s Black Friday Sale

Second Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Merry Lee Meeker & John Carter
Service Liquor & Wines

Third Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Erin Mize & Terry Cody
Holland Bottom Farm

Honorable Mention - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Samantha Walker & John Carter
Munro Footwear

Reader’s Choice Ballot
Samantha Walker
Congratulations Independence Co. Offload
Best Special Section – Magazine
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Batesville Daily Guard
Staff
Oomph!
Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Staff
Medical Directory
Third Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Samantha Walker & Staff
Find it!

Best Special Section – Sports
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Staff
Under the Lights
Second Place - Camden News
Staff
Football Preview 2016
Third Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Staff
Salt Bowl
Honorable Mention - Batesville Daily Guard
Staff
Up and Running Basketball

Larger Dailies
First Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Wendy Miller & Special Sections Staff
All Arkansas Preps
Second Place - Texarkana Gazette
Staff
Football 2016
Third Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Jennifer Ellis, Michelle Cothern & Staff
Zoned Editions Football Preview

All Weeklies
First Place - Blytheville Courier News
Stacy Riley, Bobby Garner & Terri Coleman
2016 Missco Football
Second Place - The Times Dispatch, Walnut Ridge
Staff
Lawrence County Fall Sports
Third Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Samantha Walker & Staff

Grid Iron

Best Special Section – Cover
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Batesville Daily Guard
Matt Baker, Luu Jones & J. Ross Jones
Southside Class Flyin’ High
Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Josh Briggs
Salt Bowl
Third Place - Batesville Daily Guard
Matt Baker, Luu Jones & J. Ross Jones
High Class of 2016
Honorable Mention - Banner-News, Magnolia
Janey Sanders
Columbia County Fair

Larger Dailies
First Place - Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
Lisa Shanks
You at Your Best
Second Place - Texarkana Gazette
Staff
Football
Third Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Merry Lee Meeker
How to Guide

Smaller Weeklies
First Place - Westside Eagle Observer, Gravette
Terri Frye
Gravette Day
Second Place - Dumas Clarion
Terry Hawkins
Profile 2016 ‘Tech-Time’
Third Place - Washington County Enterprise-Leader, Lincoln
Debra Ballard
WCFL Football
Honorable Mention - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Kristie Nall
Christmas Greetings

Larger Weeklies
First Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Neal Fraser
Fall Visitor’s Guide
Second Place - The Times Dispatch, Walnut Ridge
Shantelle Redden
Letters to Santa
Third Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Lori Freeze
Spring Visitor’s Guide
Honorable Mention - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis & Preston Toller
2016 Back to School

Best Section Cover – Magazine
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey
House to Home
Second Place - Batesville Daily Guard
J. Ross Jones
Oomph!
Third Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey
Business Card Directory

Larger Dailies
First Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Emily Edmisten
Real Weddings in Arkansas
Second Place - Texarkana Gazette
Staff
HER Magazine - June 2016
Third Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Leanne Hunter
Where We Live

All Weeklies
First Place - Hot Springs Village Voice
Staff
2016 Holiday Gift Guide
Second Place - Blytheville Courier News
Stacy Riley, Bobby Garner & Terri Coleman
2016 Missco Football

Best Use of Original Photo
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Gena Whillock
Permanent Solutions - Wrinkles Bite
Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey
Everett - Merry Christmas
Third Place - Batesville Daily Guard
Randy Harris
UACCB Summer & Fall Registration

Larger Dailies
First Place - Texarkana Gazette
Linda Thrapp & Kristin Davis
Flanagan’s Shenanigans
Second Place - Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
Debra Ballard & Lamar Allen
NWA Food Bank - One in Four
Third Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Wess Daniels & Meagan Yor
U.S. Pizza Co. - We Heard You

Smaller Weeklies
First Place - Pacesetting Times, Horseshoe Bend
Carrie Johnson, Cassie Stafford & Karen Sherrell
Pocahontas Livestock Auction
Second Place - Sheridan Headlight
LeAnn Brown
Early Voting has Started
Third Place - Dumas Clarion
Jerry Lawrence
Vote Jimmy Lee Jones

Honorable Mention - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Staff
Cockrell’s

Larger Weeklies
First Place - The Weekly Vista, Bella Vista
Jennifer Doyle & Kelley Young
Racers Ready to Rrrrumble?
Second Place - Arkansas Weekly, Batesville
Stacy Fields & Matt Johnson
Merchants and Planters Bank
Third Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Daphne Morton
Hooray Pool is Open

Best Use of Clip Art
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey, Kim Woods & Lisa Howell
Spring Home Layout
Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey
Browns Country Store & Restaurant
Third Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Steve Edwards
Natures Wonder - Think Organic

Honorable Mention - Batesville Daily Guard
Randy Harris
Green’s Lawn Care

Larger Dailies
First Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Merry Lee Meeker & John Carter
Service Liquor & Wines
Second Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Erin Mize & Michelle Cothern
Double Springs Grass Farm
Third Place - Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
Debra Ballard & Donna Sugg
Pressure Washing

Smaller Weeklies
First Place - The Times of Northeast Benton County, Pea Ridge
Stephen Xi & Amber Dicken
Flying R Feed

Second Place - Herald-Leader, Siloam Springs
Terri Frye & Donna Sugg
Chicken Depot

Third Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Samantha Walker
Sonic

Honorable Mention - Sheridan Headlight
LeAnn Brown
Let Us Fill Your Home

Larger Weeklies
First Place - The Times Dispatch, Walnut Ridge
Shantelle Redden
Wings of Honor Museum

Second Place - Arkansas Weekly, Batesville
Stacy Fields & Chris Vines

Third Place - Arkansas Weekly, Batesville
Stacy Fields & Jack Hill
Maple Springs Baptist Church

Honorable Mention - The Weekly Vista, Bella Vista
Jennifer Doyle & Kelley Young
Lindens Custom Jewelry - Save Big

Best Newspaper Promotion
Smaller Dailies - First Place
El Dorado News-Times
Staff
Back to School Zone

Second Place - Banner-News, Magnolia
Janey Sanders
Ugliest Grill Contest

Third Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Todd Edwards
2016 Harrison Goblin Football Review

Larger Dailies
First Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
MerryLee Meeker
Honoring Veteran’s Day

Second Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Staci Miller Franklin
New Autos Arkansas

Third Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Leanne Hunter
Large Car Lot Stairstep

Honorable Mention - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Katy Name
Health & Wellness Special Section

Smaller Weeklies
First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Staff
Overwhelmed?

Second Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Step Up

Third Place - Sheridan Headlight
LeAnn Brown
Find the Golden Egg

Honorable Mention - Dumas Clarion
Linna Jones
Newspaper Subscription Ad

Larger Weeklies
First Place - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis
Graduate Classes of 2016 - Subscription Special

Second Place - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis
Rodeo Days

Third Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Daphne Morton

Most Original Idea
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Camden News
Robyn Yarbro & Tina Sams
Pardon Our Progress

Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey
Old South Realty - Happy Holidays!

Third Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Brandon Cone
Hotel Seville - Learn to Dance Salsa

Larger Dailies
First Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Wendy Miller, Sloane Grelen & Promotions Staff
Downtown Little Rock Magazine

Second Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
MerryLee Meeker & Garry Richards
Hot Springs Mall

Third Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Dede Green, Megan Raney & Vicki Morgan
Real Estate Spadea Wrap

Honorable Mention - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
MerryLee Meeker & Garry Richards
Garland County Relay for Life

All Weeklies
First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Staff
Reinhart Family Healthcare

Second Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Staff
Monticello School District

Third Place - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis
Tax Free Sales

Honorable Mention - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Staff
Goodyear Tire

Best Use of Humor
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey
Behind the Big Stupid Fence

Second Place - Camden News
Robyn Yarbro & Tina Sams

Third Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey & Suzie Winn
Everett Buick GMC - Family Owned

Honorable Mention - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Jon-Claude Whillock
Remax - 25th Anniversary

Larger Dailies
First Place - Texarkana Gazette
Aaron Lewis
Fuzzy’s Taco Shop

Second Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Kyle Name & Kim Shaw
Medical Arts Optical

Third Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Dede Green & Meagan York
Ken Rash - Eggtoberfest

Smaller Dailies
First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
Staff
Town & Country Service Center

Second Place - The Times of Northeast Benton County, Pine Bluff
Debra Ballard & Amber Dicken
Oakview Animal Clinic

Third Place - Pacesetting Times, Horseshoe Bend
Carrie Johnson & Karen Sherrill
Taylor Hearing Centers

Larger Dailies
First Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Stacy Fields & Eddie Woodruff
Independence County Off Road

Second Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Ed Coates
Best Drug - OH, OH, OH

Third Place - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis
Pawliday Special

Best Festival – Special Event Ad
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Steve Edwards
Eagle Heights Baptist Church - Fall Festival

Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey & Kim Woods
Quartet Singing Event

Third Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Steve Edwards
Boone County Heritage Museum - Halloween Monday Bash

Larger Dailies
First Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Erin Mize & Michelle Cothern
Searcy Parks and Rec - Skate with Us

Second Place - Texarkana Gazette
Kristin Davis
2016 Home & Garden Show

Third Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
MerryLee Meeker & Kim Shaw
Garland County Fair

Smaller Weeklies
First Place - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis
Walmart - Back to School Special!

Second Place - Hot Springs Village Voice
Stephanie Dodson
Vina Morita - Wine Gala Dinners

Third Place - Arkansas Weekly, Batesville
Stacy Fields & Karen Owens
Mountain View Chamber of Commerce - Mountains, Music & Motorcycles

Honorable Mention - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Opal Dennis
Madison County Youth Hunt

Best Single Supplement Ad
Smaller Dailies
First Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey
Riverside Grocery & Catering

Second Place - Saline Courier, Benton
Pat Stuckey & Suzie Winn
Everett Buick - Christmas

Third Place - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Jon-Claude Whillock
Pat Andrews - Be Safely Armed

Honorable Mention - Harrison Daily Times
Sherry Zollo & Jon-Claude Whillock
Haun’s - Great Fashion

Larger Dailies
First Place - Texarkana Gazette
Aaron Lewis
Texarkana Eye Associates

Second Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
Martha White & Tony Cooper
Parker Lesus - December to Remember

Third Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Kyle Name & Kevin King
Lake Hamilton School District

All Weeklies
First Place - Hot Springs Village Voice
J. Kendall Kegley
Thank You From the Bottom of Our Hearts

Second Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
Daphne Morton
The Green House at Hipp Modern Builders Supply

Third Place - Pacesetting Times, Horseshoe Bend
Carrie Johnson, Cassie Stafford & Karen Sherrill
Mark’s Pharmacy

Best Automotive Classified Ad
All Dailies
First Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
Chris Meeks & Greg Gismond
Gildner Auto Group
Arkansas Publisher Weekly

March 16, 2017

Second Place - Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
- Jemel Parker, Chris Rowe
- McLarty Daniel - Back to School

Third Place - Saline Courier, Benton
- Pat Stuckey & Suzie Winn
- Everett - First Fleet

Honor Mention - Texarkana Gazette
- Andrew MacEntee
- ORR Volkswagen

Smaller Weeklies

First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
- Staff

Second Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
- Staff

Second Place - Westside Eagle Observer, Gravette
- Stephen Xi & Tammy Pelt

Honorable Mention - Texarkana Gazette
- Andrew MacEntee

Larger Dailies

First Place - Saline Courier, Benton
- Pat Stuckey & Suzie Winn
- Everett - First Fleet

Third Place - Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
- Debra Ballard & Phil Goodpaster

Collier & Associates - Real Estate Done Differently

Second Place - Texarkana Gazette
- Aaron Lewis
- Dennis Schafer

Third Place - Texarkana Gazette
- Aaron Lewis
- Legacy

Honor Mention - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
- Dede Green & Megan Raney
- CBPRM - Merry Christmas

All Weeklies

First Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
- Daphne Morton
- Outdoor Properties - Get Back to Nature

Second Place - Hot Springs Village Voice
- J. Kendall Kegley
- Remax of Hot Springs Village

Third Place - Hot Springs Village Voice
- J. Kendall Kegley
- Looking to Sell Your Home?

Honor Mention - Hot Springs Village Voice
- J. Kendall Kegley
- Let Trademark Mark Your Home Sold

Best Employment Classified Ad

All Dailies

First Place - Texarkana Gazette
- Shirley Carrigan
- Legacy Hospice

Second Place - Texarkana Gazette
- Shirley Carrigan
- Harte Hanks

Third Place - Saline Courier, Benton
- Pat Stuckey & Kim Woods
- Almatis

Honor Mention - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
- Jeremy Lewis & Susan Webb
- Carelink - Job Fair

Smaller Weeklies

First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
- Staff

Second Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
- Staff

Third Place - Westside Eagle Observer, Gravette
- Stephen Xi & Tammy Pelt

Marvins Savers Club Job Fair

Best Real Estate Classified Ad

Smaller Dailies

First Place - Harrison Daily Times
- Sherry Zollo & Jon-Claude Whillock

Second Place - Banner-News, Magnolia
- Catherine Martin & Janey Sanders

Third Place - Saline Courier, Benton
- Pat Stuckey & Linda Hostetler

Thomas Real Estate - Drye Road

Larger Dailies

First Place - Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fayetteville
- Debra Ballard & Phil Goodpaster

Collier & Associates - Real Estate Done Differently

Second Place - Texarkana Gazette
- Aaron Lewis
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- Carelink - Job Fair

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First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
- Staff

Second Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
- Staff

Third Place - Westside Eagle Observer, Gravette
- Stephen Xi & Tammy Pelt

Marvins Savers Club Job Fair

Larger Weeklies

First Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
- Caston’s Blueberries - Help Wanted

Second Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
- Ed Coates
- Silica Transport

Third Place - Hot Springs Village Voice
- J. Kendall Kegley
- Big Red Realty - Come Join Our Team

Best Niche Publication

All Newspapers

First Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
- Katie Bridges & Sloane Grelen
- Arkansas Life

Second Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
- Art, Production, Sales & Editorial Staff
- HER - Hot Springs Magazine

Third Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
- Sarah DeClerk, Michelle Cathern & Special Sections

Staff
- What Women Want

Best of Show - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs
- MerryLee Meeker
- Veterans Day
- Category 15 - Best Newspaper Promotion (Large Dailies)

Sweepstakes

Smaller Dailies - (6 Papers, 182 Entries)

First Place - Saline Courier, Benton
- Second Place - Harrison Daily Times
- Third Place - Batesville Daily Guard

Larger Dailies - (4 Papers, 200 Entries)

First Place - Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock
- Second Place - Texarkana Gazette
- Third Place - The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs

Smaller Weeklies - (9 Papers, 185 Entries)

First Place - Advance Monticellonian, Monticello
- Second Place - Facesetting Times, Horseshoe Bend
- Third Place - Sheridan Headlight

Larger Weeklies - (8 Papers, 170 Entries)

First Place - Hot Springs Village Voice
- Second Place - Stone County Leader, Mountain View
- Third Place - Madison County Record, Huntsville
Deadline for Special Awards nominations nears

Just one week remains to submit nominations for the APA’s annual “special achievement awards” traditionally presented at the annual “honors banquet” at the annual SuperConvention.

The awards presentation will take place Friday evening, July 7, at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock, site for the 2017 APA gathering.

The awards have been around for decades and are aimed at honoring those who have spent a lifetime working in the newspaper business, who have contributed significantly to the industry and others.

The awards include:

- The “Golden 50 Service Awards” go to anyone who has contributed to a newspaper for five decades. This can be any position at the newspaper, including community correspondents, pressmen, etc.
- The “Distinguished Service Award” is presented to someone or some organization that has contributed significantly to the Arkansas newspaper industry. This award recognizes a body of work for an individual, a couple or an organization.
- The “Headliner of the Year” award goes to the person who has brought “good headlines” to the State of Arkansas during the past year and/or over the years, and can also be presented to an individual or an organization.
- The “Journalism Educator of the Year” recognizes a person who has made significant contributions to journalism education in Arkansas, either at the high school or college level.
- The “Freedom of Information Act” award goes to a person who has defended the Arkansas FOIA in some way, either a single act or for ongoing efforts.

If you know someone you believe is fitting to be nominated for one of these awards, please don’t hesitate to go to the APA website and download a nomination form. Along with the forms you can find a list of past winners of the awards.

But remember, you only have one week remaining before the nomination deadline of March 31. The APA Board of Directors will select the honorees from the nominees submitted at the April 6-7 retreat.

Deadline nears for APA Editorial Awards

March 31 is the deadline to get entries in the APA’s 2017 Better Newspaper Editorial Contest.

Contest rules and other information on entering the contest can be found on the APA website at www.arkansaspress.org. Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will be judging the contest this year.

The editorial awards will be presented Saturday, July 8, in the traditional closing luncheon of the APA’s SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock. This is the time when APA honors the good works of APA member newspapers and their respective staffs.

Again this year the contest entries will be submitted electronically. Entries are submitted to the APA contest site by pdf, and the entries will be judged online.

“It can’t get much simpler to enter,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “The judging of these contests is greatly facilitated by utilizing digital entries.”

Getting judges for on-site judgings had become a daunting task. There are fewer people available at newspapers, which often cannot afford them the day or so it takes to judge a contest in an on-site setting.

“The digital judging allows the judges to do their work from their own computer at a time that’s convenient for them,” Larimer continued. “That’s really the number one reason for making the move from the hard-copy judging to the digital approach.”

If you have questions concerning the contest, contact Terri Cobb, APA contest coordinator, at 501-374-1500 or by email at terri@arkansaspress.org.
It’s time to start thinking about the 2017 edition of the APA’s annual gathering, the SuperConvention. This year’s event will be held July 5-8 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

The program for the convention is shaping up to be a good one with some top presenters and a good variety of panel discussion addressing varying topics of interest to newspaper people in Arkansas.

We have already booked most of the featured presenters and we will be rolling them out in the run-up to the convention in a few weeks. The important thing now is to save the dates, July 5-8, and make plans to attend the APA’s annual convention.

APA has been holding conventions almost since the beginning of the association in 1873. Yeah, that was a long time ago. So long, in fact, that it makes APA the oldest trade association in Arkansas.

The APA has a history of moving the convention around to various spots in the state. That’s a tradition we continue to honor. We’ll be in Little Rock this summer, and we’ll head back to up Eureka Springs next summer for a return visit to the Inn of the Ozarks. Our last visit there produced one of the best conventions we’ve had in terms of positive feedback from those attending.

It was a fun convention, but I think the most appealing part of it was that we had the entire facility to ourselves. If you were at the Inn on the convention dates, you were involved in the convention.

Eureka Springs is always a good draw for us, too. It’s just broken out in quaint, and remains one of the most unusual cities in Arkansas.

Anyway, after that return visit to the Little Switzerland of the Ozarks, we’ll venture back over to Hot Springs, another always-popular destination for our convention and for our members who attend them.

We know where we’ll be the next few years with the convention because these things have to be contracted roughly two years out in order to get the dates we desire. I don’t generally plan things this far out, but when it comes to conventions there’s little choice.

APA has been fortunate that we have a corps of members who never miss a convention, or very rarely miss. APA conventions have always been fun gatherings when we can spend some time catching up with long-time friends and acquaintances in the business as well as hear presentations on new things in our business, and some old things revisited.

I think I’ve related in the past, maybe more than a time or two that my first recollection of an APA convention was from the mid-1950s when I tagged along with my family at a convention held in Eureka Springs. I didn’t do everything at the convention, just the fun stuff like the cookout at Lake Leatherwood, a park that remains open to this day.

I grew up in a family newspaper only 20 miles from Eureka Springs. I don’t recall going back to Lake Leatherwood.

Anyway, I met people at that Eureka Springs convention that I have remained acquainted with my entire life. Although some of those I met are now gone, I have fond memories of sharing experiences with them at APA conventions over the years. It truly is a special time of sharing with those who do the same thing we do at newspapers across the state.

One of the very earliest conventions held by the APA was held in Helena. I’m not sure how it came about that APA would choose to have a convention in Helena in the late 19th century, but that’s where they had it and apparently they had a fairly large turnout for it.

The story has been told and re-told of Thomas Newton, publisher of the Harrison Times, walking to Helena for the APA convention. From Harrison to Helena would have been an arduous journey under the best of circumstances in those days, but walking it? I can’t imagine the challenge that must have presented.

Newton was known as “the walking editor” as he apparently walked to a lot of events. In fact, he walked to Little Rock from Harrison to participate in the founding of the Arkansas Press Association. And then, of course, he walked back to Harrison.

That’s some sort of commitment, to walk to Little Rock to help organize APA, and then to walk to Helena from Harrison to participate in one of the first APA conventions. I can’t imagine anyone undertaking that today, or for that matter why they would.

But Mr. Newton did it for reasons likely known only to him. Still, it is an impressive feat and one that lives on in APA lore.

I was determined to produce a column for this week’s Arkansas Publisher Weekly that was not centered on the Arkansas legislature. They’re still in town, of course, and they’re still considering legislation to amend the state’s Freedom of Information Act.

But it seems like that’s all this column has been about for the past several weeks and I’ve grown weary of it. Perhaps you have, too. Unfortunately, it’s been a very difficult and trying session. We’ve taken our lumps but we’ve always had our victories. The latter we can certainly credit in large measure to APA members contacting their legislators regarding legislation important to us.

Many of you have engaged in this legislative session by contacting your legislators about pending legislation. Thank you for that. You should know that your contacts have a big impact on legislators and the many decisions they have to make.

We will likely have a session at the July SuperConvention dealing with legislative issues and offering suggestions on things we can do in the interim, between legislative sessions, to improve our profile during the sessions in the future.

That should be interesting.

Have a great week!
Potter Conference aids journalists in news gathering

Both Google and Facebook have created and continue to develop tools to help journalists, including those in the smallest news organizations do better work, improve workflow issues and track results.

On April 6-8, the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute on the University of Missouri Campus in Columbia will host the Walter B. Potter, Sr. conferences that will feature this approach. Those attending will learn how community news organizations, weeklies, small dailies and their websites, can reach deeper into their audiences and grow their audience with new opportunities created with tools from Google and Facebook.

Among the topics from both Google and Facebook to be explored will be, but certainly not limited to:

- Search for journalists
- Public data exploration
- Google maps for journalists
- How news feed works
- Best practices for Facebook Live

For more information on the Potter conference and for registration information, go to www.rjionline.org/potter2017.

Carmage Walls Commentary award entries sought

Entries into the annual Carmage Walls Commentary Prize are now open, and both daily and non-daily newspapers are encouraged to nominate their best work for 2017. Each entry can include no more than six opinion pieces, editorials or columns, on a single subject. Entries must have been published in a daily or non-daily newspaper between May 1, 2016 and April 30, 2017. There is no limit on the number of entries.

Awards will be presented in each of two circulation categories, over 50,000 and under 50,000. The deadline for entry is Friday, May 5.

In each circulation group, the first-place winner will receive a plaque and a cash award of $1,000. Second place winners will receive a plaque and $500.

The award will be presented at the SNPA/Inland Press Association meeting Sept. 10-12 in Colorado Springs. It recognizes outstanding commentary on local issues, and encourages thoughtful, courageous and constructive editorial page leadership on issues specifically relevant to each newspaper’s primary readership.

For additional information, contact Cindy Durham at SNPA: cindy@snpa.org or (404) 256-0444.
APA is monitoring the following bills of interest to our industry and the public:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill No. / Author</th>
<th>Short Description</th>
<th>APA Position</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HB 1225 Rep. Magie</td>
<td>Repeals the FOIA exemption for tax records of hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Stalled in House Revenue and Taxation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1236 Rev. Gazaway, Johnson, Blake</td>
<td>Exempts records that depict the death of law enforcement officers from disclosure under FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House/Senate; signed by governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1248 Rep. Williams</td>
<td>Exempts data recorded by law enforcement body camera or dash cameras from disclosure under FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Pulled down and deferred by sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1403 Rep. Boyd; Sen. Irvin</td>
<td>Exempts traffic accident reports from FOIA until 30 days after accident; restricts recipients list</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to interim study (dead for this session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1469 Rep. Tosh</td>
<td>Exempts various aspects of Dept of Community Corrections emergency preparedness plans</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed both houses, signed by governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1588 Rep. Vaught, Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records and information compiled by State Police at the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Withdrawn by sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1590 Rep. Vaught</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records and information compiled by the State Police regarding security at the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed; signed by governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1622 Rep. Johnson, Sen. English</td>
<td>Creates longer time window for complying with “unduly burdensome” records requests under FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral Pending Amendment</td>
<td>Failed in committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Rep. Johnson, Sen. English</td>
<td>Allows local government entities to adopt the same FOIA online database requires that govern state agencies</td>
<td>Opposed-Pending Amendment</td>
<td>Amended; awaits presentation in House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1823 Rep. Collins</td>
<td>Authorizes any state agency, court or local government entity required to publish record electronically; allows records to be electronically examined under FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Awaits hearing in House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1836 Rep. Brown</td>
<td>Creates an online publication alternative for various notices and listings that a city or county is required to publish in a newspaper</td>
<td>Strongly Oppose</td>
<td>Referred to interim study (dead for session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1866 Rep. Lundstrum</td>
<td>Exempts property records of law enforcement officer from disclosure under FOIA if the officer submits request in writing</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed House; awaits hearing in Senate State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 12 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Exempts public school emergency and security records from disclosure under FOIA, including higher education</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House/Senate; signed by governor 3-20-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 41 Sen. Clark Rep. Gates</td>
<td>Makes date compiled by an entity authorized to perform public services for children that is related to both a child maltreatment investigation under the FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Awaits signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Reps. Johnson/Lowery/Brown Sen. English</td>
<td>An act to amend the FOIA to allow records custodians to post records on the internet and consider that compliance with records request under the FOIA</td>
<td>Monitor-Neutral</td>
<td>Awaits hearing in Senate Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 114 Sen. Stubblefield Rep. Hammer</td>
<td>Allows a county collector to post delinquent tax notices on mineral rights to the internet rather than publish in newspapers</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed; became law 3-20-17 without governor’s signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 131 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for the security operations, emergency procedures and personnel information of the State Capitol Police</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed; signed by governor 3-6-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 152 Rep. Johnson Rep Gazaway</td>
<td>Senate version of HB 1623</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 261 Sen. Hester Rep. Davis</td>
<td>Exempts from FOIA records related to pending or reasonably anticipate litigation that involves an institution of higher education</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Education Committee</td>
</tr>
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<td>SB 364 Sen. Sanders</td>
<td>Would allow Ark Dept of Environmental Quality applications notices to be posted online OR in a newspaper</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Bill amended to remove objectionable language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 435 Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Limits availability of information under the FOIA regarding water system customers.</td>
<td>Monitor-Neutral</td>
<td>Passed; awaits signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 515 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates a FOIA exemption for records compiled by the State Police related to the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1947 Rep. Tucker Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Amends the FOIA regarding access to public information. (Shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2111 Rep. Dotson</td>
<td>FOIA (Law enforcement investigative files; disclosure of information on juveniles (shell bill))</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Passed House; awaits hearing in Senate Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2132 Rep. Rushing</td>
<td>Creation of FOIA Task Force</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Received “do pass” House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2157 Rep. Douglas</td>
<td>FOIA exemption for Highway and Transportation Dept-held information</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Reported out of committee “do pass”; awaits House vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2195 Rep. Shepherd</td>
<td>FOIA (Public Information Format; Internet alone sufficient)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Withdrawn from further consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2242 Rep. Davis Sen. Hester</td>
<td>FOIA (Water systems, planning, construction contractors access to customer information</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>“Do pass” from House State Agencies Committee; awaits House vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 373 Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Exempts from FOIA a record that constitutes an attorney-client communication or attorney work product</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Stalled in Sen. State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 669 Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Public notices (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Referred to state agencies committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 712 Sen. Elliott</td>
<td>FOIA (School compliance, admissions/budget details)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Referred to Senate Education Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tomorrow deadline for special awards nominations

Tomorrow, Friday, March 31, is the deadline to submit nominations for the APA’s annual “special achievement awards.” The awards will be presented at the honors banquet of the SuperConvention Friday, July 7, at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

The awards honor newspapers people and others who have contributed significantly in one of several areas during the past year or in a lifetime.

The awards include:
• The “Golden 50 Service Awards” go to anyone who has contributed to a newspaper for five decades. This can be any position at the newspaper, including community correspondents, pressmen, etc.
• The “Distinguished Service Award” is presented to someone or some organization that has contributed significantly to the Arkansas newspaper industry. This award recognizes a body of work for an individual, a couple or an organization.
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If you know someone you believe is fitting to be nominated for one of these awards, please don’t hesitate to go to the APA website and download a nomination form. Along with the forms you can find a list of past winners of the awards.

But remember, you only have until the close of business tomorrow to submit nominations. The APA Board of Directors will select the honorees from the nominees submitted at the April 6-7 retreat.

You can find a nomination form on the APA website, along with a list of past winners of the awards, at www.arkansaspress.org.

2017 Ad Contest - Weekly Winners

(Front Row from Left) Kristie Nall, Advance Monticellonian, Monticello; Samantha Walker, Advance Monticellonian, Monticello; Stacy Fields, Arkansas Weekly, Batesville; LeAnn Brown, The Sheridan Headlight; Daphne Morton, Stone County Leader, Mountain View; Neal Fraser, Stone County Leader, Mountain View; Stephanie Dodson, Hot Springs Village Voice; (Back Row from Left) Summer Bendict, Hot Springs Village Voice; Jennifer Allen, Hot Springs Village Voice; Cassandra Stafford, Pacesetting Times, Horseshoe Bend; Carrie Johnson, Pacesetting Times, Horseshoe Bend; Brent Powers, Northwest Arkansas Newspapers; Shantelle Reddon, The Times Dispatch, Walnut Ridge; Opal Dennis, The Madison County Record, Huntsville.
Like a whole lot of others, I spent some time over the weekend watching college basketball. More specifically I was watching the “March Madness” of the NCAA basketball championships.

I will readily admit that I lost interest when Arkansas gagged down the stretch and lost to a North Carolina team they had on the ropes. That same North Carolina team has now advanced to the Final Four after a late Kentucky collapse opened the door for the Tar Heels.

That game was on CBS, and when it was over “60 Minutes” came on. I don’t usually watch that show. Nothing against it because it is entertaining most of the time. I guess that it’s just that I have other things to do at that time and don’t get to watch it much.

But this time I did because I was intrigued by one of the promos leading up to the show. It was about chess. More specifically, it was about teaching chess to largely poor and disadvantaged children in the most southern of Mississippi counties.

I was curious about the connection and just who would have thought to do this, let alone cough up the money necessary to fund the program. It sprang from a program in Memphis where disadvantaged children were motivated by the game and that led them to excel in other sectors of their respective lives, like in their school grades.

I haven’t played chess in years, but I do recall that it required concentration and thought. The curricula used in teaching the youngsters in school is tied to history, as in history of the game, and geography, as in where it originated, where the great matches and championships have been held, and so on.

It reminded me of what the Newspaper In Education (NIE) programs started out to do in newspapers wherein copies of the local newspapers were provided to certain levels at the school. Also provided was a curriculum guide on how to use newspapers in educating children on a variety of subjects, from English to math, as well as preparing them for real life skills like comparison shopping and product selection.

It required some thought. Certainly it encouraged thought and an awareness of one’s surroundings. It teaches not to take a lot for granted, and how to deal with the mundane to the complex challenges of life.

That is the NIE program I’m describing, but it could have been the approach using the game of chess. There is no doubting the success that the chess programs have had in Memphis and now in South Mississippi. Surely, it is something that could be applied just about anywhere, just like the NIE program.

It is wonderful to watch as children gain confidence in themselves while learning through these activities. I watched as the elementary school students describe what the chess program meant to them, and what it had done for them.

In some cases, this was likely the first time anyone offered them a chance to excel at something. It is clear they took advantage of the opportunity as the chess team from that tiny Mississippi County first won the state championship of chess, and then placed in the top ten in the national tournament held in Nashville.

We’re talking about fifth and sixth graders. They are in what the NIE coordinators used to call “risk groups.” It is around that age when children are being pigeon holed, sometimes by their teachers and sometimes by themselves; sometimes by their families. There are those among us, and always have been, that will readily determine if even at that young age a person will be able to succeed. They are written off, so to speak.

Youngsters at this age are at risk of losing interest and dropping out before graduation, and certainly not preparing themselves to be productive and contributing citizens of their respective communities.

For some, these chess programs, and there are few of them, give them the opportunity to see for themselves that they can compete on an intellectual level that likely never had or would have never occurred to them. It’s the same for the well-run NIE program in schools. They provide opportunities for students, in English, writing skills, math skills and more, that they might not find in a textbook. Their local newspaper becomes a familiar local “textbook” for them.

And when it does that they become readers for life. They become fans for life of the newspaper, and likely not just the local newspaper. They become readers of several newspapers.

Obviously this doesn’t work for every student, and just as obviously the two approaches are completely different. NIE expands horizons from a very local perspective. Chess opens the mind and promotes concentration. To be successful the chess player has to stay in that chess “zone” for two to three hours. What else does a youngster, or anyone for that matter, engage in that requires that kind of mental commitment?

No program will always work, not a chess program nor an NIE program. But the numbers impacted can be impressive and the benefits, both for the newspaper and the community are enormous.

APA newspapers that still have NIE programs are in the minority to be sure, but I continue to believe that if the programs are properly run they can benefit both the students of the community as well as the newspaper.

It helps to have a really good coordinator at the school, like a classroom teacher who sees the benefits of the program and who will take the time to develop an effective program with the other teachers. In my experience this takes a special kind of teacher who possesses a specific skill set, but they are out there.

Every successful NIE program I’ve experienced in my newspaper career has had one of these special teachers, one who is motivated to actually teach children something and one who is looked up to as a leader by other teachers. It really is key to an effective NIE program.

That’s what I was thinking while I was watching “60 Minutes” Sunday evening. Those youngsters participating in the chess program in that remote and isolated, mostly rural and mostly poor county in Mississippi, reminded me why it is important to explore these things.

If you haven’t seen the segment I recommend it. Either catch up with it on On Demand, or there are some videos segments of it on YouTube.

Have a great week!
Tomorrow deadline for editorial contest

Tomorrow, March 31, is the deadline to get entries in the APA’s 2017 Better Newspaper Editorial Contest.

Contest rules and other information on entering the contest can be found on the APA website at www.arkansaspress.org. Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will be judging the contest this year.

The editorial awards will be presented Saturday, July 8, in the traditional closing luncheon of the APA’s SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock. This is the time when APA honors the good works of APA member newspapers and their respective staffs.

Again this year the contest entries will be submitted electronically. Entries are submitted to the APA contest site by pdf, and the entries will be judged online.

“So far we’ve got over 900 entries,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “That’s well below the 1,700 entries total last year, but we always get a rush of entries on deadline.”

Getting judges for on-site judgings had become a daunting task. There are fewer people available at newspapers, which often cannot afford them the day or so it takes to judge a contest in an on-site setting.

“The digital judging allows the judges to do their work from their own computer at a time that’s convenient for them,” Larimer continued. “That’s really the number one reason for making the move from the hard-copy judging to the digital approach.”

If you have questions concerning the contest, contact Terri Cobb, APA contest coordinator, at 501-374-1500 or by email at terri@arkansaspress.org.

ANF announces 2017 host newspapers for interns

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF) has announced the list of newspapers that will host paid interns this summer under the ANF’s Paid Summer Internship Program.

The grants provide interns with some valuable hands-on experience in the journalism field, and the interns provide some summer help for newspapers.

“We have been providing four matching grants to Arkansas newspapers for summer internships for several years now, and each year the program grows,” said Karen Brown, ANF Executive Director. “This year we received six host newspaper applications, so we have a strong waiting list if one newspaper is unable to participate.”

The host newspapers for 2017 are as follows:

• Carroll County Newspapers
• Times Dispatch – Walnut Ridge
• Harrison Daily Times
• The Daily Record – Little Rock

Participating newspapers will receive a $1,500.00 matching grant from the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation to assist with paying the interns. The ANF Summer Internship Host Newpapers are chosen on a first-come first-serve basis.

Host newspapers are required to match the ANF $1,500.00 grant as well as follow state and local laws concerning hourly minimum wage requirements for interns. For more information about the program or how your newspaper can participate, contact Karen Brown, ANF Executive Director, at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

Nominations open for NNA Amos, McKinney & Phillips awards

The National Newspaper Association is presently seeking nominations for the Amos, McKinney & Phillips Awards, which are the highest honors awarded to working and retired newspapermen and women who have exhibited distinguished service to the community press.

The General James O. Amos Award was established in 1938 by E.C. Amos, publisher of The Sidney Daily News, to honor his father, General James O. Amos, a pioneer Ohio journalist and an early-day member of the National Editorial Association. The Emma C. McKinney Award was created in 1966 to honor Emma C. McKinney, co-publisher and editor of the Hillsboro (OR) Argus for 58 years. In 1954 Mrs. McKinney was named dean of Oregon newspapermen and women and in 1957 received the Amos Voorhies Award, the highest state honor that can be awarded to an Oregon newspaper person. Mrs. McKinney was inducted into the Oregon Journalism Hall of Fame in 1982.

The Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award was established in 2007 to honor Daniel Morris “Dan” Phillips, an award-winning writer and photographer who passed away in 2005 at the age of 47. Nominations are due May 15. For more information, a list of past winners and nomination forms, go to www.nnaweb.org/contests-awards.

Deadline tomorrow for attending Potter Conference

Tomorrow (Friday), March 31, is the deadline for registering to attend the Potter conference for journalists to be held April 6-8 on the campus of the University of Missouri in Columbia.

The Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute on the University of Missouri Campus in Columbia will host the Walter B. Potter, Sr. conferences that will feature this approach. Those attending will learn how community news organizations, weeklies, small dailies and their websites, can reach deeper into their audiences and grow their audience with new opportunities created with tools from Google and Facebook.

Among the topics from both Google and Facebook to be explored will be, but certainly not limited to:

• Search for journalists
• Public data exploration
• Google maps for journalists
• How news feed works
• Best practices for Facebook Live

For more information on the Potter conference and for registration information, go to www.rjionline.org/potter2017.
Guest Column:
Calculating your best revenue area for new subscribers
By Lewis Floyd, Sr. Associate, W.B. Grimes & Company

There was a time we went after circulation at “damn the expense – full subscriptions ahead”. The understanding was the cost of delivery was offset by ad revenue. Then advertisers decided that “all circulation was not equal”. As more advertisers came to this conclusion, ads or inserts declined as they were specified for areas the advertiser believed worked best for them.

As revenue declined expenses were cut, in some cases publications pulled out of areas not generating ad revenue – in other cases subscribers quit from a lack of advertising or due to things they liked being removed from the publication.

In response to these declines, publications cut more expenses, increased subscription rates, and the circle began again with more cut backs from advertisers. This is a cycle we must stop to survive, so how do we go about it?

My suggestion would be to do an analysis of advertising and subscription revenue by delivery areas offered advertisers. While in paper advertising would likely be divided by total subscriptions, insert advertising would be divided by subscribers in areas paid for delivery of the insert. We already would know subscription revenue, and if different in delivery areas that rate would be used.

Then you calculate revenue per area and divide by subscribers to see the potential value of a new subscriber in the area. To get a truer value you could just use the insert and subscription revenue, then it would be a safe assumption that revenue would increase by that amount for each new subscription. The in paper advertising might also increase, but it would be a smaller factor and depend on things other than a new subscription.

At this point the most likely conclusion is to concentrate on growth in these areas, but there is no silver bullet for “bagging” subscribers. We are back to basic subscription methods, applied to specific areas, but subscription discounts and sales will not accomplish your goal in the long run. Your editorial staff needs to step up coverage of events and activities, clubs, and school coverage in the sections you desire to increase readership – you will need to provide new reasons for them to buy and read your newspaper (if you were already providing all you could your penetration rate would be the best in the nation).

Not sure how much trouble it could be, but working with a local school newspaper and including some of their articles could be an inexpensive answer for more school coverage. Perhaps you can connect with some newsletters covering local clubs or copy Church email announcements, using parts of their newsletters or emails.

As you apply these techniques and find success you can look to the next best revenue area, and then the next, etc. – and before you know it the new slogan will be “determine the best area of revenue – get the subscribers in that area”.

Just saying …
Contact Lewis at 850-532-9466 or email lfloydmedia@gmail.com.

Save the Date!
Arkansas Press Association
SuperConvention
July 5 -8 | Little Rock | DoubleTree Hotel
### Legislative Report

APA is monitoring the following bills of interest to our industry and the public:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill No. / Author</th>
<th>Short Description</th>
<th>APA Position</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HB 1225 Rep. Magie</td>
<td>Repeals the FOIA exemption for tax records of hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Stalled in House Revenue and Taxation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1236 Rev. Gazaway, Johnson, Blake</td>
<td>Exempts records that depict the death of law enforcement officers from disclosure under FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House/Senate; signed by governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1248 Rep. Williams</td>
<td>Exempts data recorded by law enforcement body camera or dash cameras from disclosure under FOIA.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Pulled down and deferred by sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1403 Rep. Boyd; Sen. Irvin</td>
<td>Exempts traffic accident reports from FOIA until 30 days after accident; restricts recipients list</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to interim study (dead for this session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1469 Rep. Tosh</td>
<td>Exempts various aspects of Dept of Community Corrections emergency preparedness plans</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed both houses, signed by governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1588 Rep. Vaught, Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records and information compiled by State Police at the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Withdrawn by sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1590 Rep. Vaught</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records and information compiled by the State Police regarding security at the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed; signed by governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1622 Rep. Johnson, Sen. English</td>
<td>Creates longer time window for complying with “unduly burdensome” records requests under FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral Pending Amendment</td>
<td>Failed in committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Rep. Johnson, Sen. English</td>
<td>Allows local government entities to adopt the same FOIA online database requires that govern state agencies</td>
<td>Opposed-Pending Amendment</td>
<td>Amended; awaits presentation in House State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1823 Rep. Collins</td>
<td>Authorizes any state agency, court or local government entity required to publish record electronically; allows records to be electronically examined under FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed House; Do Pass Sen. State Agencies Committee; headed to Senate floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1836 Rep. Brown</td>
<td>Creates an online publication alternative for various notices and listings that a city or county is required to publish in a newspaper</td>
<td>Strongly Oppose</td>
<td>Referred to interim study (dead for session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1866 Rep. Lundstrum</td>
<td>Exempts property records of law enforcement officer from disclosure under FOIA if the officer submits request in writing</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed House; “do pass” Senate State Agencies Committee; headed to Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 12 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Exempts public school emergency and security records from disclosure under FOIA, including higher education</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House/Senate; signed by governor 3-20-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 41 Sen. Clark Rep. Gates</td>
<td>Makes date compiled by an entity authorized to perform public services for children that is related to both a child maltreatment investigation under the FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Stalled in committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Reps. Johnson/Lowery/Brown Sen. English</td>
<td>An act to amend the FOIA to allow records custodians to post records on the internet and consider that compliance with records request under the FOIA</td>
<td>Monitor-Neutral</td>
<td>Passed House; “Do Pass” Senate State Agencies Committee; Moves to Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 114 Sen. Stubblefield Rep. Hammer</td>
<td>Allows a county collector to post delinquent tax notices on mineral rights to the internet rather than publish in newspapers</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed; became law 3-20-17 without governor’s signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 131 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for the security operations, emergency procedures and personnel information of the State Capitol Police</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed; signed by governor 3-6-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 152 Rep. Johnson Rep Gazaway</td>
<td>Senate version of HB 1623</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 261 Sen. Hester Rep. Davis</td>
<td>Exempts from FOIA records related to pending or reasonably anticipate litigation that involves an institution of higher education</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Education Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APA is monitoring the following bills of interest to our industry and the public:

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<tr>
<td>SB 364 Sen. Sanders</td>
<td>Would allow Ark Dept of Environmental Quality applications notices to be posted online OR in a newspaper</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Bill amended to remove objectionable language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 435 Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Limits availability of information under the FOIA regarding water system customers.</td>
<td>Monitor-Neutral</td>
<td>Passed; awaits signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 515 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates a FOIA exemption for records compiled by the State Police related to the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1947 Rep. Tucker Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Amends the FOIA regarding access to public information. (Shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2111 Rep. Dotson</td>
<td>FOIA (Law enforcement investigative files; disclosure of information on juveniles (shell bill))</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Passed House; awaits hearing in Senate Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2132 Rep. Rushing</td>
<td>Creation of FOIA Task Force</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Passed House; “Do Pass” Sen State Agencies Committee; On to Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2157 Rep. Douglas</td>
<td>FOIA exemption for Highway and Transportation Dept-held information</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Reported out of committee “do pass”; awaits House vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2195 Rep. Shepherd</td>
<td>FOIA (Public Information Format; Internet alone sufficient)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Withdrawn from further consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 373 Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Exempts from FOIA a record that constitutes an attorney-client communication or attorney work product</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Failed 11-14 in Sen; vote expunged; re-vote expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 669 Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Public notices (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Referred to state agencies committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 712 Sen. Elliott</td>
<td>FOIA (School compliance, admissions/budget details)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Referred to Senate Education Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Legislative session recesses; Expect May return

The 91st General Assembly of the Arkansas legislature came to an end Monday morning with both houses approving motions to go into recess.

The legislature will return in May to tie up any loose ends before adjourning sine die.

“This was a long, grueling and exhausting session for us,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “The APA lobbying team was kept very busy from day one of the sessions, right up until the motion to end the session.”

The APA represents the interests of the newspapers of Arkansas at the legislature, focusing primarily on issues such as public notices and the state’s Freedom of Information Act. The Wills Law Firm contracts the lobbying duties for APA. They bring three lobbyists to the effort, Robbie Wills, former Arkansas Speaker of the House, his wife Dana Wills, and former House member Rick Green. Larimer is also a registered lobbyist for APA.

“I was very impressed with our lobbying team during this session,” Larimer continued. “We took some losses in the session, but I’m convinced it could have been a lot worse without the expertise of the Wills firm.”

The biggest loss was SB114, a bill to remove the requirement to publish the list of delinquent taxes on mineral rights in a newspaper of record and to allow the list to be published online. The bill passed both houses over APA’s objection and became law without the signature of Gov. Asa Hutchinson.

Once a bill reaches the governor’s desk, he has five days to sign it or veto the measure. After the five days the bill becomes law if the governor does not act.

“This represents a considerable amount of revenue for some APA members,” Larimer said. “There are 25 counties in Arkansas that have mineral rights and that previously published these delinquent tax lists.”

Another measure, one that seems to return in every legislative session, would have removed all public notices from newspapers and allow them to be published online instead. Rep. Karilyn Brown of Sherwood who was eventually convinced to refer the bill to interim study sponsored the measure, HB1836. It will now be on the agenda for study between now and the next general session.

“I want to thank those APA members who engaged with their local legislators when asked to do so on pending legislation,” Larimer concluded. “It makes a world of difference when legislators hear from their newspaper constituents back home.”

See the final “Legislative Update” feature in this Arkansas Publisher Weekly for the final disposition of the bills monitored in this session by the APA lobbying team.

Fifty APA members enter 1666 contest entries

The numbers are in on the 2017 APA Better Newspaper Editorial Contest as the deadline passed Friday, March 31.

Fifty APA newspapers entered a total of 1,666 entries in the contest. The number of newspapers entering the contest was the same as last year, but the total number of entries was down slightly.

“On par the numbers were almost exactly what they were last year,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “That’s actually encouraging since we have lost some members through the merging of nameplates.”

Members of the Oklahoma Press Association will judge the contest. The awards will be presented Saturday, July 8, at the closing luncheon of the annual SuperConvention to be held July 5-8 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

Today’s the day for ‘Arkansas Gives’

Today is the day of the Arkansas Gives program, a one-day, 12-hour window of giving to Arkansas non-profits, including the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation.

Now in its third and last year, the Arkansas Community Foundation, a non-profit organization devoted to smart giving to improve Arkansas communities, orchestrates the Arkansas Gives campaign. The event has raised several million dollars for Arkansas non-profits in its first two years.

During this one-day event, each donation you give will help your favorite non-profit organizations qualify for additional bonus dollars from the Arkansas Community Foundation. All participating non-profits will receive a portion of a pool of bonus dollars provided by Arkansas Community Foundation. The more a non-profit raises, the more of the bonus dollars it will receive.

They will also provide additional cash prizes to the non-profit organizations that raise the most money and recruit the most individual donors.

To make a donation, go online to www.arkansasgives.org, select the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation and make a contribution. It is very easy and the funds will help advance the mission of the Foundation.
The legislature went home Monday.

They didn’t really adjourn so much as they took a recess. They will return May 1 to clean up loose ends and to adjourn sine die.

It was an interesting and most challenging session for us this go round. There were public notice challenges and there were plenty of attempts to amend the state’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and not in a good way.

Well, not in a good way for the most part. A couple of bills late in the session were positives for the FOIA. A bill by Rep. Laurie Rushing of Hot Springs to create a FOIA Task Force to review prospective amendments to the FOIA before each legislative session was passed. This was a good thing as there were more bills filed in this session to amend the FOIA, mostly in ways we couldn’t approve. Some of them weren’t necessary as what they were proposing was already covered in the law. Others were also already imbedded in the law.

These bills just become so much legislative calendar clutter. They achieve nothing really but they all have to be dealt with and take our time and energy to address.

As it was I spent more time in the halls of the Capitol building in this session than in any of the previous six sessions I’ve monitored. It wasn’t because I didn’t have anything better to do because I had plenty that was going begging at the office. It took all that time assisting our lobbying team to keep track and monitor all the bills in the legislative pipeline that would in some way harm our industry or the FOIA.

A second bill late in the session sponsored by Rep. Clarke Tucker of Little Rock would have set up a FOIA request review board. This would give anyone who had had FOIA requests denied another level of review for the denial, one just short of filing a lawsuit. Sometimes that’s the only option for someone seeking public records and some records custodian dug in and steadfastly denying access.

It was an interesting and innovative proposal with very little fiscal impact (about $7,000 a year), but it ran out of time late in the session and like so many others will await another day at the legislature in the future.

And while I’m on the subject I need you all to give yourselves a pat on the back. Several of our member newspapers engaged in contacting their elected legislators when asked to do so. I cannot tell you how valuable this is for our lobbying efforts, so thank you to each of you who connected when it was critical to do so.

So many of you ran stories and editorials regarding proposed legislation that would not have been helpful to our industry or beneficial to the people of Arkansas. I appreciate each one of those, too, as they definitely do not go unnoticed. Legislators read this stuff and are sensitive to it. It’s a great way to get their attention if their local publisher or editor is writing about something over which they may have some authority.

I appreciate these efforts and the positive impact they have for us.

The APA/APS Board of Directors convenes this week for their annual spring retreat. It’s Thursday and Friday at Gaston’s Resort on the White River, in the shadow of Bull Shoals Dam.

This won’t be the first retreat we’ve had at Gaston’s. We’ve actually had a few there over the years, but the last time we were there it was covered in ice and snow. Travel to and from was treacherous, especially getting up and down the hill to the riverside resort.

Normally when at Gaston’s we would walk from our room to the resort’s restaurant, but walking was too slippery and dangerous. It was ice covered and almost impossible to walk on, so we drove the short distance to the restaurant.

That was a fall retreat held in the first week of December. Thankfully, we won’t have to deal with that on this visit. The Weather Service predicts it will be in the 60s and sunny both Thursday and Friday at Gaston’s. Of course it will be cool along the river. It always is, even in the heat of summer.

After the legislative session, I’m looking forward to the getaway.

We know what the programming is going to be for the 2017 SuperConvention July 5-8 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in downtown Little Rock. In the next few weeks we will be outlining the many features of the convention, all of which will be worth your time and expense to attend.

I can tell you that we have adopted a patriotic theme for this convention. That will make more sense to you when you see who is the keynote speaker. It will be amazing and something you won’t want to miss.

That’s all coming up. All you need to do now is to make sure those dates, July 5-8, are open for you so you won’t miss out on this big event.

A front-page photo in the last weekend edition of the Harrison Daily Times depicts the newspaper hosting a Chamber after hours in the pressroom of the newspaper. The Times pressroom crew was running their Goss Community for the visitors.

These are always fun and fruitful events. There are people in the community who may have read the Times for years but never seen the press operate. For these folks it is fascinating to watch.

I’ve done these at two different dailies I published, one in Kansas and one in Tennessee, and in both communities the event earned us some big PR points with readers as well as of course with advertisers.

We would usually print the Sunday comics pages for them to see, mainly because they are colorful, but also because the Sunday comics have been a mainstay for newspapers for generations. Readers and advertisers get a kick out of seeing them rolling off the press.

If you don’t have a press, it’s still a good idea to invite the community it for an event. They will definitely better identify with the newspaper after the event.

And that’s always a good thing.

Have a great week!

Tom
2017 Ad Contest - Daily Winners

Daily Winners - (Front Row from Left) LaVonna Jo Ables, Batesville Daily Guard; Staci Miller Franklin, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; Wendy Miller, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; Emily Edmisten, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; Sarah DeClerk, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; Sue Stillman, Banner-News, Magnolia; Debe Johnson, The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs; Michelle Cothern, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; (Back Row from Left) Jon-Claude Whillock, Harrison Daily Times; Ronnie Bell, El Dorado News-Times; Gena Whillock, Harrison Daily Times; Kelly Freudensprung, The Saline Courier, Benton; Pat Stuckey, The Saline Courier, Benton; Merry Lee Meeker, The Sentinel-Record, Hot Springs; Brent Powers, Northwest Arkansas Newspapers; Joel Sollaccio, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; Lisa Williams, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Little Rock; Stacy Riley, Blytheville Courier News; Terri Coleman, Blytheville Courier News; Kristin Davis, Texarkana Gazette.

THROWBACK THURSDAY

APA AT VANDERBILT – There’s little information regarding why this group of APA members traveled in Vanderbilt University in Nashville in October of 1895, yet there they are in their Sunday finest posting on the venerable campus in Music City. This is yet another in the collection of many old photos archived at the APA building in Little Rock.
Guest Column:  
What You 'Pareidolia' Isn't Always What You Get  
Jim Stasiowski

My wife, Sharon, and I took a late-winter trip to Tucson, Ariz. The primary reason was that Sharon’s frequent-flyer miles were about to expire, and we didn’t want to lose them, but we also are constantly investigating warm places to move to when we no longer want to endure winter cold here in northern Nevada.

Tucson is nice, and I suppose that tepid single syllable sufficiently explains why we wouldn’t choose it as a permanent home.

But it does have used-book stores, always a lure for us, and I found what seems a barely handled copy of “Alphabet Juice,” by Roy Blount Jr., a witty romp through a cornucopia of words – Ever heard of “pareidolia”? It means perceiving an image, such as the “Virgin Mary on a piece of toast,” Blount says – in the company of one of our funniest yet most thoughtful writers.

According to the dust jacket, the book, when new, sold for $25; I paid $5, an act of thievery.

As I started typing this column and added “Alphabet Juice” to the language books strewn across my desk, I wondered: How many books are piled up here?

I counted 16, five of which are open, and that doesn’t count the dozen or more on the floor. Yeah, I’m that obsessed with words.

I read such books to be both educated and surprised, and I just propped open “Alphabet Juice,” making it open book No. 6, to pages 74 and 75, on which Blount examines the seemingly simple verb “demean”: Cruestier books on usage will forbid you from using this word to mean, roughly, “degrade,” because its original meaning was to conduct oneself in a certain way; hence “demeanor.” I’m not going to do that, because you wouldn’t listen, and why should you: nobody uses “demean” in the original sense anymore, there are plenty of other words that serve that meaning perfectly well, and people have been using “demean” meaning “to lower” since at least 1601.

Surprising, right?

Readers of everything – newspapers, books, cereal boxes – love surprises, we want to see something new, unexplored. Seeking that is a skill the best reporters and editors develop: Instead of settling for the predictable and obvious, they look at everything and think: “Hmmmmm, what if this set of facts (or circumstances, or this piece of toast) is hiding something?”

Although we live in the desert of northern Nevada, we had a particularly wet, snowy, winter.

In the March 4-5, 2017, weekend edition of The Wall Street Journal, Jo Craven McGinty wrote a column headlined, “End to California Drought Isn’t Cut and Dried.” (I am a fan of fun headlines.)

When I looked out my window that weekend, I saw snow on the ground and clouds in the sky. Our weather first hits California, then smacks into the Sierra Nevada range, then gets to us, usually somewhat diminished. In other words, if we’re wet, northern California is really wet.

McGinty writes that although California got soaked this winter, “[T]he state also remains immersed in its worst drought in 20 years.” “That strange situation,” McGinty continued, “is explained by the fact that there are multiple ways to gauge drought.”

(Here I must thank McGinty for providing me the perfect metaphor for reporting well: Dig.)

The column cogently explains that although a massive volume of moisture fell recently, the preceding dry years took their toll on the groundwater. One of McGinty’s sources was quoted as saying, “It will take years to decades to fill up” the aquifers that were so heavily drawn from when reservoirs were drying up.

Readers see water on the surface and conclude that a drought is over; metaphorically, journalists have to look elsewhere, underground in McGinty’s case.

Our rejection of the obvious is more than a reflex; rather, it is a sound strategy, for if readers, experiencing along with us this thing we call life, so easily identify constant precipitation as the cure for drought, they don’t need us. Readers aren’t going to interview scientists, as McGinty did, or plunge into data on aquifers, as McGinty also did.

Think of the shouts of derision in the newsroom whenever a politician campaigns on empty “economic development” promises, or a business mogul insists his or her company is more interested in the welfare of workers than in piling up profits. Those shouts aren’t mere skepticism; rather, they are pledges not to allow the unchallenged to be the final word.

May you be blessed with pareidolia and perceive in this column not a heavenly vision of perfection but a practical example of diligence.

THE FINAL WORD: One more shout out to Blount: He is the first commentator I have found who agrees with me that the diminutive of “microphone” should be “mike” and not the trendy, phonetics-defying “mic.”

From Blount: “Rolling Stone, the venerable rock ‘n’ roll magazine, spells it ‘mike.’”

(‘I’m a veteran of the 1960s, and I assume Rolling Stone aficionados are aghast at hearing it labeled “venerable.”)

Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872, or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.
APA is monitoring the following bills of interest to our industry and the public:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill No. / Author</th>
<th>Short Description</th>
<th>APA Position</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HB 1225 Rep. Magie</td>
<td>Repeals the FOIA exemption for tax records of hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Stalled in House Revenue and Taxation Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1236 Rev. Gazaway, Johnson, Blake</td>
<td>Exempts records that depict the death of law enforcement officers from disclosure under FOIA</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House/Senate; signed by governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1248 Rep. Williams</td>
<td>Exempts data recorded by law enforcement body camera or dash cameras from disclosure under FOIA.</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Pulled down and deferred by sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1403 Rep. Boyd; Sen. Irvin</td>
<td>Exempts traffic accident reports from FOIA until 30 days after accident; restricts recipients list</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Referred to interim study (dead for this session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1469 Rep. Tosh</td>
<td>Exempts various aspects of Dept of Community Corrections emergency preparedness plans</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed both houses, signed by governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1588 Rep. Vaught, Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records and information compiled by State Police at the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Withdrawn by sponsor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1590 Rep. Vaught</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for records and information compiled by the State Police regarding security at the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed; signed by governor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1622 Rep. Johnson, Sen. English</td>
<td>Creates longer time window for complying with “unduly burdensome” records requests under FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral Pending Amendment</td>
<td>Failed in House vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Rep. Johnson, Sen. English</td>
<td>Allows local government entities to adopt the same FOIA online database requires that govern state agencies</td>
<td>Opposed-Pending Amendment</td>
<td>Passed House; failed in Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1836 Rep. Brown</td>
<td>Authorizes any state agency, court or local government entity required to publish record electronically; allows records to be electronically examined under FOIA</td>
<td>Strongly Oppose</td>
<td>Referred to interim study (dead for session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1866 Rep. Lundstrum</td>
<td>Exempts property records of law enforcement officer from disclosure under FOIA if the officer submits request in writing</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Passed House; Amended in Senate; referred back to House State Agencies, failed a “do pass” vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 12 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Exempts public school emergency and security records from disclosure under FOIA, including higher education</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed House/Senate; signed by governor 3-20-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 41 Sen. Clark Rep. Gates</td>
<td>Makes date compiled by an entity authorized to perform public services for children that is related to both a child maltreatment investigation under the FOIA</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Stalled in committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1623 Reps. Johnson/ Lowery/Brown Sen. English</td>
<td>An act to amend the FOIA to allow records custodians to post records on the internet and consider that compliance with records request under the FOIA</td>
<td>Monitor-Neutral</td>
<td>Passed House and Senate 3-31-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 114 Sen. Stubblefield Rep. Hammer</td>
<td>Allows a county collector to post delinquent tax notices on mineral rights to the internet rather than publish in newspapers</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed; became law 3-20-17 without governor’s signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 131 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates FOIA exemption for the security operations, emergency procedures and personnel information of the State Capitol Police</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Passed; signed by governor 3-6-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 152 Rep. Johnson Rep Gazaway</td>
<td>Senate version of HB 1623</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 261 Sen. Hester Rep. Davis</td>
<td>Exempts from FOIA records related to pending or reasonably anticipate litigation that involves an institution of higher education</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Pulled; replaced by SB 373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Final Legislative Report

APA is monitoring the following bills of interest to our industry and the public:

<table>
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<th>APA Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SB 364 Sen. Sanders</td>
<td>Would allow Ark Dept of Environmental Quality applications notices to be posted online OR in a newspaper</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Bill amended to remove objectionable language; passed House, Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 435 Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Limits availability of information under the FOIA regarding water system customers.</td>
<td>Monitor-Neutral</td>
<td>Passed; awaits signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 515 Sen. Stubblefield</td>
<td>Creates a FOIA exemption for records compiled by the State Police related to the Governor’s Mansion</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Assigned to Senate State Agencies Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1946 Rep. Tucker Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Creates a review panel to conduct unbiased review of rejected FOIA requests</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Presented House State Agencies; pulled down for amendment; ran out of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1947 Rep. Tucker Sen. Bond</td>
<td>Amends the FOIA regarding access to public information. (Shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2111 Rep. Dotson Sen. Bond</td>
<td>FOIA (Law endorsement investigative files; disclosure of information on juveniles (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Passed House and Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2132 Rep. Rushing</td>
<td>Creation of FOIA Task Force</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Passed House and Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2157 Rep. Douglas</td>
<td>FOIA exemption for Highway and Transportation Dept-held information</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Passed House; ran out of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2195 Rep. Shepherd</td>
<td>FOIA (Public Information Format; Internet alone sufficient)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Withdrawn from further consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 2242 Rep. Davis Sen. Hester</td>
<td>FOIA (Water systems, planning, construction contractors access to customer information</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Passed House; ran out of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 373 Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Exempts from FOIA a record that constitutes an attorney-client communication or attorney work product</td>
<td>Opposed</td>
<td>Failed 11-14 in Sen; vote expunged; ran out of time before re-vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 669 Sen. Hester</td>
<td>Public notices (shell bill)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>No action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 712 Sen. Elliott</td>
<td>FOIA (School compliance, admissions/budget details)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Failed “do pass” Senate Education Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THROWBACK THURSDAY

HUNTSVILLE REPUBLICAN – This photo of the Huntsville Republican was taken in 1908. The newspaper was published for 34 years under eight owners. The owners pictured in this photo are Mr. and Mrs. E. Grant Hutchinson and their three children, two of whom are posed sitting atop the building. The newspaper was later merged with a competing Democrat newspaper to become the Madison County Record. (Madison County Record photo)

Window for at-large nominations now open

The two-week window for at-large nominations to the APA Board of Directors opens today and runs through April 27, as per the APA constitution and bylaws.

Three APA members have been nominated by the nominating committee process and are published in a separate article in this week’s 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 letters of recommendation from three APA member newspapers in good standing. These letters would need to be submitted to the APA by the April 27 deadline.

The ballots in the annual election will be mailed May 12.

Arkansas Press Association

Nominees set for Arkansas Press annual election

This is the first of three required publications of the nominees to fill vacant seats on the APA Board of Directors.

The nominees were chosen in March by the nominating committee and validated by the Board of Directors at its annual spring retreat last week at Gaston’s White River Resort. The nominating committee is comprised of the immediate past president, one sitting APA Board member, and two at large members. Those roles were filled this year by Rusty Fraser, Rusty Turner, Kelly Freudensprung and Paige Henley.

The nominees include:

- Nick Coulter of West Memphis, advertising director of the Evening Times
- Eliza Gaines, Vice President of Audience Development for WEHCO Media
- Lori Freeze, editor of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View

These three candidates along with five others will appear on the ballot in APA’s annual election to be held in May.

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 27.

Designated voter letters will be mailed later this month, and the ballots for the annual APA election will be mailed in mid-May.

The newly elected APA board members will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the annual SuperConvention July 5-8 in Little Rock.

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@ArkansasPressAssociation
Somewhere I’ve got an archive of columns I’ve written over the passed almost 50 years. Growing up in a newspaper family, my column writing started early. Actually, all my writing started early. My first by-line fatality vehicle accident and photo came when I was nine years old. It was sort of by accident.

Tagging along with my Dad to the accident scene at a place called “Dead Man’s Curve,” (doesn’t every place have a Dead Man’s Curve?), it was apparent we couldn’t get close enough to the scene to get a photo. However, there was a hill adjacent to the curve that overlooked the accident scene and offered an excellent vantage.

Dad handed me the Speed Graphic camera and up the steep hill I climbed until I had an excellent vantage and took the photo. It wasn’t an easy climb with that “boat anchor” of a camera in tow, but I dared not drop it, as it was the only camera the family newspaper operation owned.

(We later added a Polaroid Land camera, which produced far less quality photos but did serve expedience when on deadline. Some of the reproduction of those early photos was awful, anyway, so often the instant camera came into use.)

Since I had taken the accident photo, Dad insisted I write the story, too. It was to become the first of many accident photos I took and stories I wrote, just like most people who have hung around a community newspaper for very long. These things just seemed to be part of life in the hills of Northwest Arkansas with the narrow, winding roads, sharp turns and no shoulders.

The most difficult of these to cover were those accidents that took the lives of friends. That happened all too often as I recall. These events were traumatic for the tiny community in which I grew up and in which my family operated a newspaper. Writing these stories for the newspaper was difficult because the community was mourning the loss. The last thing I wanted to do was to mess up the last story that would be written about a member of our little community.

There’s always pressure on the local newspaper reporters to get things correct that impact their community in such a way. It was always magnified on these stories, however.

It’s almost comical now looking back on those days, using the family newspaper’s Speed Graphic, to take photos for the newspaper. There was nothing automatic about those bulky contraptions, but if you got all the settings correct they could produce some outstanding photography.

We have a Speed Graphic on display in the APA museum in our building in Little Rock. Every once in a while I’ll pick that thing up and see if I can remember all the settings that had to be just right before you could snap the photo. You had to have them all right before taking the photo, too, as you often only got one shot at it. You weren’t operating with a roll of film so you could take multiple photos of the same subject. Often you only had one or two four-inch by five-inch film packs to utilize for the shot. That was one shot per pack. The day I ascended that steep hill to take my first fatality accident photo I had one shot at it.

Later on we obtained a film roll adapter for the Speed Graphic and that took some pressure off of getting all the settings just right. Still, it was a cumbersome contraption by today’s camera standards. The truth is today’s smart phones have better optics in them than some of those old cameras did.

Of course having a top quality photo in hand didn’t always mean that it was going to translate well to the printed newspaper. It helped to have good quality photos, but the engraving technology of the day was lacking at most small newspapers.

The old joke I can recall hearing my elders tell at APA conventions was that the wedding photo that was used the week before could be used as an accident photo the next week and nobody would know the difference. Some of the photo reproductions really were that bad.

It wasn’t the photos that were bad. Well, not always anyway. The processes used to reproduce photos in the newspaper were sketchy at best. That’s why you didn’t see a lot of photos in the archive pages of many small newspapers of old. It just wasn’t something they did well.

Even if they did produce a good engraving of a photo, the presses of the day were designed to reproduce type and line engravings, not half-tone photos. Those old clunker presses that could be found at almost every newspaper, no matter the size, often just couldn’t pull it off.

Thinking of some of these things from my childhood growing up in a family newspaper just serves to remind me how old I am. It doesn’t seem that long ago, but the reality is that it was a lifetime ago.

This column started out about column writing when it occurred to me that my first standing column in the family newspaper began in 1968 after I had entered the U.S. Navy. The column began at the urging of my late older brother, Ted, Jr., who was at the time editor of the family newspapers. He needed content and badgered me until I agreed to write the column.

Those columns were dispatched from wherever I happened to be, from San Diego to Hong Kong to Singapore to Saigon to Tokyo. It’s entertaining for me to go back and read some of those old entries, some of which were pretty bad. That’s the thing about newspapers, we do archive well, and while some of those old columns would have been better off not being archived, it’s still entertaining to peruse them on occasion.

For roughly 30 years I wrote two columns per week. That in addition to editorials and countless news stories. Now, writing only one weekly column makes me feel like a slacker. Of course there are other things here to do besides writing columns, but I do enjoy continuing what I started almost a half-century ago.

Fifty years doing this? That’s just hard to believe.

Have a great week!

Tom Larimer’s
Potpourri

Arkansas Publisher Weekly
April 13, 2017
Word has been received that Jim Morris, long-time editor of the Springdale News, died Wednesday morning, April 12, at the Circle of Life Hospice in Springdale. Morris had been recovering from bypass surgery and was experiencing complications, having good days and bad before he succumbed.

He was a recipient of the APA's “Golden 50 Service Award,” which he was presented in 2000. Funeral plans were incomplete at this writing. An obituary for Morris was to appear today in the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

May 15 deadline for NNA awards nominations

The National Newspaper Association is presently seeking nominations for the Amos, McKinney & Phillips Awards, which are the highest honors awarded to working and retired newspapermen and women who have exhibited distinguished service to the community press. The deadline for nominations is May 15.

The General James O. Amos Award was established in 1938 by E.C. Amos, publisher of The Sidney Daily News, to honor his father, General James O. Amos, a pioneer Ohio journalist and an early-day member of the National Editorial Association. The Emma C. McKinney Award was created in 1966 to honor Emma C. McKinney, co-publisher and editor of the Hillsboro (OR) Argus for 58 years. In 1954 Mrs. McKinney was named dean of Oregon newspapermen and women and in 1957 received the Amos Voorhies Award, the highest state honor that can be awarded to an Oregon newspaper person. Mrs. McKinney was inducted into the Oregon Journalism Hall of Fame in 1982.

The Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award was established in 2007 to honor Daniel Morris “Dan” Phillips, an award-winning writer and photographer who passed away in 2005 at the age of 47.

For more information, a list of past winners and nomination forms, go to http://www.naweb.org/contests-awards.

Circulation group plans conference at Harrison's Durand Center

MCMA, the Midwest Circulation Management Association, has scheduled a free mini-conference for Thursday, May 4, from 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Durand Center, 303 North Main Street in Harrison.

The conference is free to MCMA members and $35 for non-members. The fee includes a one-year membership in MCMA.

Lunch will be provided. The agenda consists of postal issues, home delivery ideas, single copy solutions, utilizing social media in multiple capacities, a review of legal issues regarding work and independent contractors and more.

To register email the MCMA Arkansas Director, Chuck Stevens, at csstevens@mtnhome.gannett.com.

More information on MCMA can be found at www.midwestercirculation.com.

Members in the News

Patrick Massey, editor of The De Queen Bee, has been named general manager of Mena Newspapers, Inc., including the newspapers in De Queen as well as those in Mena, Waldron and Mansfield, according to a report in The De Queen Bee.

Mena Newspapers, Inc. Publisher Clark Smith made the announcement citing Massey’s commitment to the newspapers and the communities they serve.

Massey will continue to office in De Queen where he has served as managing editor since 2009.

Jim Morris

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More information on MCMA can be found at www.midwestercirculation.com.
2016 was the year of “fake news.” It dominated the election cycle, it took over Facebook feeds and even caused crime.

But as inundated as we were with fake news, it is not a new thing.

For more than 150 years, newspapers have been in the “anti-fake news” business. There have always been lies and ridiculous conspiracy theories, but they used to be delivered to you across the dinner table and not in your news source. Let me be clear, fake news is not news you don’t agree with or dislike, it is falsehoods, cultivated with the intention to deceive. These stories are written to undermine the truth and power of the press.

Today, consumers must be much more aware of who is creating their news, and whether there are real reporters and editors standing behind the stories. Over half of Americans get news on social media. There is no current method of elevating real stories from trusted publishers, in fact, recent studies suggest that consumers care more about who shares the story than the original source.

Making stuff up is easy. What is hard is checking facts and digging up stories that powerful people want to keep hidden.

We are celebrating real news as the cure to fake news. On March 29th, the News Media Alliance and our partners will make a commitment to celebrating news that is real, reputable and trusted. This is a day to celebrate that hard work, and to ask the public to stand-up for the principle that facts matter.

During the past year at the Alliance, I have celebrated our industry for their hard work and dedication to the truth. I now ask you to join me and support real news. It was because of hard working journalists that so many issues came to light this election season. We saw a glimpse of Trump’s tax returns, we heard the tape of Trump talking to Billy Bush, we read Clinton’s emails. We knew when the candidates got their information right, and when they didn’t. And today, the media continues to fight for the right to report on actions being taken by President Trump and his Administration, despite efforts to keep them out. This information gets to us because of the media. Not in spite of it.

It has become vogue to distrust and disparage the media. But as fake news corrodes trust, we must support the real media. Alliance members and other real journalists do an amazing job under difficult circumstances.

Fake news is not going to stop. We must become an educated and discerning populous. We must subscribe to real journalism, where the stories are colorful but the news is black and white.

Tell me how you are celebrating with the hashtag #supportrealnews.

(David Chavern serves as President & CEO of the News Media Alliance. Chavern has built a career spanning 30 years in executive strategic and operational roles, and most recently completed a decade-long tenure at the United States Chamber of Commerce.)
Nominees set for APA annual election

This is the second of three publications of the nominees to fill vacant seats on the APA Board of Directors. The publications are required by the APA bylaws.

The nominees were chosen in March by the nominating committee and validated by the Board of Directors at its annual spring retreat at Gaston’s White River Resort. The nominees include:

- **Nick Coulter** of West Memphis, advertising director of the *Evening Times*
- **Eliza Gaines**, Vice President of Audience Development for WEHCO Media
- **Lori Freeze**, editor of the *Stone County Leader* in Mountain View

These three candidates along with five others, those already on the board, will appear on the ballot in APA’s annual election to be held in May. APA board members all stand for re-election each year except for the immediate past president.

The two-week window for at-large nominations remains open for one more week. A letter of recommendation from three APA newspapers in good standing is required for an at-large nomination. That period will expire on April 27.

Designated voter letters will be mailed later this month, and the ballots for the annual APA election will be mailed in mid-May.

The newly elected APA board members will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the annual SuperConvention July 5-8 in Little Rock.

Window for at-large nominations to close

One week remains for at-large nominations to the APA Board of Directors. The deadline for such nominations is April 27, as per the APA constitution and bylaws.

Three APA members have been nominated by the nominating committee process and are published in a separate article in this week’s *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 letters of recommendation from three APA member newspapers in good standing. These letters would need to be submitted to the APA by the April 27 deadline.

The ballots in the annual election will be mailed May 12.

APA PRESS DAY, 1953 — This APA luncheon was the annual APA “Press Day” luncheon held in conjunction with the Arkansas Livestock Exposition, also known as the state fair. The luncheon was a popular annual event that generally included celebrities that were performing or appearing at the fair. Note the dress of this group. It obviously was not a casual luncheon.
The Pulitzer Prize list was released early last week. It included the usual list of familiar winners like the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Miami Herald and The Wall Street Journal.

Joining them this year was The Storm Lake Times from Storm Lake, Ia., a twice weekly, 3,000-circulation newspaper. Their prize was for editorial writing, namely for editorials calling out big businesses in their areas, businesses such as the Koch Brothers, Monsanto and Cargill and their alleged secret funding by government.

There’s little argument that this would be an aggressive position taken by a tiny newspaper in the rural Midwest, but it is a shining example that good journalism happens at newspapers of all sizes. It’s refreshing to see good work rewarded with the top prize for journalism, the Pulitzer.

The Times is a family operation with a 10-person staff. By any standard, that’s a small newspaper although there are many smaller right here in Arkansas. Compared to others competing for this top prize year in and year out, The Times is way smaller, as in not even close.

Congratulations to the Cullen family and to The Times for this enormous recognition of their efforts. They serve as a great example of the impact even a small newspaper can have on the community they cover and on a national scale for this recognition.

This story reminded me of another small newspaper so honored back in 1979. The Point Reyes Light, a weekly newspaper in California, won the Pulitzer Prize for their expose of the Synanon cult.

The newspaper was then owned by Dave and Cathy Mitchell, who reportedly paid $47,000 for the newspaper in 1974 when it had a circulation of 1,700. They won the Pulitzer for Public Service on their reporting on the cult, which had a rather conspicuous presence in that part of California at the time. Synanon had threatened libel litigation against the Light, and the San Francisco Examiner reportedly dropped their coverage of the cult because of the threats.

Obviously the Light did not back off in exposing the corruption surrounding the cult despite facing six libel suits from them. Synanon was at one time a drug rehabilitation organization that later evolved into the Church of Synanon and further into a violent cult.

If you recall that earlier award, it was an inspiration to small newspapers all over the country. It also was a great example of the quality work that could be done by newspapers of any size that put their mind to it and follow it through to the end.

The same could be said now for The Storm Like Times.

It would have been much easier just to get along by going along, but that doesn’t win any prizes or credibility for a newspaper. Seeking and reporting the truth, sometimes the ugly truth that resides even in small communities is what newspapers do. Rather, it’s what they are supposed to do.

Some do it on a regular basis. Some do it exceptionally well. Some even win Pulitzer Prizes. It happens.

In fact it just did. Again.

I don’t think any journalist or any newspaper ever set out purposefully to win a Pulitzer Prize. Surely if they did they would likely be sorely disappointed. They just do what journalists do, what newspapers do, and they do it well. For that they sometimes get recognized, yes even sometimes with a Pulitzer.

You have to admire the dedication it takes at newspapers of any size to see something through to a major prize like the Pulitzer. It is encouraging reading the stories of the actions taken at the newspapers that win the prizes, this year and every year.

It also reminds us that good journalism is still being practiced, and virtually none of it is fake news. They don’t give Pulitzers for fake news, and of course they shouldn’t.

Like so many others, I’ll be glad when the whole fake news things fades into the history books, if indeed it ever does.

My fear is that it will not. My fear is that it will become the mantra for anyone who doesn’t agree with a particular story or a particular style of reporting the news. Does any of that sound familiar?

Newspapers retain credibility as publishers of “real” news. Any newspaper will go to great lengths to protect their credibility because in reality it is something they must have to be good at what they do. It’s the one thing no amount of money can buy for a newspaper.

Often newspapers do what they do under the threat of losing their credibility. Sometimes that’s a great challenge especially when a source is feeding you bad information. But the real newspapers, the publishers of “real” news, the good newspapers double-check everything. They don’t just broadcast it willy-nilly through social media channels where fake news lives and where it thrives, where the gullible sop it up and regurgitate it as if it were the gospel.

The thing about credibility is that once it’s gone, you can’t get it back. That’s why social media has no real credibility, and why it should not be assigned any. That’s why newspapers take their credibility so seriously, so that their readers will continue to take them seriously.

It is important I think at times to remind readers that social media is entertainment, not a valid news source. Certainly it’s not one to be taken seriously as a news source. If they want the real news, news with credibility, they need to get it from their newspaper.

There is definitely an appetite for that. Evidence of that is the surge in circulation at the New York Times, Washington Post and others after the election in November. I’m not sure it was so much the election or the outcomes, but rather the repetitious references to fake news. People were defaulting to sources they could trust…namely newspapers.

That, of course, is as it should be.

Have a great week!

Tom
Central Arkansas weeklies merge publications

Seven Central Arkansas weekly newspapers will merge into two weekly newspapers effective in May.

The Times of North Little Rock with merge with the Maumelle Monitor, The Jacksonville Patriot, and the Sherwood Voice to become one weekly newspaper, while the Lonoke Democrat will merge with the Cabot Star-Herald and The Carlisle Independent to make the other weekly.

All of the newspapers are owned by Gatehouse Media.

Nominees set for APA annual election

This is the third and final publication of the nominees to fill vacant seats on the APA Board of Directors. The publications are required by the APA bylaws.

The deadline for at large nominations was today. There are as yet no at large nominations so there will be no contested races on this year’s ballot. Even so, the APA bylaws require the election be held, contested races or not, so we will go through the process just as if there were contested races.

The nominees were chosen in March by the nominating committee and validated by the Board of Directors at its annual spring retreat at Gaston’s White River Resort. The nominees include:

- Nick Coulter of West Memphis, advertising director of the Evening Times
- Eliza Gaines, Vice President of Audience Development for WEHCO Media
- Lori Freeze, editor of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View

These three candidates along with five others, those already on the board, will appear on the ballot in APA’s annual election to be held in May. APA board members all stand for re-election each year except for the executive board comprised of the president, vice president, second vice president and the immediate past president.

The two-week window for at-large nominations closes today. An at large nomination can be achieved by producing a letter of recommendation from three APA newspapers in good standing. Successful at large nominees will be added to the annual ballot to compete for a spot on the APA board.

Designated voter letters were mailed April 21, and the ballots for the annual APA election will be mailed in May 12. Designated voters are again reminded to sign the outside of the return ballot envelope in order for the ballot to count.

The newly elected APA board members will assume their respective seats on the board at the conclusion of the annual SuperConvention July 5-8 in Little Rock.
Arkansas Publisher Weekly

April 27, 2017

Tom Larimer’s

Potpourri

Just because you don’t hear much about newspaper newsstand theft any more doesn’t mean it doesn’t still happen. It does. All. The. Time.

Why do you suppose it is that some people don’t think taking a newspaper from a news rack without paying for it is actually, you know, stealing? It is now and it always has been.

A recent story in the Nashville News-Leader indicated that single-copy theft is still a problem. They estimate losing on average 29 copies of their newspaper a week to thievery, at 75 cents per copy. The total loss is not a huge number, but it is a nuisance number that any small community newspaper could live without.

As a boy I can remember my Dad complaining about people taking newspapers from the “honor” racks without paying. Are there any “honor” racks still in use? Those you see now are largely dispensing free distribution publications, which aren’t so worried about people taking their publications. In fact, they encourage it.

Dad quit complaining so bitterly about the “shrinkage” when thieves just started taking the entire rack so they could take it somewhere private where they could break into the coin receptacle and retrieve the couple of bucks in quarters therein, if there was that much. They’d destroy a $50 rack for maybe two bucks.

That was back when the single copy price was a quarter, which doesn’t seem like much but at the time you could purchase a gallon of gas with a quarter. Yeah, ok that was a few years ago. We “robbed” the racks quite often to remove the temptation.

We would get calls every once in a while, usually from the sheriff’s office, that they had recovered one of our racks where thieves had discarded it out in the countryside after stealing the coinage. Or sometimes we’d get a call from a resident that they’d seen one of our racks in one of the many creeks around the community. I’ve retrieved more than a couple of racks from creeks where they’d been tossed.

Not long after that it occurred to us to start chaining down the racks. Of course, not long after that we retired the “honor” racks and went to the coin-operated type. They were more expensive, of course, so we definitely chained them down to prevent loss of the entire rack.

That just proposed more of a challenge to some thieves who used bolt cutters sometimes to cut the dog chains we were using. So we went to a heavier chain, a “log chain” if you will. This slowed the thieves who, apparently frustrated, took to beating the crap out of the racks to get into the coin box and retrieving the couple of bucks in quarters thereon for others.

Newspaper theft has long been a problem, but you don’t often hear about thieves being apprehended, let alone brought to justice. But it does happen.

In the course of my newspaper career, I’ve had a couple of circulation people who took personally these thefts of our products. One would stake out racks that were experiencing consistent theft just to find out who was doing it. You don’t always find that sort of dedication, but this lady took seriously her responsibilities.

She would “feed” the rack with the morning edition of the newspaper in the wee hours of the morning, then set up across the street and observe the rack. More than once she caught her thief. Once it was a man who would put in the money for a single copy, then set all the other copies of the newspaper inside on top of the rack for others to take.

So he was paying for his copy and giving away all the others for us. Once she caught a proprietor of the store in front of which one of our racks was chained taking all the newspapers out of the rack to sell in his store.

This lady’s tenacious monitoring of troubling rack losses greatly reduced the number of newspapers we lost to theft, as you could probably imagine. The word got around that we were taking the losses seriously, and prosecuting those we caught stealing. Yes, that will do it.

One could suppose there is an upside to the thefts that people still value the newspaper sufficiently and want it so badly they will result to thievery to get one of their very own. Yeah, you could take that attitude, but I suspect it’s likely more of a case of some people just enjoy stealing something. Newspapers are just a handy target to satisfy that streak of larceny with which some are apparently burdened. And if they can’t steal it, they may well vandalize it in the case of the damaged racks.

Most of us will likely never understand why such things still happen.

Vandalism is another things we’ll likely never understand. That’s likely because most of us can’t understand the weird satisfaction vandals get from what they do.

I read a lot of newspapers so I couldn’t tell which ones it was, but I recently read a couple of community newspapers that contained stories of cemetery vandalism. In both stories in newspapers from distant communities, vandals had pushed over grave markers in a local cemetery. This is another crime I recall from my youth, and another I have never understood.

What sort of perverted joy could anyone possibly get from pushing over and damaging grave markers? Some of the old grave markers in some cemeteries are works or art almost. They are certainly antiques that won’t take much being pushed over before shattering into several pieces.

Yet there are still those among us who will do this stuff, evidenced again by the two stories with photos I have recently read in two separate publications.

One might hope that with the proliferation of security cameras that less and less vandalism might be the case, not more. Perhaps cemeteries are the last places to install the cameras. It is a sad commentary that cemeteries would actually need them.

Or churches. Or newsstands.

But they do.

Have a great week!

Tom

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Members
In the News

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

News Observer rate hike First in 21 years

The Ashley News Observer in Crossett announced recently that it would be raising the single copy price of the newspaper for the first time in 21 years, and also would raise the subscription rates for the newspaper for the first time in 14 years.

The single copy price went to $1 at the newsstand.

Publisher Barney White said the newspaper is proud to have kept its rates flat for more than two decades, but added that is has become time to fine tune costs.

Subscription rates for the newspaper increased to $35 annually for in-county subscribers, $43 for adjoining counties, and $52 annually for other areas of the U.S.

Subscribers were given a window of opportunity to subscribe to the News Observer at the old rates.

Nashville News Leader victimized by newspaper thieves

The Nashville News-Leader in a recent story in the newspaper cited “sticky-fingered thieves” in the loss of 29 single copies per week taken from the newspaper’s newsstands.

The story indicates the thefts have come principally from three newsstand locations in Dierks, at Center Point and at a Nashville convenience store.

The News-Leader’s single copy price is 75 cents, so the average weekly loss is just over $20.

Designated voters asked to return letters to APA

Designated voter letters were mailed last Friday to publishers and general managers of every member newspaper of the Arkansas Press Association. Those receiving the letters are asked to return them with the name of the designated voter for the upcoming APA annual election.

The APA bylaws restrict participation in the annual election to those who return the designated voter letters. Some voters will be casting ballots for multiple member newspapers, and easy should be listed on the returned letter.

The ballots will be mailed to designated voters on Friday, May 12. Ballots must be returned by Friday, May 26, and the designated voter MUST sign in the area provided on the outside of the return envelope for the ballot to be counted.

There are no contested races on the ballot this year, but the APA bylaws require that an election be held regardless.

‘Journalism and Islam’ topic for SPJ event in Little Rock

“Journalism and Islam” is the topic for an upcoming event sponsored by the Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) set for Wednesday, May 10, at 6 p.m. at the Islamic Center of Little Rock.

The evening will include a free halal dinner and frank discussion about how Muslims are covered in the news at home and abroad. Discussion topics include:

• When should reporters mention the faith of a source?
• Are there stories that aren’t being covered?

Register now for MCMA conference

There’s still time to get signed up for the MCMA, the Midwest Circulation Management Association, conference scheduled for Thursday, May 4, from 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Durand Center, 303 North Main Street in Harrison.

The conference is free to MCMA members and $35 for non-members. The fee includes a one-year membership in MCMA.

The fee also includes a lunch that will be provided. The agenda consists of postal issues, home delivery ideas, single copy solutions, utilizing social media in multiple capacities, a review of legal issues regarding work and independent contractors and more.

To register email the MCMA Arkansas Director, Chuck Stevens, at csstevens@mtnhome.gannett.com.

More information on MCMA can be found at www.midwestcirculation.com.

Deadline nears for NNA awards nominations

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) is presently seeking nominations for the Amos, McKinney & Phillips Awards, which are the highest honors awarded to working and retired newspapermen and women who have exhibited distinguished service to the community press. The deadline for nominations is May 15.

The General James O. Amos Award was established in 1938 by E.C. Amos, publisher of The Sidney Daily News, to honor his father, General James O. Amos, a pioneer Ohio journalist and an early-day member of the National Editorial Association.

The Emma C. McKinney Award was created in 1966 to honor Emma C. McKinney, provided. The agenda consists of postal issues, home delivery ideas, single copy solutions, utilizing social media in multiple capacities, a review of legal issues regarding work and independent contractors and more.

To register email the MCMA Arkansas Director, Chuck Stevens, at csstevens@mtnhome.gannett.com.

More information on MCMA can be found at www.midwestcirculation.com.

The Daniel M. Phillips Leadership Award was established in 2007 to honor Daniel Morris “Dan” Phillips, an award-winning writer and photographer who passed away in 2005 at the age of 47. For more information, a list of past winners and nomination forms, go to www.nnaweb.org/contests-awards.
At News Media Alliance, we’re just a few days away from our annual mediaXchange conference. This year’s theme is focused on the Futures of News. Not the singular future, but the plural form. The future is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Every news organization is going to have its own unique blend of business – with print, digital, social distribution, events, subscriptions, video, etc. But we all have one thing in common: audience, and that audience is growing and consuming more news all the time.

Trying to shoe-horn one solution isn’t going to work, and we’re not going to try. The important thing is that we innovate, communicate and advocate together.

At mediaXchange, we will talk about emerging technologies, platforms and solutions to challenges publishers are currently facing.

I’m thrilled to present a new mediaXchange format, which has become sleeker, more innovative and interactive than ever before. This annual event has evolved to become more representative of what we are. As the largest industry gathering of its kind in North America, I believe it is an incredibly valuable event for publishers and news media, advertisers and associated businesses in the print and digital publishing industry.

mediaXchange 2017 is a chance to hear from insightful speakers with bold new ideas and innovative strategies. We’ll be discussing and analyzing some of today’s key issues, from journalism in the time of President Trump to diversity in the newsroom. You’ll gain insights into our members with momentum, learn about some exciting new tools from the Alliance and network with the best of the best.

We have tremendous speakers lined up from inside and outside of the industry, and we’re thrilled to introduce you to some rising stars. Intrigued? Here’s what to expect:

• Killer keynotes. Trust us: You won’t want to miss insights from Mitch Joel, Mirum; Jonathon Perelman, ICM Partners; and Paul Taylor, generational expert and book author.

• Table Talks tailored to and driven by you. Are you hoping to gain insights into new advertising trends, audience engagement via social media, revenue growth or strategies for local newspapers? Take your pick of table talks designed around these topics.

• An edge in technology and advertising. Over 30 of the top newspaper advertisers and agencies representing over 85 companies will be attending mediaXchange, and we have facilitated several opportunities for personal meetings and conversations to further your relationships and introduce your advertising offerings.

And, you get a front row seat to some of the newest and brightest technology solutions, with a fast-paced round of pitches from the winning startups of Accelerator Pitch Program.

While I’m truly excited for this incredible lineup of speakers, the program itself doesn’t begin to capture all of mediaXchange. One of the greatest assets of this conference is the community of newspaper executives, advertisers and members of the publishing business who attend. Your discussions, ideas, networking and collaboration is one of our key strengths as an industry, and it is the reason I am so optimistic for the futures of news publishing.

So, come prepared to learn, discuss and have a little fun—it is New Orleans, after all.

(David Chavern serves as President & CEO of the News Media Alliance. Chavern has built a career spanning 30 years in executive strategic and operational roles, and most recently completed a decade-long tenure at the United States Chamber of Commerce.)
Ballots for the 2017 APA election will be mailed next week, and designated voters at APA member newspapers will have until Friday, May 26, to return them in the envelope provided. Designated voters are reminded to sign the outside of the envelope provided for the return of the ballot. A spot for that signature is clearly visible on the outside of the return envelope.

Eight candidates will appear on the ballot, including the three new nominees, Nick Coulter of The Times of West Memphis, Eliza Gaines of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, and Lori Freeze of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View.

Also on the ballot will be the continuing APA Board members:

- 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
- Ellen Kreth of the Madison County Record in Huntsville
- Sue Silliman of the Camden News, and
- Clark Smith of the Mena Star.

The APA executive board do not appear on the ballot. They include:

- President Nat Lea, WEHCO Media, Inc.
- Vice President Byron Tate, Sheridan Headlight
- Second Vice President Tom White of the Advance Monticellonian in Monticello, and
- Immediate Past President Rusty Fraser of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View.

The list of honorees by county in the annual Farm Family of the Year contest was released this week. The list of honorees can be found at this link: https://tinyurl.com/l5prkja.

Some 70 of the state’s 75 counties have county Farm Family honorees. There are actually 71 county Farm Families named as Arkansas County traditionally names two farm families, one from the north part of the county and one from the south.

These county Farm Families of the year are divided into eight districts. They will compete with others in their district for the district Farm Family honors. The district winners will be announced June 19.

From those eight district winners a state Farm Family of the Year will be named. That announcement is traditionally made at a luncheon in early December. This year’s luncheon will be held December 7 in North Little Rock.

Since 1947 the Arkansas Farm Family of the Year Program has served as a vehicle to recognize outstanding farm families throughout the state. The objective of the program is:

- To give recognition and encouragement to farm families who are doing an outstanding job on their farm and in their community,
- To gain recognition of the importance of agriculture in the community and the state, and
- To disseminate information on improved farm practices and management.

The Arkansas Press Association was one of the three founding sponsors of the program, and continues to lend support for the program in an ongoing basis.

The Arkansas Farm Bureau is the lead sponsor of the Farm Family of the Year program.

“The Arkansas Farm Family of the Year program is one of the oldest of its kind in the nation,” says Mollie Dykes, Farm Bureau coordinator for the program. “The success and longevity of this program has only been possible because of our sponsors and partners.”
In a week the ballots will be mailed to APA member newspapers for the annual election. This year there are no contested races on the ballot, but the APA bylaws require that an election be held. That includes the mailing of the “designated voter” letters to members. We have received several of them, but not a majority. Please make it a point to sign and return your designated voter letter so you may participate in this election.

The three news names on the ballot include Nick Coulter of The Evening Times in West Memphis; Lori Freeze, editor of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View; and Eliza Gaines of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

The other names on the ballot are already APA board members who stand for re-election each year.

Please return your designated voter letter and be watching for the ballots to arrive next week. The ballot will have a return envelope, which must be signed by the designated voter in order for the ballot to be counted. You may sign the ballot if you wish, but the outside of the return envelope must be signed or the ballot won’t be opened.

We have generally had really good participation in the annual election. I’m confident we will this year as well. There are no ballot issues on the ballot this year so no two-thirds requirement of member participation.

All the candidates on the ballot need is one vote to be elected, or re-elected to the board whichever the case.

You likely saw last week that the APA membership role dropped by five flags with some of merger of some of the Central Arkansas Newspapers now owned by Gatehouse Media, a company that owned 26 newspapers in Arkansas before this week’s mergers.

The Lonoke County Democrat will be the flag for three former Lonoke County newspapers, The Lonoke Democrat, the Cabot Star-Herald, and The Carlisle Independent.

The Times of North Little Rock, the Maumelle Monitor, the Sherwood Voice and the Jacksonville Patriot will be incorporated into one weekly newspaper to be known as The Times.

In a front-page letter to readers and subscribers, Publisher Ed Graves indicated that the changes were made to improve the financial viability of the publications.

The two consolidated publications will also operate separate online news portals at www.lonokenews.net and www.pulaskinews.net.

It’s always sad to see old APA flags fade into history, but such is the nature of the newspaper industry these days. In fact, it really always has been. If you read the histories of the newspaper industry in Arkansas, you’ll read about a lot of publications that no longer exist.

Community newspapers around this state as well as across the country are often the oldest continually operating business in the community. Many of them in Arkansas are over a century old, and most don’t have a business in town that would rival that longevity.

But like everything else in this life, communities change. The erosion of population and the attendant loss of businesses result in fewer potential readers, subscribers and advertisers. That’s never a good scenario for the local newspaper, but it is the predicament in which some newspapers, including those that have been operating for decades, find themselves.

On the other hand, those communities that have show growth, whether steady or explosive, are obviously in a much better position to succeed.

When I am asked how the newspapers of Arkansas are doing, I generally always answer, “some good; some not so good.” That’s about as accurate as one can get these days. There are several variables including some of the aforementioned population erosion or the opposite, population growth. But those are just a couple of the factors. Competition for readers and advertisers obviously are factors, too. There are few publications left that do not have competition of some sort, either from another print product, local broadcast, or perhaps an online news portal operated independently in the community.

Those in the isolated markets, those far removed from a larger community with a larger newspaper, are in a better position to succeed, too. Residents of these communities need their local news and if the newspaper is providing it for them, then more than likely these newspapers remain robust.

So answering the question about how our industry is doing in Arkansas isn’t all that easy to explain, at least without going more in-depth on all the variables.

Ours is not now and never has been an easy industry to describe. I suppose that’s true with a lot of other businesses, too, but I tend to think the newspapers are unique in the community they serve because in so many cases there is no other entity in the community doing what the local newspaper does.

And in most cases the newspaper is a reflection of the community it serves. Reading the local newspaper can tell you a lot about the community. Sometimes it is obvious that they’re doing well, and sometimes not so much.

The newspapers of Arkansas will be coming together again July 5-8 in Little Rock for the annual SuperConvention, and as always it will be a great time of sharing and networking with others in the business. I’ve attended many conventions over the years in several states, and I’ve seen some great presentations at convention, but there is no argument that the absolute best information I gleaned from attending a convention is what I learned from others attending.

I suspect this has been the experience of most who attend conventions. APA has been fortunate to have a large contingent of those who won’t miss the convention. We work hard on this end to provide excellent programming for the convention, but we also are mindful of including those networking opportunities where you can “talk shop” with others in the industry.

There will be both, great programming and plenty of networking time at the 2017 convention in Little Rock. I hope you have it on your calendar and that you will plan to attend. I can assure you it will be worth your time.

Have a great week!

Tom

Arkansas Publisher Weekly
Foundation seeking items for Convention auction

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation is once again seeking contributions to its annual silent auction at the APA’s SuperConvention to be held this year July 5-8 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation provides services to the APA newspapers and they provide support through paid internships, scholarship opportunities, continuing education opportunities, literacy projects and sponsorship of conference speakers.

Among the list of items they seek, though certainly not limited to these ideas for popular auction items are:

• 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 outdoor items

The Foundation will also be featuring the “Literacy is in the Bag” area again this year. Newspapers could also consider donating a purse 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 and gently loved. Contact Karen Brown, Executive Director, for more information about the purses that have had donated in the past.

“We love being able to feature items in the auction showcasing our newspaper’s community,” Brown said, “and we sincerely appreciate all donations.”

In addition, the annual APA golf tournament that benefits the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation is going to held at the Country Club of Arkansas in Maumelle at 3 Country Club Circle on Wednesday, July 5. Jay Edwards, The Daily Record Little Rock, is coordinating this fun event. Please consider signing up for this event sponsored by AT&T and UAMS.

Please email Karen Brown if you or your newspaper would like to donate an auction. All items will be listed in social media, convention materials and releases. Brown can be reached at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

Register now for SPJ ‘Journalism and Islam’ event

“Journalism and Islam” is the topic for an upcoming event sponsored by the Arkansas Pro Chapter of SPJ set for Wednesday, May 10, at 6 p.m. at the Islamic Center of Little Rock.

The evening will include a free halal dinner and frank discussion about how Muslims are covered in the news at home and abroad. Discussion topics include:

• When should reporters mention the faith of a source?
• Are there stories that aren’t being covered?
• What terms should be avoided?

Imam Mahmoud Al-Denawy Hassanein of the Islamic Center of Little Rock will give a tour and share information about Islam.

The event requires an RSVP, which can be done by email to Jennifer Ellis at jellis@arkansasonline.com or text 501-533-0565.

Tomorrow deadline for Carmage Walls Commentary Award entries

Entries into the annual Carmage Walls Commentary Prize are now open, and both daily and non-daily newspapers are encouraged to nominate their best work for 2017. The deadline for entries is Friday (tomorrow), May 5.

Each entry can include no more than six opinion pieces, editorials or columns, on a single subject. Entries must have been published in a daily or non-daily newspaper between May 1, 2016 and April 30, 2017. There is no limit on the number of entries.

Awards will be presented in each of two circulation categories, over 50,000 and under 50,000.

In each circulation group, the first-place winner will receive a plaque and a cash award of $1,000. Second place winners will receive a plaque and $500.

The award will be presented at the SNPA/Inland Press Association meeting Sept. 10-12 in Colorado Springs. It recognizes outstanding commentary on local issues, and encourages thoughtful, courageous and constructive editorial page leadership on issues specifically relevant to each newspaper’s primary readership.

For additional information, contact Cindy Durham at SNPA: cindy@snpa.org or (404) 256-0444.
Guest Column: Postal 'Guru' Responds to FAQ's, Offers Postal Tips
By Max Heath, NNA Postal Chair

These questions and the corresponding answers come from the Postal hotline Q & A:

Q: How much editorial content difference is required to keep separate Periodicals permits?

A: The National Newspaper Association is often called upon to help members deal with problems resulting from the need, especially in difficult economic times, to keep different Periodicals publications operating in compliance with Domestic Mail Manual rules.

Newspaper clusters serving contiguous suburban areas with multiple titles often sell advertising in many of those titles as a “group buy.” Then the question becomes whether shared news has value in more than one title, which often it does.

And sometimes, there is a creep toward too much identical content because of decreasing budget for editorial employees. This can even happen in rural counties where two papers in nearby towns are brought under the same ownership.

The answer of having 20 percent difference in non-advertising content lies in Customer Support Ruling PS-141, which interprets DMM 207.6 Periodicals Qualification standards. I am quoting it below in full:

“This CSR discusses the eligibility of mailing similar copies of newspapers or other publications under different permits.

“Only one permit for Periodicals mailing privileges may be authorized for a newspaper or other type of periodical publication.

An examination of copies of concurrent issues of two Periodicals newspapers disclosed that they are identical except for the titles and identification statements. It appears that the publisher is publishing the same newspaper under two titles and has a separate Periodicals authorization for each title. Since under the present manner of preparation there is in fact only one newspaper, Periodicals mailing privileges may be authorized only for one newspaper.

“If the publisher can prepare his two newspapers in such a manner that he can demonstrate by customary journalistic standards that the newspapers are different, each newspaper can be considered to be independent for postal purposes. This means that if the non-advertising portion in one newspaper differs by at least 20 percent from the non-advertising portion in the other newspaper, they will be considered as being separate and independent newspapers.

“It should be noted that this percentage is an interpretative aid to help us make this determination on a consistent and fair basis. One method of determining whether the non-advertising portions of two publications differ by at least 20 percent is as follows:

1. “Measure the non-advertising content of each publication.

2. “Compare the non-advertising matter in the publications and, in the publication with the greater number of column inches of non-advertising matter, mark the number of column inches of non-advertising matter that is different from the non-advertising contents of the other publication (Publication B).

3. “Measure the number of column inches of non-advertising matter in publication A that was marked as different.

4. “Divide the figure from (step 3) by the total number of column inches of non-advertising matter in publication A.’

5. “Multiply the result by 100 to express the answer as a percentage.”

Q: Can I mail the newspaper at Standard Mail (now renamed Marketing Mail) prices instead without changing content to comply with the 20 percent rule of thumb for differentiating separate Periodicals titles?

A: The short answer is no. CSR PS-186 addresses this. Interpreting DMM 207.4.7.1, it makes clear that incomplete copies of a newspaper may be mailed at Standard Mail prices. Complete copies can be mailed at Periodicals prices. Therefore, complete copies may not be mailed at Standard prices. The key language:

“Publishers may choose to mail any or all copies of their Periodicals publications at Express Mail, Priority Mail, or First Class Mail prices. However, they may mail only the types of copies specifically allowed by postal standards at the U.S. Postal Service Marketing Mail or Package Services prices. They may not, for example, arbitrarily choose to mail subscriber copies at the USPS Marketing Mail or Package Services prices, even though postage computed at those prices may be lower than postage at Periodicals prices.”

Q: Can I use a section of the newspaper as a “shopper” mailed Standard Mail to non-subscribers of the newspaper to provide total market coverage of households for advertising and ad supplement purposes?

A: Yes. This practice was started by the late Bill Branen and Publisher Larry Tobin at the Tomahawk (WI) Leader. Branen, a legendary Burlington, WI, publisher, was a postal pioneer in developing forward-thinking practices, and training others through seminars. Often called “The Tomahawk Plan,” it uses the rule cited in an earlier question allowing incomplete portions of a Periodical to be mailed at Standard (now Marketing Mail) prices.

Newspapers stack a B section of the newspaper with ROP advertisers that want to pay higher advertising rates to reach every household in the market. Then, after the newspaper pressrun is complete, an additional pressrun of the section without the indicia in the upper right, is completed for non-subscriber households. Classifieds are sometimes included at an upcharge, like ROP. That section, sometimes renamed something like “Leader/Plus” or something entirely different atop the former section front, is then mailed using a labeling list of nonsubscriber addresses. © Max Heath 2017

(MAX HEATH, NNA postal chair, is a consultant for NNA members and Landmark Community Newspapers. He is sponsored by Interlink Software. Email maxheath@lcni.com.)
Annual Election Ballots readied for Friday mail

Ballots for the 2017 APA election will be mailed Friday (tomorrow), May 12, and designated voters at APA member newspapers will have until Friday, May 26, to return them in the envelope provided.

Designated voters are reminded to sign the outside of the envelope provided for the return of the ballot. A spot for that signature is clearly visible on the outside of the return envelope.

Eight candidates will appear on the ballot, including the three new nominees, Nick Coulter of The Times of West Memphis, Eliza Gaines of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, and Lori Freeze of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View.

Also on the ballot will be the continuing APA Board members:
• 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
• Ellen Kreth of the Madison County Record in Huntsville

• Sue Silliman of the Camden News, and
• Clark Smith of the Mena Star.

The APA executive board does not appear on the ballot as they do not stand for reelection. They include:
• President Nat Lea, WEHCO Media, Inc.
• Vice President Byron Tate, Sheridan Headlight
• Second Vice President Tom White of the Advance Monticellonian in Monticello, and
• Immediate Past President Rusty Fraser of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View.
The list of the 2017 County Farm Families of the Year was released last week. The honorees were selected some time ago, but the release of the list was embargoed so that everyone gets the list at the same time.

The reason for this is so that nobody gets a head start on promoting local salutes to the county farm family. It may not have ended the practice entirely, but it was a worth effort.

Embargoes are like padlocks. They’re not really designed to keep the dishonest on the right path; they’re made to keep honest people honest.

Those who are honest will honor them. Those who are not, well, not so much.

That padlock thing has stuck with me for many years. In fact, it dates to my freshman year in high school.

One of the best (actually, he was the best but I don’t want to offend any of the others) teachers I ever had was Fred Berry. A graduate of Yellville-Summit High School, he taught civics in my freshman year of high school. He made the observation about padlocks and it apparently branded itself into my impressionable brain as I’ve resurrected that analogy several times in my adult life.

I suspect most of us could relate similar stories of things from our primary education, which have stuck with us. Likely, Fred Berry has no idea that his off-hand remark about padlocks would so register with any of his students, let alone an average, whatever-it-takes-to-get-by student like myself.

Likely most of us can also point to teachers in our formative years that made similar impressions on us back in the day. Perhaps there was more than one, but one usually sticks out in the memory.

But I digress.

Salutes to the County Farm Family of the Year are great revenue opportunities for many APA member newspapers. For some it is the largest or certainly the largest revenue generators of the year. Not every county in the state names a Farm Family of the Year, but the vast majority does.

The Arkansas Press Association was one of the three founding partners of the Farm Family of the Year program back in 1947 along with the Arkansas Power & Light Company (AP&L) and the agriculture extension service. Other sponsors signed on early, including the Farmers Home Administration. The Memphis Commercial-Appeal was also a sponsor in the early days of the program.

Originally called the “Arkansas Balanced Farming Program,” the program was once divided into several divisions, including “tenant and sharecropper” and “plantation.” In addition, the tenant and sharecropper division had a “Home Improvement Division.”

Yes, the program has evolved considerably from its beginnings, but continues to honor hard-working farm families on the county level around the state, as well as at the district level. One of the eight district honorees will be named the Arkansas Farm Family of the Year. That announcement will come at the annual luncheon in December.

The Arkansas Farm Bureau took over as the lead sponsor of the program in 2005 and continues to grow the program with the cooperation of several sponsors and partners in the program.

It remains an outstanding program.

Our old friend and former APA Board member Jeff Jeffus is retiring as president of newspaper division of WEHCO Media, Inc., the parent company of several newspapers in Arkansas including the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. Actually he had mentioned some time ago that he would likely retire by the end of this year, but it was made officials in last Thursday’s business section of the Democrat-Gazette.

Jeff has had a long career in the newspaper industry, working at newspapers in his native Texas, Indiana and Arkansas in a career that has spanned 49 years. He says he’ll be returning to Northwest Arkansas after retirement and has purchased an Airstream trailer. Obviously, he plans to do some traveling.

Congratulations to Jeff as he enters retirement, and best wishes to Mark Lane who has been hired to replace Jeff.

Big shoes to fill, indeed.

One of the Jeff’s stops along his newspaper career journey was at the Stuttgart Daily Leader. That newspaper announced last week that effective the week of June 2, it would change from a five-day daily to a twice weekly, publishing on Tuesday and Friday.

When that change is made, there will remain 20 daily newspapers in the membership of the Arkansas Press Association.

The announcement came in a front-page story that explained that the newspaper would be adjusting and extending the subscriptions of their subscribers with the switch from five days a week to two.

The story also indicated the “Daily” will not be dropped from the newspaper’s name.

I think there were 30 daily newspapers in APA when I arrived here in 2004. None have folded, but a couple the dailies have changed to less-than-daily frequency and others have been merged with other daily newspapers.

These sorts of changes generally produce some pushback from local readers accustomed to having the newspaper five days a week. I was publisher of a small daily newspaper once that dropped from five publication days a week to four. You would have thought we had taken away their first-born.

That’s really okay, though. It means that the readers care about their newspapers and perhaps that they’ve taken “ownership” in it over the years. If we didn’t hear from anyone I’d be really concerned because that would mean they just don’t care.

Then too, nobody likes change, especially not in one of their local institutions like the newspaper. Here any little change, like dropping Alley Oop from the comics page or omitting the Astrology column or worse yet, the crossword. Oh yeah, you’ll for sure hear it about these changes.

But again, I’m okay with that because it just means that readers are invested in the newspaper. They like what they like and they don’t like what they don’t like, and they don’t mind letting you know in no uncertain terms just how they feel.

Changing publication frequency is one of the biggies for a newspaper, whether it’s expanding publication days or reducing them. This is likely why we change so seldom. It’s just easier to keep on keeping on.

That is until the practical realities of the business side of the newspaper have to be considered.

Have a great week!
Jeffus retiring; Lane steps in; Gallaty promoted

Arkansas newspaper veteran Jeff Jeffus, 69, has announced his retirement at president of WEHCO Media’s newspaper division his last post of several in a newspaper career spanning 49 years.

Mark Lane, 55, corporate VP for Morris Communications in Augusta, Ga., will be replacing Jeffus.

Also, WEHCO, publishers of several newspapers in Arkansas, has announced the promotion of Conan Gallaty to president of WEHCO Digital Services. He was previously executive vice president of the digital division.

Jeffus began his newspaper career journey in his hometown of Paris, Tex. Along the way he made publisher stops at newspapers in Stuttgart, Greensburg, Ind. Greenville, Tex., and Port Arthur, Tex. He was named senior vice president of American Publishing Co. in 1998. He was also previously the publisher and regional manager of the northwest Arkansas Times, and in 2008 was named president of northwest Arkansas Newspapers.

Jeffus also served six years on the APA Board of Directors.

Batesville Daily Guard honored by White River Reading Council

The Batesville Daily Guard has been named “Business of the Year” for the newspaper’s support of literacy through its Newspaper In Education program. The newspaper was given this award by the White River Reading Council, an affiliate of the Arkansas Reading Association.

The Arkansas Reading Association, an affiliate of the International Literacy Association, is a professional organization of individuals, institutions and councils dedicated to promoting reading and to developing literacy.

The Guard will be recognized at a celebration dinner planned for May 18 in Batesville.

Arkansas Newspaper Foundation 2017 summer internships announced

The 2017 Arkansas Newspaper Foundation paid summer internships have been selected, according to Karen Brown, ANF director.

The Foundation has for years placed college students in community newspapers across the state. Not only do these students receive valuable first-hand experience that will assist them in their career choice and help them navigate the interview process, some of them are hired after graduation by Arkansas newspapers.

This year the Foundation received student applications from across the state including from Arkansas Tech University, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Harding University, University of Central Arkansas, College of the Ozarks, and Arkansas State University.

Conference to focus on Arkansas Delta

A one-day conference about the future of the Arkansas Delta is planned for Friday, May 19, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Pine Bluff Convention Center.

Sponsored for the second year by Simmons Bank, the theme of the conference is “The Arkansas Delta: Why It Still Matters.” The agenda will feature several speakers for the event, which is designed to help community leaders network with each other and discuss how to deal with a declining population base as well as other challenges facing the Delta.

There is no cost to attend the event and lunch will be provided. Registration can be completed online at www.simmonsbank.com/delta.

Rex Nelson of Little Rock, Raymond Abramson of Holly Grove and Ritter Arnold of Marked Tree will chair the event.

Save the Date! Arkansas Press Association Super Convention

July 5 - 8 | Little Rock | DoubleTree Hotel
Curtman leaves El Dorado for Jonesboro, home

It’s going to be a homecoming of sorts for Randal Curtman who resigned recently as managing editor of the El Dorado News-Times to accept the same position at The Sun in Jonesboro, which just happens to be his hometown.

A veteran newspaperman, Curtman had been on the job in El Dorado for one year before deciding to make the leap to Jonesboro. His resignation is effective tomorrow, May 12.

General Manager Ronnie Bell says that news editor Terrance Armstard will step in to fill some of the managing editor duties while a search is conducted.

The search for a new ME for the News-Times is already underway. The opening and the job particulars can be found on the APA’s Jobs Bulletin.

Guest Column:

Don't Underestimate Curiosity, Judgment, Writing Skills

By Jim Stasiowski

Boredom alert: Much of this column is about two activities that some people (mostly intellectual snobs) have little or no interest in: golf and television.

If you’re a journalist, however, I already have enticed you into reading more because you’re curious about how I am going to pull off an unlikely connection between writing for newspapers and watching golf broadcasts.

What you learn early about golf, as a player or a spectator, is that there is a story in every shot, every hole, every round, every competition.

Think for a moment what a story is: Someone (or some group) is trying to accomplish something, and to do so, be, she or they must overcome difficulties, which is the very definition of golf.

I know people who never play golf, but when it is on TV, they’ll watch because of the constant compelling drama. Even if you don’t know Jordan Spieth from the River Jordan, you can witness a vast range of emotions in a golf broadcast, not unlike in some sappy love story on another channel, as players reach for excellence and succeed spectacularly, fail disarmingly or fall somewhere in between.

I love golf, love playing, watching, talking about it or even thinking about it. And on a recent Sunday afternoon, as my wife, Sharon, and I were watching a hotly contested professional tournament on television, the broadcast abruptly switched from the live action to an electronic chart listing where a dozen (or so) competitors ranked in some apparently meaningful statistic.

Picture this: An attractive woman steps up to an electronic screen and touches it to show me, a golf fan, some names and numbers.

Why, why, why would the broadcast’s director, who should know that every shot is a story, yank me away from the reason I tune in and instead show me lifeless statistics?

Because he can. Because the broadcast team used fancy communications and computation gizmos to compile the stats, and because the network has invested in these gimmicky touch-screens, if the director doesn’t use them at least once in the tournament, some executive upstairs will scream, “So why did we invest in that fancy touch-screen and in all the computers and smart-stuff required to create the statistics if we’re never going to use them?”

The lesson to all of us should be that although statistics can be illuminating and graphics can aid understanding, they should never take the place of telling a story (or, in the case of a TV broadcast of a golf tournament, aiming a camera at players and letting them tell their own stories).

“But Jim,” you’re saying, “we’re newspapers, and that’s TV. We’d never fall for the superficiality and flash that networks rely on.”

But we would. We have. I have proof: USA Today.

In the late 1970s, early ’80s, newspapers freaked out because TV news was stealing our faithful readers, so Gannett invented USA Today, which so blatantly imitated a local news broadcast, readers every few minutes would involuntarily read an ad so as to duplicate the commercial interruptions of the “News At 11” experience.

(Incapable of subtlety, Gannett even made USA Today’s street-sales boxes look like TV sets.)

Before long, throngs of newspapers were blatantly imitating USA Today, with cartoonish (and only occasionally relevant) graphics, stories short enough to finish in the time a reader takes to swallow five or fewer spoonfuls of Cheerios, punny headlines and strain-and-for-clever six-word teasing lead sentences that call to mind the silly bantering between the shallow anchorman and the weather-forecasting starlet.

Our TV role-playing didn’t work; it simply made readers who value depth – in other words, our core readers – lose faith in us.

The problem newspapers face today is that as staffs shrink and the availability of click-for-everything data expands, we risk relying too much on easy research and too little on writers who know how to use their judgment, curiosity and storytelling skills to explain the world.

I’m not anti-statistics; I am, however, anti-ostentation, anti-showing-off. When I do seminars, I don’t use PowerPoint or other electronic gizmos that would illustrate my points. I eschew such frills because when I’ve sat through PowerPoint-aided seminars, I have noticed that people in the audience stare at the screen rather than watch the seminar presenters in action.

I want people to read me, not replace or distract from, our stories. The unstoppable growth of glitzy computing and presentation tools tempts us to dilute our storytelling, but we have to resist TV’s mindless addiction to them.

THE FINAL WORD: Avoid the dumbing-down word “timeline.”

Its use implies we cannot trust our readers to understand the vivid, specific words “chronology” (a start-to-finish list of events that have happened) and “schedule” (events that are about to happen).

Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.)
The 2017 APA SuperConvention is returning to Little Rock July 5-8 and will headquarter at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in downtown Little Rock. The deadline for making room reservations is June 12.

Reservations may now be made for sleeping rooms at the DoubleTree. Just to go http://tinyurl.com/lrkcp3j to reserve your room or rooms for the annual gathering.

Registration packets for the convention will be released next week. Once again the convention will feature a variety of sessions and will feature return visits by Russell Viers, Ed Henninger and Leonard Woolsey. Also featured will be a round table discussion and panel discussions to include “Cover Executions,” “News Gathering in the Digital Age,” and “Reflections on a Career in Journalism.”

Continued on page 3
The 2017 APA convention, scheduled for July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock, may seem like a long way off at this point, but for your APA staff planning and organizing the event, it’s like tomorrow.

The convention planning committee met in January to create a rough draft of the convention, and even then some of the features of the convention had already been arranged. It’s just the nature of things that to get the people you want when you want them, the arrangements have to be made months in advance.

I am confident that the result of those early arrangements and the work done by the convention planning committee chaired by Byron Tate, publisher of The Sheridan Headlight and president-elect of the APA Board of Directors, will result in another outstanding convention for APA members and associates.

The convention will sport a patriotic theme this year. That was chosen after the selection of the keynote speaker for the convention, our old friend Morley Piper, a resident of the Boston area and the retired executive director of the New England Press Association.

Not making that connection to the patriotic theme yet? You will when you learn that Morley was a 19-year-old army lieutenant when he went ashore at Normandy during the D-Day invasion on June 4, 1944.

For many years Morley didn’t speak of the experience. Many who knew him, including myself, didn’t know of his involvement or the inspiring story that came with surviving this massive invasion that turned the tide of World War II. It is a story you will want to hear and an experience you won’t forget.

When Morley first spoke of the experience to a group of my counterparts gathered for our annual convention held that year in New Orleans, many of us were stunned. There were few dry eyes in the house as we heard Morley’s story unfold. To hear of the involvement of this wonderful man who is held in high esteem but virtually everyone who knows him, including myself, my counterparts across North America, well, it was a very emotional experience for all of us.

After that presentation, Morley has been invited to several press association gatherings to share it with newspaper members. I’ve been to a couple of those and had a desire early on to bring Morley to the APA convention. The timing for it all finally fell into place this summer and I am so looking forward to his visit and for the opportunity for you to hear Morley relate the experience.

So perhaps now it becomes clear why the patriotic theme was chosen. It will certainly be appropriate considering everything.

If you’ve never been to an APA convention, and there are those working at Arkansas newspapers that have not, I would encourage you to make plans to be in Little Rock for this one. It will be a memorable one for several reasons, certainly not the least of which will be Morley’s presentation.

I would offer this one admonition: if you desire to attend this convention to hear Morley, you might want to make your arrangements well in advance. This luncheon for sure will sell out. The seats will be filled on a first-come basis, so if you’re modus operandi is to wait till the last minute, you might miss out on this one.

There will of course be many other features of the convention this year. We’re still fine-tuning the schedule to ensure optimum continuity for the gathering, and we’ll be sharing the schedule in the Arkansas Publisher Weekly as well as on the APA web site and on the Facebook page so keep checking.

Also, the online convention registration feature will be available next week. Check the APA website for this. You can also book your sleeping rooms at the DoubleTree Hotel online. Check the link here provided by the hotel: http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/L/LITMBDT-APA-20170705/index.jhtml. The room rate will be $116 per night. Parking is available in the parking deck adjoining the hotel at $12 per day. The deadline to reserve hotel rooms at the DoubleTree for the SuperConvention is June 12.

Russell Viers will be making a return visit to the APA convention. Russell was just here for a sold out seminar at the APA building in Little Rock back in January.

Also coming to the convention is Ed Henninger, the newspaper design expert, who will be doing a session on “Saving Public Notices.” I saw this session at a Public Notice Resource Center in Nashville, Tenn. last fall and can attest that it is very good.

In addition, Ed has offered to do one-on-one sessions on a scheduled basis after his morning presentation Friday, July 7. If you would like a different perspective on your newspaper’s design, contact Ed to set up a one-on-one and let him review your newspaper. Ed’s been doing this for a long time and he keeps up with the ever-changing elements of newspaper design.

I recommend one of these sessions with Ed to anyone looking to enhance their newspaper’s design. If you’d like a session with Ed, contact him directly prior to the convention to set up a time. Email Ed at edh@henningerconsulting.com.

Leonard Woolsey will be making a return visit to the convention to talk about niche publications. He’ll be talking about why newspapers should be doing them, along with some dos and don’ts of niche publications for newspapers. Several APA newspapers have these. Most are slick magazines that nicely compliment the newspaper as well as generating an additional revenue stream.

This is just a sampling of what will be on the schedule for the upcoming APA convention. We will have much more highlights that we will feature in the weeks leading up to the annual gathering.

Golfers don’t miss the opportunity to play one of Central Arkansas’ premier golf venues when the annual APA golf outing to benefit the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation tees off Wednesday, July 5, at the Country Club of Arkansas in Maumelle.

We’ll have lunch and then play in the afternoon, and we’ll be finished in ample time to attend the early bird party at the Clinton Presidential Center.

Sponsors of the annual event are again AT&T Arkansas and UAMS.

Have a great week!

Tom
Dick Browning retires from Arkansas Democrat-Gazette advertising department

Dick Browning called it an end to his advertising career at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette Wednesday (yesterday), and was honored with a going away reception at the newspaper in downtown Little Rock where he was presented a .22 rifle as a going-away gift.

Dick had been with the Democrat-Gazette for 38.5 years. He says he plans to ride his motorcycle some in his retirement, and he and his wife have a sailboat on Lake Maumelle. He also hunts and fishes.

He says they will be moving to his family home in Judsonia, where he grew up.

Tysons announce sale of Atkins, Dover newspapers

Van A. and Ginnie Tyson announced in their two newspapers this week, The Atkins Chronicle and The Dover Times, that they have sold the newspapers to Billy and Paula Reeder. Billy is an assistant professor of journalism at Arkansas Tech University in Russellville. Van has been publisher for the past 25 years.

The sale will reportedly be official June 1. Johnny Sain has joined the new owners and will serve as managing editor, according to a Facebook post by the new owners.

Room reservations

Continued from page 1

The keynote address will come at the Friday lunch, which will feature Morley Piper, retired executive director of the New England Press Association. As a young Army lieutenant, Morley was among those storming the beach at Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944. His presentation relates the experience on D-Day and the harrowing days that followed.

The annual “Honors Banquet” will again be on Friday evening when the APA will present the annual “special achievement awards,” and the convention will conclude Saturday with the annual Better Newspaper Contest Awards luncheon, which will this year be emceed by Rusty Turner, editor of the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette and a member of the APA Board of Directors.

Lafayette County contends Arkansas FOIA unconstitutional

The Lafayette County Press in a story written by Lucy Goodwin reported this week that Lafayette County considers the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act unconstitutional. They site that contention in refusing to release some public records.

Lucy, along with husband Tommy Goodwin, co-publishes the Press.

A lawsuit was filed May 9 on behalf of a former county employee against Lafayette County that seeks to force the county to release the requested employment documents concerning the termination of the county employee. In a response to the lawsuit, the county claimed the documents were “privileged.” At the same time the county gave the Arkansas Attorney General notice challenging the constitutionality of the FOIA, according to the Press.

Judge David Laser refused to grant a stay of his order until the question of FOIA constitutionality could be determined by the state Supreme Court. The judge did grant the plaintiff in the case $2500 in legal fees to be paid to the plaintiff by the county.

Service directory can create revenue opportunities

Would you like to learn how to build a new revenue stream for your newspaper by creating a strong service directory? Well, here’s your chance through a webinar offered by Online Media Service on June 7. “Building a Strong Service Directory to Increase Revenue” is scheduled from 1 to 2 p.m. CDT on Wednesday, June 7. Registration fee is $35, although APA members may register for a discount since APA partners with the Online Media Campus to provide these opportunities. The session will be recorded so that those who don’t have time in their schedule for the live event can access the recording and see it at their convenience. The session speaker is Janet DeGeorge, president of Classified Executive Training & Consulting. She has years of experience in managing classified advertising departments for newspapers such as the Mercury News in California and the Scottsdale and Mesa Tribune in Arizona.

DeGeorge is a former vice president of the Western Classified Advertising Association, a key speaker at regional and national advertising conferences and has produced numerous articles and webinars regarding classified advertising. She specializes in classified sales training for sales reps and new managers, outbound sales training and the redesigns of print and online products and rate packages to uncover new revenue sources. For more information and to register, click http://www.onlinemedia campus.com/2017/04/service-directory. The deadline to register is June 5.
Foundation Seeks Items For Auction

The silent auction at the APA’s annual convention July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock, an event that benefits the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), is in need of items to be auctioned.

The Foundation, the charitable arm of the APA, funds internships and scholarships as well as sponsoring the occasional speaker at APA events.

Items for the auction can be anything from lodging packages to dinner gift certificates to arts and crafts, and from event tickets to goodie baskets and autographed items. A wide variety of items are featured in the event each year. APA members and associates are encouraged to contribute items to be auctioned off to help in this annual fund-raising effort.

Email ANF Director Karen Brown if you or your newspaper would like to donate an auction item. Items will be listed in social media, convention materials and news releases leading up to the event. Brown can be reached at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

Guest Column:
Into the Issues: Building Trust in a World of Fake News
By Al Cross

Last month’s column was a warning that the attack on journalism by certain actors on the public stage is having an effect on community newspapers, and that social media are driving readers to spend more time with national news than with local news. How can community papers can adapt to this radically changed news landscape?

To survive, newspapers must stop thinking of themselves as being in the newspaper business, or even in the news business; you’re in the information business, competing with all other sources of information for people’s time and attention – even if you are the only newspaper in your market.

Increasingly, rural communities have become bedroom communities, and the longer a commute someone has to work, the less likely they are to read their local newspaper, according to research by Eastern Kentucky University and the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues at the University of Kentucky. The ubiquity of information through smartphones means you have to be where your readers are, and that means mobile.

The new landscape requires us to operate on multiple platforms. Your newspaper’s web site should be attracting most of its traffic from social media. If it’s not, you’re probably not getting enough traffic.

And we need to be on social-media platforms not just to drive traffic, but to help people understand the difference in social media and the news media.

We also need to stop saying “the media” when we mean “the news media,” in order to distinguish ourselves from actors in the media who are more about opinions and an agenda than about facts and public service.

And we need to stop using “the media” as a singular noun. It’s more plural than ever, and it’s important for readers to understand that. The media are. And they are many different things.

If we don’t distinguish ourselves from our competitors in the information market, we are lost. The fundamental difference in social media and news media are a discipline of verification, as defined in The Elements of Journalism, by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel.

Those elements have shifted a bit, but not substantially, in the new landscape of journalism. They are a guide not only for journalists as we do our work, but for citizens to understand how we work and why we do what we do.

Here are the elements, which would make a good standing box or filler on your editorial page, with a brief explanation of each:

Journalism’s first obligation is to the truth — not to some absolute or philosophical truth, but practical truth “by which we can operate on a day-to-day basis.” And that includes being transparent about sources and methods, so readers can make fully informed judgments.

Its first loyalty is to citizens – not to the bottom line of whoever is publishing the journalism. In the current environment, this test may be the most difficult for some publishers.

Its essence is a discipline of verification — not objectivity, which is rarely achievable because we are human beings, but objectivity of method: testing the truth of information so our biases don’t get in the way.

Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover — not pure neutrality, but an arm’s-length relationship that keeps our essential independence from being compromised.

It must serve as an independent monitor of power — not just keeping an eye on government, but on all facets of society, including business and nonprofit organizations.

It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise — not just offering an outlet for discussion, but improving the quality of the debate with verified information.

It must strive to keep significant things interesting and relevant — in other words, making readers want to read the news that they need to read. This is more important than ever in the new age.

It must keep the news comprehensive and proportional — an even more challenging task when competing for time and attention, but all the more important to build and maintain confidence and trust.

Its practitioners must be allowed to exercise their personal conscience — speak out against poor journalism, and allow others to do so.

Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities — to be responsible on social media. That may be too much to hope for, but if we ask them to be, that’s a reminder that information needs to be more about facts than opinion.

While we need to do a better job explaining ourselves, ultimately we will not be judged on the arguments we make, but by the work that we do: reporting news that’s important and relevant, and more.

Even if you successfully compete in the information business, that’s not really enough to be a complete community newspaper.

You also have to be in the deliberation business. Deliberation is how democratic societies make decisions, and one of the best forums for deliberation is the newspaper – an editorial page with lots of letters.

And, ultimately, you also need to be in the leadership business, because there are times when a newspaper must take a stand and lead its community in what it thinks is the right direction it needs to go.

Nothing else in a community can do these three things as well as a newspaper, and now is the time to do it better than ever. Make yourself essential.

In your quest for people’s time and attention, you are also competing with other media for readers’ confidence and trust, which drive time and attention. Be worthy of that trust.

(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. This column was adapted from a speech at the Texas Panhandle Press Association in Amarillo on April 21.)
Register, reserve rooms now for upcoming APA SuperConvention

Online registration for the 2017 annual APA convention is now active as is the link to make room reservations at the convention headquarters hotel, the DoubleTree by Hilton in downtown Little Rock. The convention will be July 5-8.

You can find both links at the APA web site, www.arkansaspress.org.

The convention programming is packed with sessions that will provide topics of interest to just about everyone in the newspaper business in Arkansas. It will include some hot revenue-generating ideas as well as ways to make our newspaper packages more efficient and appealing.

Also important on the convention program is a session on “Saving Public Notices” to be presented by Ed Henninger. This session deals with our positioning of public notices

Continued on page 3

Tomorrow deadline for return of APA ballots

Friday (tomorrow) is the deadline for return of ballots in the annual APA election, a designated voters at APA member newspapers are reminded once again to sign the outside of the return envelope.

Even though the election is not yet complete or official, one candidate has been removed from the ballot. Nick Coulter has reportedly left The Times of West Memphis and will no longer be a candidate for the APA board. With the addition of the other new nominees to the board, namely Eliza Gaines of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette and Lori Freeze of the Stone County Record in Mountain View, the board will have a full complement of members.

Others appearing on the ballot include existing board members:

• 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
• Ellen Kreth of the Madison County Record in Huntsville
• Sue Silliman of the Camden News, and
• Clark Smith of the Mena Star.

The APA executive board does not appear on the ballot, as they do not stand for re-election. They include:

• President Nat Lea, WEHCO Media, Inc.
• Vice President Byron Tate, Sheridan Headlight
• Second Vice President Tom White of the Advance Monticellonian in Monticello, and
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Editor’s Note: Reprinted here is a column written in the 70s and broken out again this year for Memorial Day. This column, a letter really, has been reprinted every year since it was written. It has been updated to correct the number of years since it was written.

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, 45 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 Bobby Cobb, and Ned Tucker, Roger Poe, Keith 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 APA office will be closed Monday in observance of Memorial Day.

Have a great holiday and a great week.

Tom
Golfers sign up for annual APA fundraiser

Golfers of all skill levels are encouraged to sign up for the APA’s annual golf outing to be held Wednesday, July 5, at the Country Club of Arkansas in Maumelle.

Jay Edwards, APA board member and publisher of The Daily Record in Little Rock, is chairman for the 2017 event, which is again sponsored by UAMS and AT&T Arkansas.

The golf scramble is an annual fund-raiser for the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation. All proceeds go to the Foundation to be used for paid internships and scholarships and other charitable contributions to benefit the newspaper industry in Arkansas.

The entry fee is $100 per individual, which includes the green fee, golf cart, lunch and refreshments on the course. Golfers can sign up as a team or as an individual. Those signing up as individuals will be assigned a group. Handicaps or average round scores need to be added to the registration form to help balance the teams.

Trophies will be awarded to the members of the first place team. Awards will also be presented to the longest drive and the closest to the pin on designated holes. The award presentations will be at the Friday luncheon, July 7, at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock, site of the APA’s annual convention.

Don’t forget about items for ANF auction

APA members and associates are encouraged to donate items to be auctioned at the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation’s annual silent auction at the APA’s annual convention July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock. The auction raises funds for the Foundation, which provides internships and scholarships among other projects.

Items for the auction can be anything from lodging packages to dinner gift certificates to arts and crafts, and from event tickets to goodie baskets and autographed items. A wide variety of items are featured in the event each year. APA members and associates are encouraged to contribute items to be auctioned off to help in this annual fund-raising effort.

Email ANF Director Karen Brown if you or your newspaper would like to donate an auction item. Items will be listed in social media, convention materials and news releases leading up to the event. Brown can be reached at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

SuperConvention

Continued from page 1

in our newspapers and how best to showcase them to achieve maximum exposure.

“I know our members will find this session highly informative,” says Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “This session offers a different perspective on how to package public notices in our newspapers that will raise the awareness of public notices and the issues that they cover.”

Russell Viers will make a return visit to the SuperConvention, and John Tull of Quattlebaum Grooms and Tull law firm in Little Rock, has agreed to do a session on legal issues and the state of the Freedom of Information Act.

Ellen Kreth will moderate a round table discussion that will include several topics of interest to APA member newspapers, and a pair of panel discussions focusing on careers in journalism and on news gathering in the digital age will also be included in the convention programming.

Leonard Woolsey will make a return visit to the APA convention to discuss niche publications, a segment of the community newspaper business that has grown significantly in recent years. Leonard will talk about that and why it’s such an important part of the newspaper potential revenue stream.

Of course there are the other standing features of the convention, such as the past presidents’ breakfast Friday morning, and the passing of the gavel at the Friday luncheon to install the new APA president, which this year is Byron Tate, publisher of the Sheridan Headlight.

The keynote speaker will be Morley Piper, the retired executive director of the New England Press Association who, as a 19-year-old army officer stormed ashore at Normandy during the D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944.

The experiences of that day and the days that followed will be featured in Morley’s presentation.

There will be all this and much more on the convention agenda. For a complete schedule of events, go to the APA website, get registered and join your APA member colleagues in this 2017 convention event.

Design evaluation offered free at 2017 APA SuperConvention

If you are looking for yet another reason to attend this year’s APA SuperConvention, look no farther.

An added bonus for those attending the APA SuperConvention July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock will be the opportunity to have a one-on-one session with Ed Henninger who will do a free evaluation of your newspaper’s design.

Henninger, a nationally recognized authority on newspaper design that maximizes the newspaper’s overall package, will make a presentation on “Saving Public Notices” Friday, July 7, at 9 a.m., and for the remainder of the day he has offered to schedule sessions with newspaper publishers and editors to do these evaluations.

This is a great opportunity to get expert help quickly and at no cost to the newspaper. Ed will find ways to improve the look and efficiency of your newspaper. It will be a 15-minute session that could benefit your newspaper for years to come.

If you would like to take advantage of this offer plan to bring three or four copies of your newspaper for Ed to go through with you.

The way to sign up is to email Ed directly at edh@henningerconsulting.com with the subject “APA design evaluation.” He asks that you include a phone number so he can get back to you if necessary.

“This is a great chance to get an expert’s perspective on your newspaper’s design and at a price anyone can afford…it’s free,” says Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “I highly recommend this to any APA member newspaper.”
Guest Column: 
**Tax Reform: What It Means to the Newspaper Industry**

By David Chavern, President & CEO, NAA

When I sat down to write this month’s CEO column, I knew I wanted to talk about something that excited passions and the intense interest of our members. Tax reform immediately sprang to mind.

Last month, the White House released a tax plan, but it left more questions than answers. Now, Congress holds the fate of real, reputable, and trusted news in their hands. On May 18th, to get the ball rolling it officially embarked on the long-awaited attempt at comprehensive tax reform with a hearing, “How Tax Reform Will Grow the Economy and Create Jobs.”

It is vital to remember that members of the news media industry utilize their deductions to reinvest in the quality journalism that every American relies on. The News Media Alliance agrees that creating a “pro-growth” simplified system would benefit individuals and corporations alike. As members of Congress proceed, we ask them to continue providing certain tax incentives to the news media industry that allow companies to reinvest in the tremendous resources necessary to produce the verifiable, high-quality journalism that citizens trust – be it covering the local School Board or the White House.

Past tax reform proposals have called to limit or eliminate the advertising deduction to offset a lowered corporate tax rate. The News Media Alliance unwaveringly supports maintaining the current treatment of advertising costs as an immediately deductible ordinary and necessary business expense. Advertising creates 20 million jobs and adds $5.8 trillion to the U.S. economy, benefiting all levels of economic growth from national manufacturers to local businesses to newspapers. If Congress were to alter this deduction it would distort business decisions and undermine the pro-growth goals of any new bill.

There is a public interest in newspaper companies reinvesting in high-quality, vetted news. Americans may be receiving their news from more sources than ever before, but studies show that news received by premium publishers has a higher level of trust among consumers. That trust comes from knowing that professional journalists and publishers are driven by an ethical standard to report the truth. Gaining the trust of their readership increases subscriptions and has a positive impact on overall revenue. The aforementioned tax deductions allow for newspapers to continually reinvest in the quality news that communities rely on.

The Alliance will continue to advocate for the current treatment of ad tax, Sec. 199, which allows us to write off costs associated with printing the paper, and Sec. 173, the circulation deduction for expenses that help increase subscriber growth. We pride ourselves on supporting real news—our members—so you can trust we will continue to support and champion the industry on Capitol Hill.

(David Chavern serves as President & CEO of the News Media Alliance. Chavern has built a career spanning 30 years in executive strategic and operational roles, and most recently completed a decade-long tenure at the United States Chamber of Commerce.)
APA election concluded; Two new board members added

The 2017 APA election is now in the books as the deadline passed last week for ballots to be returned to the APA office by designated voters at APA member newspapers.

A total of 47 ballots were cast in the annual election, which will add two new names to the APA/APS Board of Directors roster.

Lori Freeze of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View, and Eliza Gaines of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette are the new additions to the board. They will join:

• 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
• Ellen Kreth of the Madison County Record in Huntsville
• Sue Silliman of the Camden News, and
• Clark Smith of the Mena Star

Each of these appeared on the 2017 ballot. Under the APA bylaws, board members stand for election each year with the exception of the president, vice president, second vice president and the immediate past president. Those slots are held by:

• President Nat Lea, WEHCO Media, Inc.
• Vice President Byron Tate, Sheridan Headlight
• Second Vice President Tom White of the Advance Monticellonian in Monticello, and
• Immediate Past President Rusty Fraser of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View

One candidate appearing on the 2017 ballot, Nick Coulter of The Times of West Memphis, left the newspaper industry making him ineligible to hold a board spot.

The new board members will assume their seats on the board at the conclusion of the 2017 APA convention July 5-8.
Arkansas Publisher Weekly

June 1, 2017

We are now just over a month away from the 2017 APA annual SuperConvention. The annual gathering of Arkansas’ newspaper people will convene July 5-8 and will headquarter at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

I’ve lost count of how many APA conventions this will make in this hotel, dating back to its beginnings when it went by another name, the Camelot Inn. The exterior of the building appears pretty much the same, but the interior is not even close. The hotel has undergone a few transformations, including one since we last met there a few years ago.

The most recent renovation took place simultaneously to the massive updating and expansion of Robinson Auditorium, a landmark of a building attached to the hotel. If you haven’t seen the updated version of Robinson Auditorium you owe it to yourself to see what a great Arkansas treasure this building is once again.

We’ll get a first hand look Thursday evening of the convention when we have a dinner there in the expanded part of the auditorium, the glassed-in addition on the back of the auditorium. This room and the huge balcony just off of it affords visitors a scenic view as it overlooks the Arkansas River and the new Broadway Bridge, itself a work of art.

This meeting venue is just steps away from the DoubleTree’s convention facilities where virtually all of the convention sessions will take place.

The Clinton Presidential Center will be the setting for one off-site activity for the convention. The “early bird” party will take place here Wednesday evening, July 5. This event was held there last in 2006 and we figured it was time to pay a return visit.

There will be dinner there, and the museum will be open for touring, all included in the price of the event ticket. It is unknown if the President will be in residence on that date, but if he is we’ll sure invite him to stop by.

Anything can and likely will happen when Arkansas’ newspaper people come together for such a purpose. Many great memories are attached to past APA conventions, including those held at what is now known as the DoubleTree Hotel.

Make it a point to join your colleagues for this annual gathering, and make a few memories of your own. We’ll look forward to seeing you there.

One feature of the Memorial Day weekend we just observed are the many re-runs of old war movies and documentaries on past wars. I’m a sucker for war movies.

One of those documentaries that caught my eye over the weekend was one dealing with the D-Day invasion June 6, 1944 at Normandy on the French coast. It was meaningful for me at least because as I watched the documentary, which included actual footage of the invasion, I thought of my friend Morley Piper who was among those coming ashore on that fateful day.

Morley will be our keynote speaker for the upcoming APA convention. That will take place at the Friday luncheon, July 7, at the DoubleTree Hotel. Morley will relate his experiences on that day and the days that followed as the allied forces turned the tide of World War II.

It would be hard for most of us imagine what it would have been like to be among those storming the beaches at Normandy. The Germans, dug in and defending the shore with heavy armament from concrete bunkers, were just as determined to see that the invasion failed.

The whole scene had to have been surreal. Morley will paint that scene for us in his address and perhaps give us a better idea of how it felt as a 19-year-old lieutenant leading men into that lethal chaos.

Actually, I know he will as I’ve heard his presentation a couple of times. I can attest that it is at once spellbinding and emotional. Perhaps it was more so for me as I’ve known Morley for years, even though for a lot of those years I did not know he had participated in the largest amphibious invasion in history. Few knew because he didn’t talk of it for decades after the war.

The 2017 APA convention will have a patriotic theme for obvious reasons. The Friday luncheon where Morley will speak, where we’ll install the new APA president, award the golf outing prizes, and present an FOIA Award, will sell out. If you wish to attend I highly recommend you register early and reserve yourself a spot at the luncheon.

You can now register for the convention online, as well as reserve a room at the DoubleTree Hotel. You can find those links on the APA web site at www.arkansaspress.org.

There are a lot of reasons to attend the APA convention. Good reasons. One of the best is the networking with other newspaper people, those friends and colleagues who share the same type of business and who face the same challenges.

There is a lot of value in “talking shop” with those attending the convention. In fact I’ll wager that most who attend the conventions will tell you this is the main reason they come. Everything else is just an added bonus.

Whatever reason you have or use to come, just come to the convention. If you’ve never been to one this one would be a good one to be your first. I can assure you that you will learn a thing or two, make a few new acquaintances, and overall have an excellent experience that is at once renewing and illuminating.

I attended my first APA convention over 60 years ago and I can honestly say I’ve never tired of attending them. Quite the contrary, in fact. I look forward to them each year. That was true before I was responsible for staging the conventions, and continues now that I am.

I hope to see you there July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

Have a great week.

Tom
Rex Nelson returning as Senior Editor of Democrat-Gazette

Rex Nelson is returning full-time again at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette as senior editor. He will also expand his weekly column the three times per week.

Also, the Democrat-Gazette announced the promotion of Associate Editor Karen Martin to senior editor/Perspective.

Nelson has previously held sports writing and editing positions at the newspaper, and once held the Washington, D.C. bureau chief position for the newspaper. He has for two years held a corporate communications position at Simmons First National Corporation.

Nelson has also agreed to moderate a panel discussion at the upcoming APA SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock. The panel, titled “Reflections on a Career in Journalism,” will feature Brenda Blagg, Max Brantley, John Brummett and Frank Fellone. That panel will be Saturday morning, July 8, at 9:30 a.m.

SuperConvention
Continued from page 1

Larimer, APA executive director. “We’ll be using the biggest luncheon facility available to us but I am confident it will sell out so don’t be left out.”

In addition to Morley’s presentation, the APA past presidents will “pass the gavel” to install the next APA President, Byron Tate. The golf awards will also be presented at this luncheon, and one of two 2017 FOI Awards will be presented at this event.

There are a lot of other great features of the 2017 convention. You can find a lot more information on the APA SuperConvention on the APA web site at www.arkansaspress.org, where you’ll also find links to register for the convention and to reserve a room at the DoubleTree Hotel. The deadline for making hotel reservations under the APA room block rate is June 12.

“‘I encourage everyone planning to attend the convention to reserve early to guarantee you a spot,” Larimer added. “Please don’t put off registering and risk missing out on any of the convention events.”

June 22 deadline for Pulliam Fellowship applications

Mid-career editorial writers are invited to apply for the Eugene C. Pulliam Fellowship that provides time away from daily responsibilities for study and research. The deadline for applications is June 22.

The fellowships, which take to allow Pulliam Editorial Fellows to take courses, pursue independent study, travel and pursue other endeavors that enrich their knowledge of a public interest issue.

The Pulliam Fellowship is a Sigma Delta Chi Foundation program first offered in 1977.

Auction items sought for annual ANF silent auction

Auction items are still being solicited by the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation to put on the auction block at the 2017 APA SuperConvention set for July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

The silent auction is a popular fixture at the annual gathering, but most importantly it helps raise funds for the Foundation, which in turn uses those funds to underwrite internships, scholarships, ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing Conference grants, and to pay speaker fees in advancing their educational mission.

The auction is always most successful when plenty of items are donated to sell in the silent auction. If you have items you’d like to donate, contact Karen Brown, director of the Foundation, at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

And make plans to attend the APA’s annual convention and help bid up those auction items. The auction is one of the fun elements of the convention, and certainly provides funding for some worthwhile projects.
Pine Bluff Commercial ends Saturday editions

The Pine Bluff Commercial has announced it is bringing to an end its Saturday edition of the newspaper. The announcement came in a front-page letter to readers published Friday in the newspaper.

The decision reportedly came after a long deliberation process.

The announcement said they plan to feature Friday night high school sporting events in their online edition as well as on their Facebook page.

Democrat-Gazette plans All-Arkansas preps event June 17

Former Dallas Cowboys star running back Emmitt Smith will be the featured guest at the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette’s “All Arkansas Preps” awards banquet set for Saturday, June 17, at the Wally Allen Ballroom at the Statehouse Convention Center in downtown Little Rock.

The event celebrates high school athletes from across the state and their accomplishments in 12 different sports.

More information on the event and to purchase tickets go to www.allarkansaspreps.com.

Edwards first to register for SuperConvention

Jay and Kathy Edwards along with Bobby Burton of The Daily Record in Little Rock became the first to register for the APA’s annual SuperConvention to be held July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock. They registered online.

Jay is on the APA Board of Director and is the chairman of this year’s annual golf outing to raise funds for the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation.

Early registration is encouraged to help in the planning of the convention events. More information on registration as well as hotel reservations can be found on the APA web site at www.arkansaspaperweekly.org.

Follow Us on Facebook
@ArkansasPressAssociation

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**CONVENTION SCHEDULE**

**Wednesday, July 5**

Noon  
APA Golf Tournament  
Country Club of Arkansas, Maumelle

6:00 p.m.  
Early Bird Outing  
Clinton Presidential Library Reception & Tour

**Thursday, July 6**

Noon  
Opening Round Table Luncheon

1:30 p.m.  
Session: Covering Arkansas Executions

3:00 p.m.  
ANF Silent Auction Opens

3:30 p.m.  
Session: Legal, Libel & FOI Q&A

6:30 p.m.  
Drink & Draw, Dinner, Music & Tours  
Robinson Center

8:30 p.m.  
Afterhours Hospitality

**Friday, July 7**

8:00 a.m.  
Past Presidents’ Breakfast  
Invitation Only

8:30 a.m.  
Trade Show Opens  
Press Camp (Kids 6-12)

9:00 a.m.  
Session: Saving Public Notices  
Presented by Ed Henninger, Director, Henninger Consulting, Rock Hill, SC

10:30 a.m.  
Session: Creative Niche Publications  
Presented by Leonard Woolsey, Publisher, Galveston County Daily News

Noon  
Lunch  
• Keynote Speaker, Morley Piper, D-Day Veteran, NAM Clerk  
• President’s Gavel Passing  
• Golf Awards Presentation  
• Presentation of Freedom of Information Award

2:00 p.m.  
Session: Russell Viers

6:00 p.m.  
Honoree’s Reception

7:00 p.m.  
APA Honors Banquet  
Distinguish Service, Freedom of Information and Golden 50 Awards

8:30 p.m.  
After-Hours Hospitality  
ANF Silent Auction Concludes

**Saturday, July 8**

8:30 a.m.  
Continental Breakfast  
APA Member Business Meeting

9:00 a.m.  
Panel Discussion: Reflections on a Career in Journalism

10:30 a.m.  
Panel Discussion: Newsgathering & Reporting in the Digital Age

12:00 p.m.  
APA Better Newspaper Editorial Awards Presentation
Edwards first to register for APA SuperConvention

Jay Edwards, publisher of The Daily Record in Little Rock and a member of the APA Board of Directors, was the first to register for the SuperConvention set July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock.

Jay registered himself, wife Kathy, and Bobby Burton, also from The Daily Record. Terri Leifeste of the Texarkana Gazette, and her husband Alvin followed Jay’s registration closely.

Both registered for the convention utilizing the online registration available on the APA web site. Find what’s there at www.arkansaspress.org/event/2017SuperConvention.

Convention packets containing information on the convention along with the traditional registration forms were mailed to APA member newspapers last week. The mailing included detailed information on the convention schedule along with activities that will go along with the gathering.

Among those activities include the annual golf outing to be held Wednesday afternoon, July 5, at the Country Club of Arkansas in Maumelle. This event raises funds for the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation in furtherance of their mission, which is to provide paid internships, scholarships, and grants for attending conferences such as the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference held each November in Vicksburg, Miss.

The theme for the APA SuperConvention is a patriotic one. There will be plenty of red, white and blue in the convention décor that will greet keynote speaker Morley Piper, a survivor of the D-Day invasion at Normandy. His presentation will relate his experiences on that day and the days that followed as the allies turned the tide of World War II.

There are many other fun, enlightening and entertaining events planned for the convention. You won’t want to miss any of them, so get registered, make your hotel reservation and join your APA colleagues at the annual SuperConvention.

Just four days till convention hotel deadline - June 12

The deadline to reserve hotel rooms for the July 5-8 APA SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock is June 12, just four days away.

If you haven’t reserved a hotel room for your convention stay, now would be a good time to do it. The recommended way to reserve a room is through the online reservation site that can be found on the APA web site at www.arkansaspress.org.

Sign up now for free design evaluation at APA

One of the featured presenters at the upcoming APA SuperConvention July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock is newspaper design expert Ed Henninger.

In addition to his formal presentation on “Saving Public Notices,” Ed has offered to do one-on-one design evaluations of newspapers and to make recommendations to those signing up for the service. The sessions will be 15 minutes each and must be scheduled ahead of time directly with Ed.

The way to sign up is to email Ed directly at edh@henningerconsulting.com with the subject “APA design evaluation.” He asks that you include a phone number so he can get back to you if necessary.

Ed’s session at the convention will be Friday, July 7, at 9 a.m. After that he will schedule these free sessions for the rest of the day. If you would like to take advantage of this offer plan to bring three or four copies of your newspaper for Ed to go through with you.
You don’t have to look far these days to find yet another survey of interest. It’s only human nature that we pay more attention to surveys that produce results in which we believe rather than those that produce results that run counter to our core beliefs.

That’s the problem with core beliefs. They are often no longer valid. When survey results produce results that run counter, we tend to pay less attention or assign less credibility.

I read a lot of survey results, mostly those relating to the newspaper industry. I have no shortage of core beliefs regarding our industry and it pains me to read those surveys that pain a bleak picture for our future.

We as an industry do a lot of hand wringing over how to reach millennials, or we inquire a lot about why the traditional newspaper is not reaching this group generally defined as age 18-25.

So it was that I was reading the results of a survey taken by students at Emerson College in Boston. The survey was delving into some of the lingering questions about newspapers and their relationship with millennials.

Part of the survey produced the same results we see in most such endeavors these days. Yes, newspapers are losing circulation. Yes, newspaper advertising revenues are declining.

But there was one question that produced some responses I found interesting, if not all that surprising. The answer wasn’t surprising because some of us have been saying it for some time.

When asked in the survey what it would take for the respondents to buy a print publication, several of the respondents said they would buy print if it contained information that couldn’t get online or anywhere else. Well duh!

The key part of the name “newspapers” is NEWS. If it isn’t news, or if it’s “stale news,” why would anyone want to buy it? If we’re providing the same news that voracious consumers of news can get somewhere else and sooner, then why would they buy a print publication?

Years ago I witnessed a great illustration of this. It was in a small midwestern city served by a traditional if a bit stodgy daily newspaper. An enterprising newspaperman, sensing opportunity, launched a weekly in the market but before he did it he studied what the daily was covering in the community… and what it was not covering.

Actually, more especially he looked at what the daily was NOT covering, and that’s where he put his focus running tons of photos of what the daily wasn’t covering along with relevant text. This approach quickly attracted the attention of local readers desiring this additional coverage, and advertisers desiring to reach that audience.

One area the upstart found lacking in the daily was coverage of high school wrestling in the community. The daily sports editor didn’t like wrestling so they didn’t cover it. The new guy did and immediately gained a foothold in the community just based on this difference that set him apart from the daily.

The daily scoffed at the upstart. That’s what entrenched, stodgy community dailies do sometimes. Before they knew it, however, the weekly had seriously eroded their market share doing a stellar job of covering high school wrestling along with several other stories the daily was failing to cover or cover well. The daily had to start covering those community news events that they hadn’t wanted to cover, had no interest in covering, but which consumers of news in their community actually wanted.

So this was a story of a newspaper giving readers, or at least a significant number of them in the community, something they couldn’t get anywhere else, and surely not in their local daily newspaper. It’s the same principal as the results produced by the recent Emerson survey.

Respondents to the survey said they would also buy a print product for the coverage of the arts, health, food and spirits. Of course entertainment would rate high on that list I would imagine.

Yet we find that in the cutbacks we often see at newspapers, it is exactly this coverage that is the first to be cut. Millennials don’t buy print products for the coverage of global/national news, politics or in some cases local news. They are, after all, interested in what they’re interested in, and that seems to be something a lot of traditional newspapers are not providing them. Who could blame them for defaulting to the internet to find news of those things in which they do find interest? Newspapers, often, are inviting them to do just that.

The days of a newspaper editor unceasingly making decisions of what goes into the newspaper because “this is what readers should be reading” are gone. That ship has sailed. Readers will tell us what they want to read in a number of ways, and one of them is by NOT buying our print product.

This is not to suggest that the news be “dumbed down,” or that the news should be trivialized, because obviously it should not. But what we put into our newspapers is important. Newspaper space is highly valuable and is only growing more so. Budgets are tight and some newspaper news holes are even tighter. What we choose to showcase in that reduced space will determine whether it will appeal to the local news consumer.

Newspaper readers know when the editor is just filling space so he or she can get the newspaper out the door. Filling space to be filling space with no regard for who might actually be interested in reading what we’re putting in the newspaper is a mistake. Perhaps we don’t give readers enough credit for recognizing this.

This is from the Emerson survey:

“It’s clear that readers aren’t looking to print for breaking news. We’d take this one step further. They are looking for more niche topics: don’t try to cover all of the news, the internet already does that. Instead focus on one topic and cover it deeply and creatively so that people within that circle of interest respect it and seek you out.”

What they said.

Have a great week.

Tom
Reception to fete Tysons on retirement

Van and Ginnie Tyson, former publishers of The Atkins Chronicle and The Dover Times, will be the guests of honor at a retirement reception Sunday, June 11, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the W.J. Matthews Civic Center at 108 West Main Street in Atkins, according to daughter and former APA member, Gail Murdoch.

The event is a come and go reception hosted by People for a Better Atkins. APA friends of the Tysons are invited to attend the reception and to wish them well in their retirement.

The Tysons recently turned over their two publications to Paula and Billy Reeder. The transaction was effective June 1.

“Mom and Dad and our whole family have had a wonderful time being a part of the Arkansas newspaper community and we will miss you all,” Murdoch said.

Ellis joins CCN staff as photographer

Tavi Ellis has joined the Carroll County News staff in Berryville May 31 filling a slot vacated by the semi-retiring longtime CCN photographer, David Bell.

Bell will continue to shoot some photos for CCN and the Lovely County Citizen in Eureka Springs on a freelance basis.

Ellis has been a freelance photographer for CCN since 2015. She owns her own photography business, Tavi Photography in Eureka Springs.

Sun-Times names Teer as new editor

Dawn Teer has been named the new editor of the Heber Springs Sun-Times. She has been working as reporter of the Sun-Times’ sister newspaper, the White Hall Journal.

Teer, who says she’s always wanted to live in Heber Springs, is replacing James Jackson in the editor position.

She says she will continue sending her columns to the Journal as well as the Stuttgart Daily Leader, another sister newspaper of the Sun-Times.

SPJ pro chapter seeks contest entries

The Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists is seeking entries in the annual Diamond Journalism Awards contest recognizing outstanding journalism by professionals and students from Arkansas and bordering media markets in Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas.

If you live within 250 miles of Little Rock, you are eligible to enter the Diamond Awards contest.

Eligible work must have been published or broadcast between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Entries are now open and they will continue to accept entries until 11 p.m. CDT July 14.

Entries should be made online via the Better BNC Media Awards platform that can be found at www.betternewspapercontest.com.

The contest is open to professional and student journalists, including freelancers who can submit entries or have entries submitted on their behalf by news organizations that published or broadcast their work. Membership in the SPJ is not required.

More information on the contest can be found in the Better BNC Media Awards.

Time remains to donate ANF silent auction

There is still time to donate items to be included in the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation’s annual silent auction held in conjunction with the APA SuperConvention. This year’s event will be July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

The auction is one of the fund-raising events of the Foundation, which uses the funds to underwrite newsroom internships, scholarships and other education-related uses.

Items can be anything from crafts items to hotel stays, just about anything that those attending the APA convention would find of interest.

If you have items you’d like to donate, contact Karen Brown, director of the Foundation, at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

And make plans to attend the APA’s annual convention and help bid up those auction items. The auction is one of the fun elements of the convention, and certainly provides funding for some worthwhile projects.
Guest Column:

When, Where to 'Tease' Stories: A New Age Challenge

By Jim Stasiowski

On the same morning in mid-May that I read The New York Times’ gripping, deeply researched advance on the Bill Cosby trial, I witnessed a display of human nature that made me question whether the Times’ recent format changes make sense.

The trial story appeared atop the cover of the “Arts” section, not on Page A1, despite the widespread celebrity of Cosby and the societal significance of the charges against him, that he drugged then had sex with an unwilling woman, a pattern he is rumored to have repeated several times.

At the bottom of Page A1 was a small block tease – a non-photo tease buried among 11, some with photos – for the trial story, guiding readers to Page C1. And on Page A2 was a large tease written by the co-author of the “Arts” section Cosby story. The tease explained the co-author’s continuing work on Cosby’s legal travails.

The New York Times has changed its Pages A2 and A3. Formerly on weekdays, A2 had an index and corrections, while A3 had news stories. Now A2 is dominated by a feature labeled, in two verbose decks, “Inside The Times (...) The Story Behind The Story.” In each such feature, a reporter metaphorically puts his or her human face (minus photo) on the story we readers are being urged to read “Inside The Times.”

The rest of A2 and all of A3 now have a variety of snippets, trivia and other short items that no doubt a focus group concluded would attract otherwise unlikely readers.

I resent all the teasing and previewing. The Arts page Cosby story was extremely well done, part narrative, part analysis, and it didn’t require all the nanny-like nudges, most specifically, the “Inside The Times ...” overkill.

Why not put the Cosby story on Page A1? OK, it was a huge Trump-tastic news day, so Cosby got crowded off A1, but why not give it a stronger tease on Page A1 and run it on Page A3, implying that it is significant news, not meant merely for those who follow “Arts”?

I’m sure it’s because we – not just The New York Times – are scrambling. The tidbitting of Pages A2 and A3 apparently is designed to lure in the young, short-attention-span folks held captive by the snippet life.

Entranced by electronic marvels, kids ignore anything ploddingly traditional, right?

Yet shortly after I read the Cosby story, I took my morning walk, which means twice passing the same school-bus stop. On that morning, across the street from the bus stop, a large, noisy yellow Caterpillar excavator was clawing through mounds of dirt, prepping the land for development.

On my first pass, a half-dozen elementary-school youngsters were texting or electronically surfing while another six were watching the construction activity. When I made my second pass minutes later, all of them were staring at the Excavatorsaurus Rex.

Sure, texting and surfing are addictive; but that’s because they blend action, change and conflict, elements that all people, young and old, enjoy, and elements of not only every construction project ever built, but also every good story ever written.

I admire The New York Times’ boldness to blow up the traditional Pages A2 and A3 and try something new. But I disagree with the paper’s apparent assumptions, first that young people cannot be trusted to recognize good storytelling, and second that tantalizing tidbits will so dazzle young people that they will be fooled into embracing a newspaper they otherwise would ignore.

And I question requiring reporters to write what amount to “How I Got The Story” tales on A2. (A couple of weeks after the Cosby stories ran, that A2 feature, by a sportswriter covering the NBA, included this insightful sequence: “Cleveland and Miami are both fine cities with friendly, welcoming people. But they are very different cities.”)

Surely the shrinking rosters of reporters nationwide should mean not assigning superfluity.

If kids set aside electronic fluff for watching the real world, there is hope for those of us who devote our lives to making that world come alive, not in snippets, but in sentences and paragraphs. My hope is that after school that day, the kids resumed watching the excavator and that night, they talked to their parents about what they saw and asked about machinery and construction and commerce and growth.

One more thing: I used to know exactly where The New York Times’ corrections were, on Page A2 (except Sundays); now I hunt for them. I used to praise the Times for putting the corrections in such a prominent spot, as if the paper were saying, “We are proud to show how diligent we are in correcting our mistakes.”

Who knows? Such dependable, trustworthy behavior someday might inspire even those with short attention spans to own up to their mistakes.

THE FINAL WORD: The noun “individual” almost always is stilted language meaning “person,” as in “Authorities say they hope to question an individual seen at the accident site.”

(Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at 775 354-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.)
D-Day veteran, career newspaperman to keynote APA SuperConvention

It was 73 years ago last Tuesday, and history reminds us that June 6, 1944 was no normal day at the beach for the thousands of American soldiers who participated in the D-Day invasion at Normandy, the largest amphibious assault in the history of the world.

Morley Piper was among those in the first wave going ashore on that fateful day. He was then a 19-year-old second lieutenant in the 29th Infantry Brigade.

Thousands lost their lives on that day. Morley survived but for years did not share the experiences of that day and the days that followed as the allies turned the tide against the Third Reich in World War II.

Morley will tell that story and more when he provides the keynote address for the APA’s 2017 SuperConvention Friday luncheon, July 7. It is an amazing first hand account of that historic invasion and what came after the initial assault. It is a story you won’t want to miss.

Morley Piper, shown saluting just of President Obama’s left shoulder in this photo, is shown at the D-Day commemoration held in 2014 in Normandy. Morley was one of a handful of D-Day veterans invited to participate in the 70th anniversary commemoration. Also shown is Francois Hollande, left, president of France.

D-Day commemoration – APA convention keynote speaker Morley Piper

After the war Morley spent several years in newspaper advertising sales before becoming executive director of the New England Press Association where he spent 45 years of his career. He now serves as the “clerk” of the Newspaper Association Managers group, the association of press association executives across North America. He remains active planning the group’s meetings, and continues to attend several press association meetings each year.

“I have known Morley for several years now, but for most of that time I did not know he was a D-Day veteran,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “I have heard his presentation on the experience a couple of times, and I can tell you it is the relation of a significant piece of U.S. history that you won’t want to miss.”

When the historical D-Day invasion was commemorated on the 70th anniversary of it taking place in 2014, Morley was among a handful of veterans of that invasion invited to join President Barack Obama in ceremonies overlooking the now tranquil beach. It was an amazing experience for Morley to re-visit Normandy for this occasion, and he will relate some of that as well.

It was in honor of Morley’s visit and his keynote address that a patriotic theme was chosen for the APA’s annual convention.

Panel to delve careers in journalism

An all-star panel of veteran Arkansas journalists will talking about their respective careers in journalism, the many changes they seen along the way, and some possible insights into the future of Arkansas journalism Saturday morning, July 8, at the APA’s annual SuperConvention at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

Panels will include Max Brantley of the Arkansas Times, retired Arkansas journalist and columnist Brenda Blagg, John Brummett, columnist for the Arkansas Democrat Gazette, and Frank Fellone, recently retired deputy editor of the Democrat-Gazette who continues to write a Saturday traffic column for the newspaper.

Moderating the discussion will be yet another veteran Arkansas journalist, Rex Nelson, presently a columnist and senior editor at the Democrat-Gazette.

The panel discussion will begin at 9 a.m. Saturday and should provide a lively hour of varying perspectives on Arkansas journalism. In all these panelists represent several decades experience covering some of the biggest news stories in Arkansas history.
We’re now just three weeks away from the start of the APA’s annual convention. This event continues a long tradition of excellent conventions packaged and designed to appeal to APA members and their respective staffs. The programing for the 2017 convention set for July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock, is stellar. Set in a patriotic theme, the convention offers a lineup of relevant presentations and discussion topics sure to appeal to newspapers large and small.

The patriotic theme was chosen when it was confirmed that Morley Piper, our old friend and colleague, would be able to provide our keynote address. (Read the story in today’s Arkansas Publisher Weekly for more on Morley and his presentation.)

We’ll start right off at the Thursday luncheon when Ellen Kreth, publisher of the Madison County Record in Huntsville and a member of the APA Board of Directors, will facilitate a roundtable discussion on a wide variety of topics of interest to APA member newspapers. Lindsey Millar, editor of the Arkansas Times, will also be there to give a short presentation on a new project of interest to Arkansas newspapers.

Another great example of the relevant sessions, one of many at the convention, is the one that will kickoff the Thursday afternoon convention programming. It’s a panel discussion including Arkansas journalists who were active in covering the recent executions in Arkansas, a story that attracted both national and international coverage.

Kelly Kissel of the Associated Press who has covered several executions, will moderate the discussion. John Moritz of the Democrat-Gazette and Knowles Adkisson of the Pine Bluff Commercial, who both provided coverage of the four recent executions, will also participate in the panel discussion.

Solomon Graves, the spokesman for the Arkansas Department of Corrections who served as the front man dealing with media representatives covering the executions was invited to participate but declined citing ongoing litigation related to the executions.

John Tull of Quattlebaum, Grooms and Tull law firm in Little Rock, will follow that session with a discussion of legal issues facing newspaper, including some changes in the state’s Freedom of Information Act coming out of the recent legislative session.

Tull and his team operate the “FOI Hotline” for APA members, something they’ve done for us for many years. Chances are if you’ve ever called the Hotline, you’ve spoken with Tull or one of his team members.

Friday morning sessions kick off with a “Saving Public Notices” session presented by Ed Henninger, who makes a return visit to the APA convention after several years absence. I saw Ed give this presentation at the Public Notice Resource Center’s symposium held last fall in conjunction with the National Newspaper Association convention in Nashville. I immediately invited Ed to bring that presentation here and he readily agreed.

Public notices have been a part of newspapers since the beginnings of our industry. They remain vital in keeping the public informed about what they’re government is doing for them or to them. Yet with each legislative session, we deal again and again with attempts to remove public notices from newspapers.

Ed’s take on helping preserve public notices in newspapers I how we display or showcase the notices. He has some creative ideas and proposal for you to consider in handling public notices in your newspapers, and I encourage you to hear what he has to say on the topic.

Ed’s session will be followed Friday morning by a presentation by Leonard Woolsey on the important potential revenue niche publications represent for newspapers of all sizes. This is a return visit to the APA convention by Leonard who made a presentation on selling modular advertising several years ago when the APA convention was held in Hot Springs.

He has developed an approach to creating niche publication that produce significant revenues for newspapers, and he will relate his approach and how it might work for you and your newspaper.

After the Friday luncheon and the keynote address by Morley Piper, Russell Viers will step up for the first Friday afternoon session. Russell, a certified Adobe trainer who conducts training in several locations in the U.S. and several other countries, always brings a colorful approach to the topics he addresses.

Russell was just here in February for a seminar held at the APA building in Little Rock. The conference room of our building was packed for the sold out seminar. Always a popular feature of our convention, Russell will bring the latest in technology for newspaper publishing world.

Actually, Russell will pretty much have the entire afternoon, and those attending will benefit from his expertise. I hope APA newspapers will make sure they people who could best benefit from his presentation are in the room for this presentation.

So often when we have Russell at the convention, I get comments like “I wish our people could have been here to see that.” This is a great opportunity for any newspaper staff.

The sessions Saturday morning should be quite informative and entertaining. The morning begins at 9 a.m. with a “Reflections on a Career in Journalism” panel discussion featuring Max Brantley of the Arkansas Times, Brenda Blagg, retired Arkansas veteran journalist, John Brummett, columnist for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, and Frank Fellone, recently retired deputy editor of the Democrat-Gazette.

Yet another veteran Arkansas journalist, Rex Nelson, who was recently named a senior editor at the Democrat-Gazette, will moderate this session. Altogether this group represents several decades of Arkansas journalism. They’ve been there for some of the biggest stories to come out of Arkansas, and they’ll relate their experiences doing it at this panel discussion.

Following that will be another panel discussion on “Newsgathering and Reporting in the Digital Age,” and will feature Lance Turner of Arkansas Business; Kelly Sublett of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway; Gavin Lesnick of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, and Greg Henderson of Rock City Times, a web site of news, politics, community and satire.

Byron Tate, publisher of the Sheridan Headlight and president-elect of the APA Board of Directors, will moderate this panel discussion.

These are just the high points. There will obviously be much more going on, but this sampling should convince you that this convention is one you just can’t afford to miss.

I hope to see you there.

Have a great week.

Tom

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

June 15, 2017
Stuttgart Daily Leader shutsters pressroom; to print in Pine Bluff

The Stuttgart Daily Leader closed its pressroom recently, and will now print the newspaper at its sister newspaper, the Pine Bluff Commercial. The newspaper had printed the community newspaper for years on a Goss Community press. The Daily Leader recently shifted from a five-day daily to publishing twice a week on Tuesday and Friday. The newspaper plans to fill the publication gaps by posting community news on their web site.

Hope Star recognizes “20 Under 50”

The Hope Star recognized 20 under the age of 50 in Hempstead County in a recent promotion initiated by the newspaper, according to Rick Kennedy, publisher. The newspaper printed a special section with the results June 3. The Star asked for nominations from readers for people in all walks of life.

Kennedy said that recognizing people and their achievements encourages feelings of gratitude and appreciate for neighbors. He said one of the things he loves about journalism is being able to document things that make a community special, how a community works, and the beautiful people that make it all happen.

Niche publications topic for Woolsey at APA convention

Leonard Woolsey will make a return visit to the APA convention when it convenes July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock. This time his topic will be niche publications and the importance of this potential revenue stream for newspapers of all sizes.

His session will be Friday morning, July 7, at 10:30 a.m.

Woolsey is the president and publisher of The Daily News, the oldest newspaper in the state of Texas. He is also the publisher of Coast Monthly magazine, a successful lifestyle-focused magazine featuring life along the Upper Gulf Coast. The Daily News is based on Galveston Island and is located within an hour of Houston.

He’s been a publisher of newspapers for more than 20 years, and began developing magazine products for newspapers while in Georgia. Now in Texas, he is leading the successful effort of Southern Newspapers, Inc. to introduce attractive and profitable magazine titles to their existing newspaper properties.

Woolsey is also a writer, reader, and cycles thousands of miles a year throughout the country. His wife, whom he met in college more than 35 years ago, prefers to not get on a bike but is always game to travel. Together they have two adult children who are both in the media field. Their son is a magazine editor in the Texas Hill Country and their daughter is finishing up her bachelors in media and communications in Georgia.

Caricature artist to bring talent to APA convention event

Nationally known illustrator Joe Thibodeau will bring his amazing caricature talent to the APA convention for the Thursday evening, July 6, event at the Robinson Center in downtown Little Rock.

He will be drawing caricatures of those wishing one during the event. Thibodeau has visited APA conventions in the past but it has been many years. Chances are good you’ve seen some of his work in the offices of your friends.

“I have one of Joe’s caricatures of me hanging in my office at the APA building,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “It was done in the 80s but apparently I haven’t changed much as it still looks just like me.”

Thibodeau was a political cartoonist and state artist in Little Rock when Bill Clinton was governor. Later, when Clinton was president, he drew cartoons of Bill and Hillary that appeared on CNN and the E entertainment channel. He was also a former graphics editor for the Las Vegas Sun newspaper where he designed newspaper pages that featured whimsical illustrations and cartoons.

He is now a full time caricature artist and painter who has a unique, entertaining and whimsical style that captures the human condition in an outrageous way.

Arkansas Publisher Weekly
Guest Column:
Into the Issues: National Issues Like Obamacare Especially Significant to Rural Areas
By Al Cross

The debate over changes to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is especially significant to rural areas, and The Rural Blog has several stories that can help inform your local coverage.

Obamacare’s private-insurance options are on life support in much if not most of rural America. A third of counties, mostly rural, had only one insurer offering Obamacare plans for this year, and that lack of competition made the plans more expensive. That was also true even in areas with two Obamacare insurers, a study found, as we reported on it at http://bit.ly/2qedXLV.

As Congress debated what to do in late May, the Trump administration was asking for more time to decide whether to continue cost-sharing subsidies that help lower-income people pay Obamacare deductibles and copayments. State insurance departments are letting insurance companies delay filing their plans, and rural areas could be hit hard if Congress and the administration “don’t send signals that they’re committed to keeping Obamacare’s insurance marketplaces stable,” reported The Hill, which covers Congress. With our pickup item, we ran a map showing the number of Obamacare insurers in every county. Get it at bit.ly/2q5eQeC. ((STAN: This map would make a good illustration; you might want to enhance it in Photoshop to make it clearer at small scale. The economic-sector map, mentioned on the third section below, is also worthy and more colorful. Your call.)

The bill drafted by House Republicans would largely hurt people in areas where coverage is high, predominately rural areas where there are few hospitals or few insurers, The New York Times reported in March. The bill passed in May differed little from the original on those points, so the story and the Kaiser Family Foundation map we ran with it are still good references. See them at bit.ly/2qPeoYK.

Obamacare has covered fewer people through subsidized private insurance than through expansion of Medicaid, which the Supreme Court made optional for states, not mandatory. The expansion probably saved some rural hospitals in states that expanded Medicaid, and probably led to the closure of some in states that didn’t. We’ve had many items about rural hospitals on The Rural Blog, which is searchable; one with a good explanation of the issue is at bit.ly/2qPx1xb.

Other health issues

The opioid epidemic is worst in rural America, which depends more on non-physicians to provide primary health care, but most states don’t let them use a federal license to prescribe a potentially life-saving medicine for opioid addiction “unless they are working in collaboration with a doctor who also has a federal license,” Stateline reported. Half of all counties in the U.S., mainly in rural areas, “do not have a single physician with a license to prescribe buprenorphine.” Read the story at bit.ly/2qch0np.

The opioid epidemic appears to be making suicide more common, and suicide rates are increasing faster in rural areas than in metropolitan areas, according to a federal study. We excerpted it at bit.ly/2QJswKQ.

Suicide is a leading cause of death among teenagers, and that was a focus of a 13-part Netflix series, “13 Reasons Why,” based on the novel of the same name. In it, 13 people receive messages from a teenage girl who committed suicide, detailing how they played a part in her decision. The National Association of School Psychologists recommended that “vulnerable youth, especially those who have any degree of suicidal ideation,” not watch it. The Washington Post reported on a group of high-school students in Michigan who responded to the series with a project, “13 Reasons Why Not,” and we picked it up at bit.ly/2qPbcon.

Nutrition is a big factor in health, and many school-nutrition directors were happy to hear that new Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue relaxed some of the Obama administrations rules for school meals. The changes delayed another reduction in the amount of salt allowed in meals, gave states the ability to allow some schools to serve fewer whole grains, and allowed schools to serve 1 percent milk rather than only nonfat milk. See bit.ly/2rbvx88.

Trade, agriculture, rural jobs

Perdue appeared to play a key role in persuading President Trump not to withdraw from the North American Free Trade Agreement, but to renegotiate it with Mexico and Canada. That was good news for farm interests that depend on exports. As those lobbies asked for protection in the negotiations, Perdue’s USDA ran against Trump’s anti-trade theme and actively promoted the value of agricultural trade to the U.S. We wrote about it at bit.ly/2qPle8W.

Cattle farmers suffering from lower prices got good news in May, when the administration cut a trade deal with China to allow U.S. exports of beef, 13 years after a case of mad-cow disease prompted the Chinese to block them. In return, the U.S. will find ways to allow Chinese cooked poultry to be exported to the U.S. It’s big news in farm and ranch country, and we picked it up at bit.ly/2qJgjWA.

Trump’s special assistant on agriculture, trade and food assistance told reporters that the White House’s new Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity would focus on agriculture because it’s “the No. 1 driver in these rural communities.” However, the Daily Yonder noted that agriculture is not the top economic sector in rural areas. The federal Bureau of Economic Analysis, which ranks seven rural economic sectors, says agriculture is fifth in earnings and sixth in jobs. The Yonder also ran a county-level map of dominant economic sectors, and we picked it up at bit.ly/2rnBE1.

Some states are enacting policies to generate or keep jobs in rural areas, such as tax credits for investment. Critics say such laws have failed to deliver, with investors profiting from the deals even if the businesses they fund never create a job, Stateline reported. We picked it up at bit.ly/2qJidj.

Rural areas sometimes lose jobs because local business owners can’t find the right buyer or successor when they want to retire. A growing number of services match rural entrepreneurs nearing retirement with younger people looking to run a business, Forbes reported. Read it at bit.ly/2rvmHSA.

If you see news with rural resonance that should be on The Rural Blog, email 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. This column originally appeared in Publishers Auxiliary, the publication of the National Newspaper Association.)
Free Press
Free People
#ArkansasNewspapers

APA 2017 SuperConvention
July 5 - 8  |  Little Rock
### Hotel Information
**DoubleTree by Hilton**

Situated in the heart of downtown Little Rock on the banks of the Arkansas River, DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Little Rock offers the best in southern hospitality. The hotel recently completed a renovation, providing refreshed guest rooms, a new lobby, and a redesigned business center and Concierge lounge. Dine at our new restaurant and lounge, Bridges, for a casual experience with local and regional fare, or pick up freshly made specialties at the new Made Market.

Begin your stay at this friendly and inviting Little Rock hotel with our signature chocolate chip cookie, and allow our staff to cater to your needs. Conveniently located only 15 minutes from the Little Rock National Airport and just off I-30, our downtown location offers easy access to everything the Arkansas capital has to offer. Our complimentary shuttle service will take you anywhere within five miles of the hotel.

To make a room reservation, call (501) 372-4371  
424 West Markham St., Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Reserve hotel rooms by June 12 | $116 Single/Double

Be sure to mention the Arkansas Press Association group name when reserving your room.

### APA Golf Tournament
**Country Club of Arkansas**

The Country Club of Arkansas golf course is consistently listed among the finest courses in central Arkansas. The course was built by golfers. With numerous sand bunkers, water on eleven holes, sparkling lakes and streams, and fairways graced by Loblolly pines, the Country Club of Arkansas captures the majestic beauty of central Arkansas. While the course was designed to appeal to golfers of all levels, it also offers a variety of challenging holes certain to appeal to the most discriminating of championship caliber golfers.

The tournament is sponsored by UAMS and AT&T Arkansas and benefits the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation.

### Convention Schedule

#### Wednesday, July 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>APA Golf Tournament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Country Club of Arkansas, Maumelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Early Bird Outing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clinton Presidential Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reception &amp; Tour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Thursday, July 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Opening Round Table Luncheon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Session: Covering Arkansas Executions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>ANF Silent Auction Opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Session: Legal, Libel &amp; FOI Q&amp;A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Drink &amp; Draw, Dinner, Music &amp; Tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Afterhours Hospitality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Friday, July 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Past Presidents’ Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Invitation Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Trade Show Opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Press Camp (Kids 6-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Session: Saving Public Notices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presented by Ed Henninger, Director, Henninger Consulting, Rock Hill, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Session: Creative Niche Publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presented by Leonard Woolsey, Publisher, Galveston County Daily News</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Friday, July 7 (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Keynote Speaker, Morley Piper, D-Day Veteran, NAM Clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• President’s Gavel Passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Golf Awards Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presentation of Freedom of Information Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Session: Russell Viers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Honoree’s Reception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
<td>APA Honors Banquet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distinguished Service, Freedom of Information and Golden 50 Awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>After-Hours Hospitality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ANF Silent Auction Concludes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Saturday, July 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Continental Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APA Member Business Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Panel Discussion: Reflections on a Career in Journalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Panel Discussion: Newsgathering &amp; Reporting in the Digital Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>APA Better Newspaper Editorial Awards Presentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### APA Golf Tournament
**Country Club of Arkansas**

The Country Club of Arkansas golf course is consistently listed among the finest courses in central Arkansas. The course was built by golfers. With numerous sand bunkers, water on eleven holes, sparkling lakes and streams, and fairways graced by Loblolly pines, the Country Club of Arkansas captures the majestic beauty of central Arkansas. While the course was designed to appeal to golfers of all levels, it also offers a variety of challenging holes certain to appeal to the most discriminating of championship caliber golfers.

The tournament is sponsored by UAMS and AT&T Arkansas and benefits the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation.
Guest Speakers

Morley Piper

Morley Piper, retired executive director of the New England Press Association who now serves as “clerk” of the Newspaper Association Managers group.

Morley was a 19-year-old junior officer in the Army and was among those charging the beaches at Normandy during the D-Day invasion in 1944. For decades Morley didn’t speak of the experience. Many who know him did not know he had participated in this bloody event that eventually turned the tide of World War II in favor of the Allies.

Morley relates the experiences of that day and some observances since that day.

He returned to France for the 50th year commemoration of the invasion in 1994 and again 20 years later for the 70th commemoration of the event in 2014. He was one of a handful of survivors of the D-Day invasion returning for the latter event, attending the observance in the company of President Barack Obama.

Morley will give a first-hand account of what it was like to be a part of that invasion force both on D-Day and the perilous days that followed. He provides a great historical perspective on the D-Day events, the days following and the war itself.

Ed Henninger

Ed Henninger has been an independent newspaper consultant since 1989 and is the Director of Henninger Consulting in Rock Hill, SC. He is universally recognized as the world’s leading design consultant for community newspapers.

He recently completed redesigns of the Cullman Daily Times in Cullman, AL; the Spencer Evening World in Spencer, IN; The Clay County News in Sutton, NE; the Madelia Times-Messenger in Madelia, MN; and the Holyoke Enterprise in Holyoke, CO.

He is now at work with newspapers and magazines in Texas, Nebraska, Massachusetts, Idaho, Georgia and Iowa.

Ed has traveled to the Ukraine, the Republic of Georgia and Armenia to offer design workshops and assist with redesigns of several newspapers in those countries.

His column on newspaper design appears regularly in Publishers’ Auxiliary, the publication of the National Newspaper Association. His column also appears in the bulletin of the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association as well as newsletters of press organizations throughout the U.S. and Canada. It is also distributed free to more than 2,000 subscribers worldwide.

Ed Henninger’s Blog is followed by more than 2,000 news design professionals worldwide and is updated weekly with reports and videos on news design and other visual arts.

Russell Viers

Russell Viers is an international speaker who has presented in 22 countries for publishing events since 1997. He has been featured at the HOW Conference, InDesign Conference, IFRA, PepCon and many more including AdobeMAX, where he was honored as an AdobeMAX Master.

In addition to speaking, he has helped many major publications and designers learn techniques to work faster and improve quality including Better Homes and Gardens, Ladies Home Journal, New York Times Regional Papers, Sabah, American Greetings, Crayola and many others.

Having started with CompuGraphic typesetting machines in the early 80s, then PageMaker 1 in 1987, Viers has been actively involved with Digital Publishing since the early days. In addition to speaking live, he has done videos for Lynda.com, Peachpit Press and Total Training.

Leonard Woolsey

Leonard Woolsey is the president and publisher of The Daily News - the oldest newspaper in the state of Texas. He is also the publisher of Coast Monthly magazine, a successful lifestyle-focused magazine featuring life along the Upper Gulf Coast. The Daily News is based on Galveston Island and is located within an hour of Houston. The newspaper is celebrating 175 years in 2017 - predating even the statehood of Texas.

Woolsey, a publisher of newspapers for more than twenty years, began developing magazine products for newspapers while in Georgia. Now in Texas, he is leading the successful effort of Southern Newspapers, Inc. to introduce attractive and profitable magazine titles to their existing newspaper properties. Coast Monthly is the winner for best magazine by the Texas Press Association for the past two years and is approaching $1 million in annual revenue for the newspaper.

Coast Monthly also played the driving factor of The Daily News being recognized in Editor & Publisher’s 2017 edition of “10 Newspapers Who Do It Right”. This is the second time newspapers led by Woolsey have been featured on this annual list by Editor & Publisher.

Woolsey is a writer, reader, and cycles thousands of miles a year throughout the country. His wife, whom he met in college more than 35 years ago, prefers to not get on a bike but is always game to travel. Together they have two adult children who are both in the media field. Their son is a magazine editor at Texas Hill Country and their daughter is finishing up her bachelors in media and communications in Georgia.
Early Bird Reception & Tour at the

**Clinton Presidential Library**

Wednesday, July 5 at 6 p.m.

Join us for Dinner, Music &
Backstage Tours at the newly renovated

**Robinson Center**

Thursday, July 6 at 6:30 pm
Golf Tournament Entry Form

Name ______________________________ Company ______________________________

Mailing Address ______________________________________________________________________

City ____________________________ State ________ Zip _____________

Phone ___________________________ E-mail ______________________________

Golf Handicap ______________________ (or) Average 18-hole Score _______________________

Name(s) of those you wish to play with ________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

$100/player | Proceeds benefit the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation

411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 | 501-374-1500 | Fax 501-374-7509
APLA 2017 SUPERCONVENTION

Press Camp!

FRIDAY, JULY 7TH

ONLY $20!

Camp Includes:
- A Junior Press Card
- Breakfast, lunch & supplies
- Sightseeing field trip around the River Market District
- Disposable camera & developing

Photos will be displayed Friday evening at the Honorees’ Reception.

PRESS CAMP FOR KIDS REGISTRATION FORM
Ages 6-12 (adult supervision and camp counselors on hand)

Child’s Name ___________________________________________ Age ________

Child’s Name ___________________________________________ Age ________

Child’s Name ___________________________________________ Age ________

Parent(s) ________________________________________________

Newspaper / Company ______________________________________

Total Number of Camp Registrants ______ x $20 each = ________

Please Return with SuperConvention Registration Form to:
411 S. Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 | Phone: (501) 374-1500 Fax: (50) 374-7509
Contribute items to the ANF Silent Auction.
Give something back to your industry. Journalism education needs your help!

Here are some thought-starters:
- Box or basket of gift items from your city or county
- Case of wine, food, etc. made in your city or area
- Unique product – handmade quilt gift basket/box, original jewelry
- Dinner for four with a celebrity (or at a special place)
- Autographed item from a celebrity
- Box seats at a sporting event – Cowboys, Travelers, Naturals, etc.
- Weekend mini-vacation for two – lodging, food & attractions
- Guided fishing, hunting trip or similar event

Auction Schedule:
Thursday, July 6 - Friday, July 7, 2017

Questions? Call APA at (800) 569-8762

YES! We want to help fund journalism education and internships. Count on us to contribute the following:

Description of item(s), including brand names (use additional page if necessary)

1. _______________________________________________________________ $ ________

2. _______________________________________________________________ $ ________

3. _______________________________________________________________ $ ________

4. _______________________________________________________________ $ ________

Authorized by ____________________________________ Title _________________________

Company ________________________________________ Phone _______________________

Address ____________________________________________ City/State/Zip ________________________

_____ Will bring item(s) to convention  _____ Will deliver item(s) to APA by June 23

Please return this form by Friday, June 23, 2017

Mail to: Arkansas Press Association, 411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 | Fax to: 501.374.7509
**READ THIS BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

1. **Each person** (except for children under 18 years of age) attending the convention must **pay a registration fee** in addition to meals or special events. Registration pays speaker & program expenses, continental breakfasts, breaks, etc. See specific meal prices due, in addition to the registration fee.

2. Circle the appropriate registration fee for each attendee, as well as the chosen reservations **for each function** each will attend. **NOTE:** (a) One may choose to register for **ONE DAY only**, prorating the registration fee, paying $25, plus any meal fees for that day. For example, Saturday award winners pay $25 registration fee **PLUS** $15 for the lunch. (b) A $10 (dollar) early bird discount can be taken per newspaper/company if we receive your registration form before **June 16th** and at least one full registration is listed. (c) Thirteen year-olds and younger children may choose a child’s plate for Friday dinner and Saturday lunch.

3. **Copy this form for additional attendees** if needed. **List children and one-day-only people after those paying full registration.**

4. Golfers and Press Camp Kids must fill out that activity’s registration form (separate page) but may pay with one check on this form if you like. **Add the page totals from those forms after the convention fees on this form.**

5. You may also wish to donate to the AR Newspaper Foundation if you are unable to attend or participate in the auction. **Add the amount in the square before Grand Total below.**

6. Dress will be summer casual for most activities. Business casual will be appropriate for the Friday night banquet.

7. **DEADLINE to register is June 30th.** All convention cancellations must be made 48 hours in advance of event or we expect your payment. **No refunds** will be made after July 3rd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Name</th>
<th>Registration Fee (Circle One)</th>
<th>Kids Press Camp</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>TOTALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Print or type FIRST &amp; LAST NAME as it will appear on name tag.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clinton Library</td>
<td>Round Table Lunch</td>
<td>Robinson Theater</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>APA Honors Banquet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member or Associate</td>
<td>Spouse</td>
<td>ONE DAY ONLY</td>
<td>Children Under 18</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Child Under 13</td>
<td>Adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>$25 Fri. / Sat.</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>$20</td>
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<td>$10</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>$25 Fri. / Sat.</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>$10</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>$25 Fri. / Sat.</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>$20</td>
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<td>$10</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>$25 Fri. / Sat.</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>$10</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>$85</td>
<td>$65</td>
<td>$25 Fri. / Sat.</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Column Totals**

| | | | Clinton Library | Round Table Lunch | Robinson Theater | Lunch | APA Honors Banquet | Editorial Awards Lunch | Add Golf Page Total | Foundation Donation - See Item #5 | GRAND TOTAL |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**IF ONE FULL REGISTRATION IS PAID**, registrations received at APA office by June 16th may take a $10 (dollar) discount per company

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Send Convention Registration to:

ARKANSAS PRESS ASSOCIATION
411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201
or fax to APA at (501) 374-7509
FINAL DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS JUNE 30TH!

ARKANSAS press ASSOCIATION

Register Online at: http://www.arkansaspress.org/event/2017SuperConvention
‘Early Bird’ party returns to Clinton Presidential Center

It’s been several years since the APA held an event at the Clinton Presidential Center in Little Rock, but that’s where we’ll be Wednesday evening, July 5, for the annual “early bird” party for those arriving early for the annual SuperConvention July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock. The event will begin at 6 p.m. with heavy hors d’oeuvres and a bar in Café 42 on the ground level of the library facility. The library will be open for touring for those registered to attend.

The library will be open until 8 p.m. for those wishing to tour the facility. The “early bird” party is actually the second event of the annual APA convention. The golf outing will have been held that afternoon at the Country Club of Arkansas in Maumelle.

Registrations are still open for both the golf outing to benefit the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation and for the “early bird” party that evening. Those interested may register online at www.arkansaspress.org. Other information on the convention and the itinerary can also be found on the APA web site.

‘Power of Process’ topic for Viers convention presentation

“The Power of Process” is the title for the Russell Viers session at the APA’s annual SuperConvention to be held July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock. Beginning at 2 p.m. Friday, July 7, Viers will have most of the afternoon to delve into a variety of challenges at today’s newspapers.

“Even if you know the software like the back of your hand, without a good process for your workflow you’re probably working too hard,” Viers says. “These sessions not only share ideas on the importance of process but also ideas on how YOU can quickly go back and implement or improve your own.”

Viers, a certified Adobe trainer, is in demand both in the U.S. and abroad. For the past several years, he has spent a considerable amount of time training in various parts of Europe as well as North America. He also often presents for APA, both at freestanding seminars and on convention programs.

On his session topic, he continues, “You’ll also see many examples of how a process in place makes photo sorting and editing, ad creation and page creation much faster and of higher quality. Whether you’re the one at the computer, in the trenches or management, this session is a must.”

Sign up now for free design evaluation at APA

One of the featured presenters at the upcoming APA SuperConvention July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock is newspaper design expert Ed Henninger.

In addition to his formal presentation on “Saving Public Notices,” Ed has offered to do one-on-one design evaluations of newspapers and to make recommendations to those signing up for the service. The sessions will be 15 minutes each and must be scheduled ahead of time directly with Ed.

The way to sign up is to email Ed directly at edh@henningerconsulting.com with the subject “APA design evaluation.” He asks that you include a phone number so he can get back to you if necessary.

Ed’s session at the convention will be Friday, July 7, at 9 a.m. After that he will schedule these free sessions for the rest of the day. If you would like to take advantage of this offer, plan to bring three or four copies of your newspaper for Ed to go through with you.
Every convention your APA staff organizes each year, we try to add on what some of you might call “value adds” to the registration fee. It’s not as if the very low registration fees don’t already get you a whole lot of insight, entertainment and education, but it’s always nice to also get a little lagniappe for your money.

Among the “value adds” this year is an opportunity to have Ed Henninger evaluate your newspaper’s design in a one-on-one session Friday, July 7. Ed will be making a presentation Friday morning on “Saving Public Notices.” I’ve seen the presentation, and it’s something every newspaper person should see. And of course, saving public notices is, or at least should be, near and dear to the hearts of every newspaper publisher.

After that session, Ed is scheduling 15-minute sessions with those newspapers wishing to get a fresh set of expert eyes on your newspaper’s design. Ed will make recommendations on how to improve the look and flow of your newspapers. That doesn’t mean you actually have to do them, but it’s always good I think, to find out what an expert has to say about our newspapers.

Ed tells me not many are signing up for the sessions, so there are still spots available. If you would like to participate, contact Ed directly via email at edh@henningerconsulting.com, and then remember to bring some copies of your newspaper for Ed to evaluate.

It won’t cost you a dime and it may well open up a whole new design world for your newspaper.

By far the most expressed interest in a convention session upcoming is the appearance by keynote speaker Morley Piper, a veteran of the D-Day invasion who came ashore in the first wave on June 6, 1944. That presentation will be at the Friday luncheon, July 7, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Little Rock. There remains, apparently a lot of interest in the events of that day as told by someone who was actually there.

We have had inquiries about attending the luncheon from members, associate members and others who have heard about the presentation. There is a lot of interest and we will make tickets available as we have them after our members have opportunity to purchase them.

If you plan to attend and have not registered, I would suggest you do so immediately to reserve your spot.

Morley is an old friend and I would like everyone to have the opportunity to hear his story. I have heard his presentation a couple of times and I can assure you it is not likely something you will ever forget.

A patriotic theme has been chosen for the convention in light of Morley’s visit, and we’ve arranged a military color guard to post the colors before the Friday luncheon begins and for a group to perform the National Anthem. That should set the tone for the luncheon and the stage for a presentation that is both moving and insightful.

Jay and Patsy Jackson, former owners of the Van Buren County Democrat in Clinton who now live in Northwest Arkansas, will miss the 2017 convention. This will be the first they will have missed since 1952. Jay is an APA past president, having held that post in 1968, and is the most senior living past president.

The Jackson’s twin daughters, Susan and Janan, almost always accompany them to the convention. Circumstances, however, will prevent them from attending the convention this year, bringing this streak to an end.

That was sad news to hear as I always enjoy visiting with each of these wonderful people, as I’m sure do many others.

On a happier note, Charlotte Schexnayder, the second most senior past APA president (1981) will be attending at least the Friday morning past presidents’ breakfast. It will be good to see Charlotte after she missed last year’s convention in Bentonville.

When I join my counterparts from across North America at our regular conferences, convention attendance is inevitably a topic that comes up. Many press associations have, for years, reported sagging convention attendance.

I’ve always taken pride that with APA, even in a small state, we still had robust attendance at our conventions, although in recent years we have noted a slow erosion of the base of people who attend our annual gatherings.

The registration numbers for the 2017 convention are below expectations at this point. While we always get a late rush of registrations, I’m just not sure it will be enough to achieve our projections.

We like to have around 300, and we plan accordingly for that. That includes making sure there are enough sleeping rooms in the hotel block, and that we purchase enough meals to feed everyone at the dining events. We have already had to cut back on the food and beverage guarantees based on early registrations.

We make these moves to make sure we don’t end up paying for hotel rooms that are not reserved or for meals that are not eaten. This gets expensive quickly. The conventions are not a profit center for APA, but we do try to at least break even on them. Sometimes, like this year, that becomes a challenge.

So what have other states that have experienced declining conventions done to counter the problem? Some have eliminated conventions, or reduced them to one-day affairs.

Our conventions are such a big part of our newspaper culture in Arkansas, I would hate to see that happen. But these days you do what you have to do. We’re not there yet, but when I see convention registration not coming up to projection...I do get a little concerned.

What can you do? Register and attend.

It would be terribly difficult to break even on the convention without the participation of convention sponsors. Without them we would have to raise the registration fees for those attending to the point that we would likely prevent even more from attending.

For a complete list of these sponsors to date, see the list in this Arkansas Publisher Weekly, and when you see them at the convention, make it a point to tell them how much you appreciate their sponsorship and participation in the convention.

Have a great week.
Warren editor pens novella

Warren Eagle Democrat Editor Tim Kessler held a book signing recently for his first novella, “A Long Road To Nowhere,” released recently. The book is available on eBook and softcover from several retailers.

The book was officially released June 2.

Kessler began his newspaper career at the Chadron Record in Chadron, Neb., and is a former night editor at the El Dorado News-Times, former managing editor of the Ashley News Observer in Crossett and the Wynne Progress, among others during his almost 38 years in the business.

His book is dedicated to John Worthen, managing editor of the Pine Bluff Commercial, with whom Kessler worked at the News Times.

Check out ANF Facebook page for auction items

Would you like to get a sneak preview of the items up for bids in the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation’s annual auction at the APA convention July 5-8 in Little Rock?

Well you can! Then prepare yourself to bid early and often on the items of your choice. The proceeds of the auction go to the Foundation to be used for education purposes such as internships and scholarships.

Check out the items at http://bit.ly/2tK7UAH.

The auction opens Thursday afternoon, July 6, at the convention, which this year will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock. The auction bidding closes at six p.m. Friday.

Join your newspaper colleagues for this annual gathering and join in the bidding for some outstanding auction items.

2017 SuperConvention registration list

Here is the list of those who have registered to attend the 2017 APA SuperConvention July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

If your name is not on this list, please register today and plan to attend this outstanding gathering with those listed below:

**Bella Vista, Weekly Vista:** Kent Marts
Bentonville, Brown: Mike and Karen Brown
Berryville, Carroll County Newspapers: Scott Loftis, David Bell, Tavi Ellis, Samantha Jones, Amanda Nettles, Kelby Newcomb
Camden New: Sue and James Lee Silliman
Chapel Hill NC, Henninger Consulting: Ed Henninger
Conway, Log Cabin Democrat: Kelly Sublett
Essex, MA, Newspaper Association Managers: Morley Piper
Fayetteville, Brenda Blagg
Fayetteville, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette: Lisa and Doug Thompson, April and Sam Wallace, Melissa Gute, Brent Powers
Galveston, Tex., The Daily News: Leonard Woolsey
Greenwood Democrat: Dustin and Christy Graham
Harrison: Jeff and Jane Christenson
Hot Springs, The Sentinel-Record: Mark Gregory, Debe and Rick Johnson
MerryLea Meeker, Steve Mross, Jimmy Robertson
Huntsville, Madison County Record: Shannon Hahn, Ellen Kreth, Preston Tolliver
Jonesboro, Roy and Pat Ockert
Little Rock, Arkansas Business: Lance Turner
Little Rock, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette: John Brummett, Gavin Lesnick
Little Rock, Arkansas Times: Max Brantley, Lindsey Millar
Little Rock, Associated Press: Kelly Kissel
Little Rock: Charlotte Schexnayder, Sue Frank
Little Rock, Rock City Life: Greg Henderson
Little Rock, The Daily Record: Bobby Burton, Jay and Kathy Edwards
Little Rock, UAMS: Yavonda Chase, Andrea Peel, Leslie Taylor
Little Rock, WEHCO Media, Inc.: Mark and Bobbi Lane, Nat and Nele Lea
Malvern Daily Record: Gretchen Ritchey, Joshua Waddles
Mena, The Mena Star: Clark and Irina Smith
Monticello, Advance Monticellonian: Harold and Cindy Coggins, Ashley and Michael Foreman, Vicki Kelly, Tom White
Mountain View, Stone County Leader: Russell Foster, Rusty and Neal Fraser, Lori Freeze, Edie Sutterfield
North Little Rock, Frank and Kay Fellone
Nashville News-Leader: John Schirmer
Prairie Village, KS, DigiVersity.TV: Russell Viers
Rector, Rust Communications: Ron and Nancy Kemp
Rison, Cleveland County Herald: Britt Talent
Searcy Daily Citizen: Dana and Bruce Guthrie, Wendy Jones, Steve Watts, Tracy Whitaker, Jamie Williams
The Sheridan Headlight: Tanner Newton, Byron and Mary Pat Tate
Springdale, Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette: Rusty and Anita Turner
State University, ASU Media and Comm: Rennette McCargo, Gil Fowler
Texarkana Gazette: Terri Leifeste
Walnut Ridge, The Times Dispatch: John and Renee Bland
Wynne Progress: David and Ashlynn Owens

Convention sponsors listed

Each year the APA solicits several partner sponsors to help stage the association’s annual convention. The 2017 SuperConvention set for July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock is no exception.

Among the sponsors signing on for the 2017 convention are:

- Arkansas Petroleum Council
- University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture
- Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/WEHCO Media, Inc.
- Arkansas Newspaper Foundation
- Arkansas Children’s
- Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas
- Farm Bureau of Arkansas
- Branson
- Auditor of State
- The Daily Record
- Rust Communications
- Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Arkansas Business Publishing Group

Other sponsors will likely join this group of APA convention partners and will be added in future Arkansas Publisher Weekly listings.
Guest Column:  
CJR Article Erroneously Characterizes State of Public Notices, Newspapers  
By Richard Karpel

In a recent article in Columbia Journalism Review, Liena Zagare and Ben Smith argue that local governments should move public notice and other civic advertising from newspapers to local-news websites like their own BKLYNER.

To buttress their case, they claim that a newspaper in their borough, the Brooklyn Eagle, recently had “three of its 12 pages entirely covered” by advertising designed to “make sure taxpayers see how their money is being spent, and to prevent officials from hiding corrupt deals.” But law firms, not public officials, placed those three pages of advertising in the Eagle. And its purpose was to provide official notice of courtroom process, not public spending. That’s a pretty glaring mistake. Surely, CJR would want to correct the record, right?

We thought so too, but CJR disagrees. However, we’re less interested in CJR’s editorial policy than in what the mistake illustrates about the authors’ understanding of public notice: It is sorely lacking. And people who write about subjects they know little about tend to spread misinformation, which is what Zagare and Smith have done.

They assert that city governments face a stark choice: Either continue running public notice and other civic advertising in “fading print publications or, seek to reach a vibrant online audience in the new online media.” Actually, local governments have a third option: They can run their advertising in both a local newspaper and on the newspaper’s website. This happens to be the option that most local governments presently exercise. Why? Because the great majority of newspapers eligible to publish public notice advertising now also run the notices online at no additional cost. In fact, this practice is so common that 12 states have passed laws requiring it. These measures were passed with the support of the newspaper industry.

Zagare and Smith are not the first to proffer a spurious choice between newspapers and the internet. Legislators who introduce bills to move public notice from newspapers to government websites frame their proposals in the same false light. They do so despite the fact that at least 35 million people still read a newspaper every day and local-newspaper digital traffic almost always dwarfs the online traffic of government websites. The willful blindness of some lawmakers on this issue is one of the reasons state press associations have felt the need to pursue legislation requiring their members to run public notices on the web.

Zagare and Smith appeal to public officials to shift advertising from “zombie” community newspapers to “vibrant” local-news websites. Leave aside for the moment the monumental self-regard that leads them to suggest that only their “heroic” websites are capable of holding local officials accountable. Their appeal is both naive and misguided.

Legislation has been introduced this year in 21 states that would shift public notice from local newspapers and their digital editions to government websites. In most cases, the bills are backed by public officials, like New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, who have little interest in providing public notice. Their real goal is to hurt the newspapers that cover them. The notion that these same officials will see the light and support critical journalism that holds them accountable is a pipe dream.

Moreover, it is not the role of government to pick winners and losers in the media. If politicians had the power to specifically direct the placement of public notice advertising, there’s little doubt that many would use it to reward favorable reporting while punishing less-flattering coverage.

Zagare and Smith also neglect to address fundamental differences between the print and online experiences and how they impact the ability to provide citizens with effective notice of official action. Reading a printed newspaper is a serendipitous experience; it encourages readers to view stories and advertisements to which they aren’t initially drawn. Few people pick up a newspaper specifically to read public notice ads but we know from experience that many citizens see them anyway. (Here’s one recent example.) This is vital when the official action they describe is too important to be hidden.

By contrast, online readers are goal directed. They generally visit websites seeking specific information. Serendipity can be encouraged but it is more challenging to direct readers’ attention to particular content in an online environment than it is in print. It is especially difficult in the case of public notice ads because readers have been trained for over a hundred years to look for them in the newspaper.

Print is also still far superior to the internet at providing assurance that a particular notice was published and conformed with the law. Digital information can easily be intentionally or accidentally altered or erased after it is posted, which simply isn’t possible in print. That’s why a newspaper notice can be self-authenticated as evidence in a court of law, and a website notice cannot.

The authors’ slanderous characterization of community newspapers as essentially worthless is a classically hipper-than-thou, Brooklyn-bubble perspective and merits little response. I’ll simply state the obvious: There are many excellent newspapers that are essential to their communities, and there are others that fall short of those standards. I suspect the same is true of local-news websites.

Another result of the bubble perspective is that people in places like Brooklyn, especially young people who write for internet news sites, tend to think everyone spends all day on the internet. The truth is approximately 50 million people in the U.S. still have no access to the internet. Moreover, they tend to be our most vulnerable citizens – older, lower-income, rural.

Publishing a newspaper in 2017 is much more challenging than it was in the past. Print circulation is down and profits are more difficult to come by. Nevertheless, most newspapers have expanded their audience via digital publishing and still provide the best vehicle for providing the public with official notice.

(Richard Karpel is the president of APW Management and the executive director of the Public Notice Resource Center, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that provides education and research about public notice in newspapers and on their websites.)
Free Press
Free People
#ArkansasNewspapers

APA 2017 SuperConvention
July 5 - 8 | Little Rock
**Country Club of Arkansas**

The Country Club of Arkansas golf course is consistently listed among the finest courses in central Arkansas. The course was built by golfers. With numerous sand bunkers, water on eleven holes, sparkling lakes and streams, and fairways graced by Loblolly pines, the Country Club of Arkansas captures the majestic beauty of central Arkansas. While the course was designed to appeal to golfers of all levels, it also offers a variety of challenging holes certain to appeal to the most discriminating of championship caliber golfers.

The tournament is sponsored by UAMS and AT&T Arkansas and benefits the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation.

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**Hotel Information**

**DoubleTree by Hilton**

Situated in the heart of downtown Little Rock on the banks of the Arkansas River, DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Little Rock offers the best in southern hospitality. The hotel recently completed a renovation, providing refreshed guest rooms, a new lobby, and a redesigned business center and Concierge lounge. Dine at our new restaurant and lounge, Bridges, for a casual experience with local and regional fare, or pick up freshly made specialties at the new Made Market.

Begin your stay at this friendly and inviting Little Rock hotel with our signature chocolate chip cookie, and allow our staff to cater to your needs. Conveniently located only 15 minutes from the Little Rock National Airport and just off I-30, our downtown location offers easy access to everything the Arkansas capital has to offer. Our complimentary shuttle service will take you anywhere within five miles of the hotel.

To make a room reservation, call (501) 372-4371

424 West Markham St., Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Reserve hotel rooms by June 12 | $116 Single/Double

Be sure to mention the Arkansas Press Association group name when reserving your room.

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**APA Golf Tournament**

**Country Club of Arkansas**

The Country Club of Arkansas golf course is consistently listed among the finest courses in central Arkansas. The course was built by golfers. With numerous sand bunkers, water on eleven holes, sparkling lakes and streams, and fairways graced by Loblolly pines, the Country Club of Arkansas captures the majestic beauty of central Arkansas. While the course was designed to appeal to golfers of all levels, it also offers a variety of challenging holes certain to appeal to the most discriminating of championship caliber golfers.

The tournament is sponsored by UAMS and AT&T Arkansas and benefits the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation.
**Guest Speakers**

**Morley Piper**

Morley Piper, retired executive director of the New England Press Association who now serves as “clerk” of the Newspaper Association Managers group.

Morley was a 19-year-old junior officer in the Army and was among those charging the beaches at Normandy during the D-Day invasion in 1944. For decades Morley didn’t speak of the experience. Many who know him did not know he had participated in this bloody event that eventually turned the tide of World War II in favor of the Allies.

Morley relates the experiences of that day and some observances since that day.

He returned to France for the 50th year commemoration of the invasion in 1994 and again 20 years later for the 70th commemoration of the event in 2014. He was one of a handful of survivors of the D-Day invasion returning for the latter event, attending the observance in the company of President Barack Obama.

Morley will give a first-hand account of what it was like to be a part of that invasion force both on D-Day and the perilous days that followed. He provides a great historical perspective on the D-Day events, the days following and the war itself.

**Ed Henninger**

Ed Henninger has been an independent newspaper consultant since 1989 and is the Director of Henninger Consulting in Rock Hill, SC. He is universally recognized as the world’s leading design consultant for community newspapers.

He recently completed redesigns of the Cullman Daily Times in Cullman, AL; the Spencer Evening World in Spencer, IN; The Clay County News in Sutton, NE; the Madelia Times-Messenger in Madelia, MN; and the Holyoke Enterprise in Holyoke, CO.

He is now at work with newspapers and magazines in Texas, Nebraska, Massachusetts, Idaho, Georgia and Iowa.

Ed has traveled to the Ukraine, the Republic of Georgia and Armenia to offer design workshops and assist with redesigns of several newspapers in those countries.

His column on newspaper design appears regularly in Publishers’ Auxiliary, the publication of the National Newspaper Association. His column also appears in the bulletin of the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association as well as newsletters of press organizations throughout the U.S. and Canada. It is also distributed free to more than 2,000 subscribers worldwide.

Ed Henninger’s Blog is followed by more than 2,000 news design professionals worldwide and is updated weekly with reports and videos on news design and other visual arts.

**Russell Viers**

Russell Viers is an international speaker who has presented in 22 countries for publishing events since 1997. He has been featured at the HOW Conference, InDesign Conference, IFRA, PepCon and many more including AdobeMAX, where he was honored as an AdobeMAX Master.

In addition to speaking, he has helped many major publications and designers learn techniques to work faster and improve quality including Better Homes and Gardens, Ladies Home Journal, New York Times Regional Papers, Sabah, American Greetings, Crayola and many others.

Having started with CompuGraphic typesetting machines in the early 80s, then PageMaker 1 in 1987, Viers has been actively involved with Digital Publishing since the early days. In addition to speaking live, he has done videos for Lynda.com, Peachpit Press and Total Training.

**Leonard Woolsey**

Leonard Woolsey is the president and publisher of The Daily News - the oldest newspaper in the state of Texas. He is also the publisher of Coast Monthly magazine, a successful lifestyle-focused magazine featuring life along the Upper Gulf Coast. The Daily News is based on Galveston Island and is located within an hour of Houston. The newspaper is celebrating 175 years in 2017 - predating even the statehood of Texas.

Woolsey, a publisher of newspapers for more than twenty years, began developing magazine products for newspapers while in Georgia. Now in Texas, he is leading the successful effort of Southern Newspapers, Inc. to introduce attractive and profitable magazine titles to their existing newspaper properties. Coast Monthly is the winner for best magazine by the Texas Press Association for the past two years and is approaching $1 million in annual revenue for the newspaper.

Coast Monthly also played the driving factor of The Daily News being recognized in Editor & Publisher’s 2017 edition of “10 Newspapers Who Do It Right”. This is the second time newspapers led by Woolsey have been featured on this annual list by Editor & Publisher.

Woolsey is a writer, reader, and cycles thousands of miles a year throughout the country. His wife, whom he met in college more than 35 years ago, prefers to not get on a bike but is always game to travel. Together they have two adult children who are both in the media field. Their son is a magazine editor at Texas Hill Country and their daughter is finishing up her bachelors in media and communications in Georgia.
Early Bird Reception & Tour at the

Clinton Presidential Library

Wednesday, July 5 at 6 p.m.

Join us for Dinner, Music &
Backstage Tours at the newly renovated

Robinson Center

Thursday, July 6 at 6:30 pm
Golf Tournament Entry Form

Name _____________________________________ Company __________________________________
Mailing Address ________________________________________________________________________
City ___________________________________________________ State __________ Zip ___________
Phone _____________________________ E-mail ____________________________________________
Golf Handicap __________________________ (or) Average 18-hole Score ____________________
Name(s) of those you wish to play with ________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

$100/player | Proceeds benefit the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation
411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 | 501-374-1500 | Fax 501-374-7509
APA 2017 SUPERCONVENTION

Press Camp!

FRIDAY, JULY 7TH

ONLY $20!

Camp Includes:
• A Junior Press Card
• Breakfast, lunch & supplies
• Sightseeing field trip around the River Market District
• Disposable camera & developing

Photos will be displayed Friday evening at the Honorees’ Reception.

PRESS CAMP FOR KIDS REGISTRATION FORM
Ages 6-12 (adult supervision and camp counselors on hand)

Child’s Name ___________________________ Age ______
Child’s Name ___________________________ Age ______
Child’s Name ___________________________ Age ______
Parent(s) __________________________________________
Newspaper / Company ________________________________

Total Number of Camp Registrants _______ x $20 each = _______

Please Return with SuperConvention Registration Form to:
411 S.Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 | Phone: (501) 374-1500 Fax: (50) 374-7509
Contribute items to the ANF Silent Auction.
Give something back to your industry. Journalism education needs your help!

Here are some thought-starters:

- Box or basket of gift items from your city or county
- Case of wine, food, etc. made in your city or area
- Unique product – handmade quilt gift basket/box, original jewelry
- Dinner for four with a celebrity (or at a special place)
- Autographed item from a celebrity
- Box seats at a sporting event – Cowboys, Travelers, Naturals, etc.
- Weekend mini-vacation for two – lodging, food & attractions
- Guided fishing, hunting trip or similar event

Authorized by ____________________________________ Title _________________________
Company ________________________________________Phone _______________________
Address __________________________________ City/State/Zip ________________________

_____ Will bring item(s) to convention  ____ Will deliver item(s) to APA by June 23

Please return this form by Friday, June 23, 2017

Mail to: Arkansas Press Association, 411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 | Fax to: 501.374.7509
READ THIS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Each person (except for children under 18 years of age) attending the convention must pay a registration fee in addition to meals or special events. Registration pays speaker & program expenses, continental breakfasts, breaks, etc. See specific meal prices due, in addition to the registration fee.

2. Circle the appropriate registration fee for each attendee, as well as the chosen reservations for each function each will attend. NOTE: (a) One may choose to register for ONE DAY only, prorating the registration fee, paying $25, plus any meal fees for that day. For example, Saturday award winners pay $25 registration fee PLUS $15 for the lunch. (b) A $10 (dollar) early bird discount can be taken per newspaper/company if we receive your registration form before June 16th and at least one full registration is listed. (c) Thirteen year-olds and younger children may choose a child’s plate for Friday dinner and Saturday lunch.

3. Copy this form for additional attendees if needed. List children and one-day-only people after those paying full registration.

4. Golfers and Press Camp Kids must fill out that activity’s registration form (separate page) but may pay with one check on this form if you like. Add the page totals from those forms after the convention fees on this form.

5. You may also wish to donate to the AR Newspaper Foundation if you are unable to attend or participate in the auction. Add the amount in the square before Grand Total below.

6. Dress will be summer casual for most activities. Business casual will be appropriate for the Friday night banquet.

7. DEADLINE to register is June 30th. All convention cancellations must be made 48 hours in advance of event or we expect your payment. No refunds will be made after July 3rd.

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Column Totals

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City | State | Zip

Phone

Registration Authorized by

E-Mail

Send Convention Registration to:
ARKANSAS PRESS ASSOCIATION
411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201
or fax to APA at (501) 374-7509

FINAL DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS JUNE 30TH!

Register Online at: http://www.arkansaspress.org/event/2017SuperConvention
Robinson Center event includes food, drink, tours, entertainment

The newly renovated Robinson Center, adjacent to the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock, will be the setting for the Thursday evening, July 6, event at the 2017 APA SuperConvention. The event will be from 6 to 8 p.m. and will include food, drink and entertainment.

APA members and guests attending will have access to the balcony outside the meeting area to take in the view. Another fun feature of the evening is the opportunity to have a caricature done by Joe Thibodeau, a former editorial cartoonist who has doing caricatures at similar events for year.

The evening will also include guided tours of the newly renovated event and entertainment facility, which has already hosted some big events, like the opening event, the staging of the play, “Phantom of the Opera.”

Those attending the event at the Robinson Center will be able to access the meeting venue through a new hallway connecting the DoubleTree convention venue and the newly renovated center.

“It’s very handy and only a short walk,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “I think those attending will appreciate what an asset this new facility is for Arkansas.”

After the event, at around 8:30 p.m., after hours event will take place back in the hotel.

‘Legal, Libel and FOIA’ topic for convention session

“Legal, Libel and the Freedom of Information Act” are on the table for discussion Thursday afternoon, July 6, when John Tull, attorney at law, makes a return visit to the APA SuperConvention. Vince Chadick will again be joining Tull for this conversation, setting the stage for a repeat of the 2016 convention in Bentonville.

Tull’s session always produced high marks on the feedback we get from those attending, including from last year’s convention session.

Question and answer will also be a big part of this session. Here’s your chance to get some of those legal questions answered, all included in the price of registration for the convention.

Robinson event features free caricatures

If you’ve been stressing out over not having a caricature of yourself to hang in your newspaper office, now is your chance to get one.

Joe Thibodeau, nationally known illustrator and caricature artist, will be creating caricatures for those desiring one at the Thursday evening APA convention event at the Robinson Center, located adjacent to the convention facilities at the DoubleTree Hotel, headquarters for the 2017 APA convention.

“The caricature accompanying this story was created for me by Joe at an APA convention back in the 1980s,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “He’s obviously very talented as I haven’t changed at all since sitting for that caricature, which has adorned my newspaper offices at each of my career stops since.”

It only takes a few minutes for Joe to crank out his caricatures, but the drawing will last a lifetime. Take advantage of this opportunity to have your caricature done at no cost by one of the best in the business.

Continued on page 3
Regular attendees of the APA conventions over the years know that we don’t go in for a lot of spectacle in the staging of the conventions. It’s just better not to do so. Things can go wrong with spectacle.

Besides, it’s not something we know enough about to try to pull off. While we take a few risks from time to time, staging a spectacle is not one we’re ready to undertake. Nor do I think our members, those who attend the conventions, would expect or appreciate.

The Friday luncheon at this year’s convention is going to be about as close as it gets. With keynote speaker Morley Piper, a D-Day veteran and long-time newspaperman, setting the tone for the convention’s patriotic theme, we’re trying to set the stage in an appropriate manner.

That means including a color guard to post the colors, and arranging to have someone who can actually sing to perform for us the National Anthem. I have sung the National Anthem before and toyed with the idea of doing it myself when we were having difficulty finding someone who was available on our desired date. Thank goodness for those attending we found someone else. Me doing it might have actually turned the event into a spectacle, and in not a very positive way.

In all honesty, I never seriously considered doing it at the Friday convention luncheon. I didn’t mention it to the APA staff. I didn’t want to put them in the awkward position of having to agree that this was a good idea, when likely they could anticipate the pending disaster that could have easily come to pass if I tried singing in front of the group.

There are a few things which I would like to be remembered. Butchering the National Anthem at a convention luncheon is not one of them.

There’s no way I would attempt to do that in a room full of people I know. This is the sort of thing you really need to do in front of a room full of strangers. It’s much, much easier to perform for strangers than it is for friends and life-long acquaintances.

And I sure would not have wanted to take anything away from the great opportunity we have to have Morley to come and present our keynote address. We are indeed fortunate. It will definitely be a high point of a convention that doesn’t need any low points, which could have easily come to pass if I tried singing in front of the group.

That Friday luncheon is going to be a busy one. We have at least one award to present and one to accept in addition to passing the gavel to install a new APA president. Byron Tate, publisher of The Sheridan Headlight, will be installed to take over for the current President Nat Lea.

The awards for the annual APA golf outing will also be presented at the Friday luncheon, along with the check presentations from the event sponsors, namely AT&T Arkansas and UAMS, representatives of which will be present to make the presentations.

All of the events and sessions at the convention are planned to enlighten, entertain and inform, but the Friday luncheon is going to be a significant microcosm of the entire gathering. I hope you plan to not miss a minute of it.

We’ve been doing some remodeling at the APA world headquarters on Victory Street in Little Rock. We didn’t actually plan to do so, but we were sort of forced into it by circumstance.

In this case the circumstance was a water supply line that burst in the upstairs ladies room. Of course the line was in the wall, which had to be broken up to get at the leak. Those are not sheet rock walls, either. They’re plaster and expanded metal, like they used to build them.

The ladies room was left in disarray after the repair so we took the opportunity to remodel the room. Actually, we didn’t have much choice in the matter. It was a mess.

Then we also had to remodel a downstairs restroom where all that leaking water had collected, cracking the plaster.

Then, if that wasn’t enough heavy rains a month or so ago finally put too much pressure on our retaining wall that runs along the back of the building lot, and it crumbled and fell into the parking lot. The wall is only about three feet tall, but had been leaning ever since I came here and likely long before.

You would think, of course, that replacing a retaining wall would be no problem. We applied for and got a permit from the City of Little Rock to proceed, but there’s also the Capitol Zoning Commission to consider and what we had planned for replacing the wall did not meet their requirements. Their code requires that the wall be re-constructed using the same sort of materials originally used in the wall that failed.

That would be brick that at one time matched the exterior of the APA building. The building brick was painted long ago during the remodeling of our building.

We had planned to replace the wall with a reinforced concrete pouring. So now we’ve requested a variance from the commission, which does not meet again until July 25 to hear our request.

Until we can get that permit, the old wall lays in the parking lot broken into two or three large sections, proving once again that there really is nothing all that simple in this world. At least not as simple as it could be or should be.

The Fourth of July holiday is upon us, and the day after is the start of our annual SuperConvention. It kicks off…or tees off…with the annual golf outing at the Country Club of Arkansas at Maumelle. There’s still time to join the festivities at the golf outing and other convention events, but please let us know if you plan to come so we can properly plan and ensure that it is a positive experience for you.

It’s going to be a great convention, but it would be even better if you were there. If you haven’t registered, please do so and we’ll look forward to seeing you there.

Have a great week.

—

Tom

Arkansas Publisher Weekly
Nonprofit news network aims to fund jounro projects

(Editor’s Note: The Arkansas Nonprofit News Network will be the topic of a brief presentation by Lindsey Millar at the Thursday roundtable at the APA convention July 6.)

The Arkansas Nonprofit News Network is a new independent, nonpartisan news project dedicated to producing journalism that matters to Arkansans. With funding from grants and donations, it hires writers, editors, fact-checkers, photographers, videographers and audio producers on a contract basis to cover a story or topic. Their reporting is then distributed for FREE among statewide partners — including radio, TV, newspapers and websites — which publish all, or localized parts, of it. The following organizations have asked to receive ANNN’s reporting: Arkansas Business, the Arkansas Leader, arkansasmatters.com (KARK, Channel 4’s website), Arkansas Times, the Ashley County News Observer, the Batesville Daily Guard, the Baxter Bulletin, the Eureka Springs Independent, fox16.com (FOX, Channel 16’s website), the Harrison Daily Times, the Jonesboro Sun, the Log Cabin Democrat, the Russellville Courier, the Searcy Daily Citizen, the Sheridan Headlight, the Southwest Times Record and the Spring River Chronicle.

Since launching in December, ANNN has published nearly 65 articles. Ibby Caputo, of Newton County, covered the Arkansas General Assembly with a special focus on education issues for ANNN. She has previously reported for NPR, the New York Times and Washington Post. Former Arkansas Times reporter David Ramsey, who has been nationally recognized for his reporting on health care in Arkansas, recently began reporting on health care in Arkansas and is leading an in-depth investigation into the state’s juvenile justice system. Former Arkansas Times reporter Benjamin Hardy has reported on child welfare as well. Look for other reporting on the environment and education later in the year, too.

The Arkansas Times, where ANNN founder Lindsey Millar is the editor, has employed a similar model in recent years, often with the help of a nonprofit partner. After the 2013 Mayflower oil spill, it joined with the environmental nonprofit InsideClimate News to raise almost $36,000 through crowd funding and a grant. The team of reporters hired with that money, including Pulitzer winner Elizabeth McGowan, filed more than a dozen major stories that ran in the Times and on InsideClimate News’ website.

Transparency is a core value for ANNN. Donors have no say in the editorial direction and other operations. ANNN discloses all contributors who give $500 or more on our website and discloses any instance in which donors’ work or business figures into ANNN reporting. All ANNN work is tagged with our mission statement and any relevant disclosures. ANNN is a registered nonprofit in the state of Arkansas that, in its startup year, is operating under the fiscal sponsorship of the Fred Darragh Foundation. Millar and other local editors will volunteer their time to manage ANNN until June 30, 2018. ANNN has no overhead; 98 percent of money raised directly underwrites meaningful journalism.

Media organizations interested in receiving ANNN reporting or learning more should contact Lindsey Millar at lindseymillar@arknews.org.

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

June 29, 2017

3
Who's Coming...

Here is the list of those who have registered to attend the 2017 APA SuperConvention July 5-8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

If your name is not on this list, please register today and plan to attend this outstanding gathering with those listed below:

**Batesville Daily Guard:** Angela Roberts, Lacy Mitchell, Luke Stroud, Joseph Price, Kris Caraway, Chelsea Savage

**Bella Vista Weekly Vista:** Kent Marts, Mark Humphrey

**Benton, Saline Courier:** John and Christa Briggs, Pat and Chuck Stuckey, Kelly Freudsprung, Wendy Moore, Sarah Perry

Bentonville, Visit Bentonville: Missy Penor

Bentonville: Mike and Karen Brown

Berryville, Carroll County Newspapers: Scott Lofitis, David Bell, Tavi Ellis, Samantha Jones, Amanda Nettes, Kelby Newcomb

Branson, MO: Tamra Jane Corbin

**Camden News:** Sue and James Lee Silliman

Chapel Hill NC, Henninger Consulting: Ed Henninger

Conway, Log Cabin Democrat: Kelly Sublett

**El Dorado News-Times:** Ronnie and Greta Bell

Essex, MA, Newspaper Association Managers: Morely Piper

Fayetteville, **Brenda Blagg**

Fayetteville, NW Arkansas Democrat-Gazette: Lisa and Doug Thompson, April and Sam Wallace, Melissa Gute, Kat Robinson

Galvaston, The Daily News: Leonard Woolsey

Greenwood Democrat: Dustin and Christy Graham

Hardy, Spring River Chronicle: Tammy Curtis, Mack Thompson

Harrison: Jeff and Jane Christenson

Harrison Daily Times: Jim and Lisa Perry, Jeff and Becky Brasel, Candace Brasel, Lynn Elevins, Craig Ealse, Yvonne Cone, Jim and Tammy Holland

Hot Springs, The Sentinel-Record: Mark Gregory, Debe and Rick Johnson, Merry Lee Meeker, Steve Mross, Jimmy Robertson

Huntsville, Madison County Record; Shannon Hahn, Ellen Kreth, Preston Tolliver

Jonesboro: Roy and Pat Ockert

Little Rock, AT&T Arkansas: Anita Smith, Melinda Faubel

Little Rock, Arkansas Business: Lance Turner

Little Rock, Arkansas Childrens Hospital: Hilary DeMillo, Rebecca Brockman

Little Rock, Arkansas Community Foundation: Jessica Szenher, Lea Whitlock

Little Rock, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette: John Brummet, Gavin Lesnick

Little Rock, Arkansas Press Association: Bridget Clay, Terri Cobb, Tom and Pam Larimer, Neil McConnell, Rebecca McGraw, Ashley Wallace, Ashley Wimberley

Little Rock, Arkansas Times: Max Brantley, Lindsey Millar

Little Rock, Associated Press: Kelly Kissel

Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau: Libby Lloyd

Little Rock, Rock City Life: Greg Henderson

Little Rock, The Daily Record; Bobby Burton, Jay and Kathy Edwards

Little Rock, Arkansas Department of Human Services: Glenn Bolick, Kev Moye, Stephen Thornton, Kathellen Purcell

Little Rock, UAMS: Andrea Peel, Leslie Taylor, Katrina Dupins, Yavonda Chase

Little Rock, WEHCO Media, Inc.: Mark and Bobbi Lane, Nat and Neal Lea

Little Rock: Charlotte Schexnayder, Sue Frank

Malvern Daily Record: Gretchen Ritchey, Joshua Waddles

Mena, The Mena Star: Clark Smith, Alex Lee, Jeri Pearson

Monticello, Advance Monticellionian: Harold and Cindy Coggins, Ashley Foreman and Michael Foremann, Vicki Kelly, Tom White

Mount Ida, Montgomery County News: Dewayne Holloway

Mountain View, Stone County Leader: Russell Foster, Rusty and Neal Fraser, Lori Freeze, Edie Sutterfield

N. Little Rock: Frank and Kay Fellone

Nashville News-Lion: John Schirmer

Prairie Village, KS, DigiVersity.TV: Russell Viers

Rector, Rust Communications: Ron and Nancy Kemp

Rison, Cleveland County Herald: Britt Talent

Searcy Daily Citizen: Dana and Bruce Guthrie, Wendy Jones, Steve Watts, Tracy Whitaker, Jamie Williams

The Sheridan Headlight: Tanner Newton, Byron and Mary Pat Tate

Siolar Springs, Herald-Leader: Graham and Amy Thomas, Janelle and Isaac Jessen

Springdale, NW Arkansas Democrat-Gazette: Rusty and Anita Turner

State University, ASU Media & Comm: Rennette McCargo, Gil Fowler

Texarkana Gazette: Terri Leifeste, Les Minor

Walnut Ridge, The Times Dispatch: John and Renee Bland

**Wynne Progress:** David and Ashlynn Owens

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**CONVENTION SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, July 5</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>APA Golf Tournament</td>
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<td>Country Club of Arkansas, Maumelle</td>
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<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>Early Bird Outing</td>
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<td>Clinton Presidential Center Reception &amp; Tour</td>
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<td><strong>Thursday, July 6</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
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<td>Opening Round Table Luncheon</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Session: Covering Arkansas Executions</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>ANF Silent Auction Opens</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Session: Legal, Libel &amp; FOI Q&amp;A</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>Drink &amp; Draw, Dinner, Music &amp; Tours Robinson Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Afterhours Hospitality</td>
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<td><strong>Friday, July 7</strong></td>
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<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>Past Presidents' Breakfast</td>
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<td>Invitation Only</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>Trade Show Opens</td>
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<td>Press Camp (Kids 6-12)</td>
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<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>Session: Saving Public Notices</td>
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<td>Presented by Ed Henninger, Director, Henninger Consulting, Rock Hill, SC</td>
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<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>Session: Creative Niche Publications</td>
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<td>Presented by Leonard Woolsey, President and Publisher of The Daily News, Galveston, Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
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<td>Luncheon</td>
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<td>• Keynote Speaker, Morley Piper, D-Day Veteran, NAM Clerk</td>
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<td>• President's Gavel Passing</td>
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<td>• ANF Golf Awards</td>
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<td>• Presentation of Freedom of Information Award</td>
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<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>Session: Power of the Process</td>
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<td>Presented by Russell Viers</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Session (cont.): Power of the Process</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Presented by Russell Viers</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>Honorees’ Reception</td>
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<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>APA Honors Banquet</td>
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<td>Distinguished Service, Freedom of Information, Golden 50 &amp; Headliner of the Year Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>After-Hours Hospitality</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ANF Silent Auction Concludes</td>
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<td><strong>Saturday, July 8</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>Continental Breakfast</td>
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<td>APA Member Business Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>Panel Discussion: Reflections on a Career in Journalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
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<td>Panel Discussion: Newsgathering &amp; Reporting in the Digital Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td>APA Better Newspaper Editorial Awards Presentation</td>
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Free Press Free People
#ArkansasNewspapers

APA 2017 SuperConvention
July 5 - 8 | Little Rock
The Country Club of Arkansas golf course is consistently listed among the finest courses in central Arkansas. The course was built by golfers. With numerous sand bunkers, water on eleven holes, sparkling lakes and streams, and fairways graced by Loblolly pines, the Country Club of Arkansas captures the majestic beauty of central Arkansas. While the course was designed to appeal to golfers of all levels, it also offers a variety of challenging holes certain to appeal to the most discriminating of championship caliber golfers.

The tournament is sponsored by UAMS and AT&T Arkansas and benefits the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation.

Hotel Information
DoubleTree by Hilton

Situated in the heart of downtown Little Rock on the banks of the Arkansas River, DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Little Rock offers the best in southern hospitality. The hotel recently completed a renovation, providing refreshed guest rooms, a new lobby, and a redesigned business center and Concierge lounge. Dine at our new restaurant and lounge, Bridges, for a casual experience with local and regional fare, or pick up freshly made specialties at the new Made Market.

Begin your stay at this friendly and inviting Little Rock hotel with our signature chocolate chip cookie, and allow our staff to cater to your needs. Conveniently located only 15 minutes from the Little Rock National Airport and just off I-30, our downtown location offers easy access to everything the Arkansas capital has to offer. Our complimentary shuttle service will take you anywhere within five miles of the hotel.

To make a room reservation, call (501) 372-4371
424 West Markham St., Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Reserve hotel rooms by June 12 | $116 Single/Double
Be sure to mention the Arkansas Press Association group name when reserving your room.
Guest Speakers

Morley Piper
Morley Piper, retired executive director of the New England Press Association who now serves as “clerk” of the Newspaper Association Managers group.
Morley was a 19-year-old junior officer in the Army and was among those charging the beaches at Normandy during the D-Day invasion in 1944. For decades Morley didn’t speak of the experience. Many who know him did not know he had participated in this bloody event that eventually turned the tide of World War II in favor of the Allies.
Morley relates the experiences of that day and some observances since that day.
He returned to France for the 50th year commemoration of the invasion in 1994 and again 20 years later for the 70th commemoration of the event in 2014. He was one of a handful of survivors of the D-Day invasion returning for the latter event, attending the observance in the company of President Barack Obama.
Morley will give a first-hand account of what it was like to be a part of that invasion force both on D-Day and the perilous days that followed. He provides a great historical perspective on the D-Day events, the days following and the war itself.

Ed Henninger
Ed Henninger has been an independent newspaper consultant since 1989 and is the Director of Henninger Consulting in Rock Hill, SC. He is universally recognized as the world’s leading design consultant for community newspapers.
He recently completed redesigns of the Cullman Daily Times in Cullman, AL; the Spencer Evening World in Spencer, IN; The Clay County News in Sutton, NE; the Madelia Times-Messenger in Madelia, MN; and the Holyoke Enterprise in Holyoke, CO.
He is now at work with newspapers and magazines in Texas, Nebraska, Massachusetts, Idaho, Georgia and Iowa.
Ed has traveled to the Ukraine, the Republic of Georgia and Armenia to offer design workshops and assist with redesigns of several newspapers in those countries.
His column on newspaper design appears regularly in Publishers’ Auxiliary, the publication of the National Newspaper Association. His column also appears in the bulletin of the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association as well as newsletters of press organizations throughout the U.S. and Canada. It is also distributed free to more than 2,000 subscribers worldwide.
Ed Henninger’s Blog is followed by more than 2,000 news design professionals worldwide and is updated weekly with reports and videos on news design and other visual arts.

Russell Viers
Russell Viers is an international speaker who has presented in 22 countries for publishing events since 1997. He has been featured at the HOW Conference, InDesign Conference, IFRA, PepCon and many more including AdobeMAX, where he was honored as an AdobeMAX Master.
In addition to speaking, he has helped many major publications and designers learn techniques to work faster and improve quality including Better Homes and Gardens, Ladies Home Journal, New York Times Regional Papers, Sabah, American Greetings, Crayola and many others.
Having started with CompuGraphic typesetting machines in the early 80s, then PageMaker 1 in 1987, Viers has been actively involved with Digital Publishing since the early days. In addition to speaking live, he has done videos for Lynda.com, Peachpit Press and Total Training.

Leonard Woolsey
Leonard Woolsey is the president and publisher of The Daily News - the oldest newspaper in the state of Texas. He is also the publisher of Coast Monthly magazine, a successful lifestyle-focused magazine featuring life along the Upper Gulf Coast. The Daily News is based on Galveston Island and is located within an hour of Houston. The newspaper is celebrating 175 years in 2017 - predating even the statehood of Texas.
Woolsey, a publisher of newspapers for more than twenty years, began developing magazine products for newspapers while in Georgia. Now in Texas, he is leading the successful effort of Southern Newspapers, Inc. to introduce attractive and profitable magazine titles to their existing newspaper properties. Coast Monthly is the winner for best magazine by the Texas Press Association for the past two years and is approaching $1 million in annual revenue for the newspaper.
Coast Monthly also played the driving factor of The Daily News being recognized in Editor & Publisher’s 2017 edition of “10 Newspapers Who Do It Right”. This is the second time newspapers led by Woolsey have been featured on this annual

list by Editor & Publisher.
Woolsey is a writer, reader, and cycles thousands of miles a year throughout the country. His wife, whom he met in college more than 35 years ago, prefers to not get on a bike but is always game to travel. Together they have two adult children who are both in the media field. Their son is a magazine editor at Texas Hill Country and their daughter is finishing up her bachelors in media and communications in Georgia.
Early Bird Reception & Tour at the

Clinton Presidential Library

Wednesday, July 5 at 6 p.m.

Join us for Dinner, Music &
Backstage Tours at the newly renovated

Robinson Center

Thursday, July 6 at 6:30 pm
Golf Tournament Entry Form

Name _____________________________________ Company __________________________________
Mailing Address ________________________________________________________________________
City ___________________________________________________ State __________ Zip ___________
Phone _____________________________ E-mail ____________________________________________
Golf Handicap __________________________ (or) Average 18-hole Score _________________________
Name(s) of those you wish to play with ___________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

$100/player | Proceeds benefit the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation
411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 | 501-374-1500 | Fax 501-374-7509
APA 2017 SUPERCONVENTION

Press Camp!

FRIDAY, JULY 7th

ONLY $20!

Camp Includes:
• A Junior Press Card
• Breakfast, lunch & supplies
• Sightseeing field trip around the River Market District
• Disposable camera & developing

Photos will be displayed Friday evening at the Honorees’ Reception.

PRESS CAMP FOR KIDS REGISTRATION FORM
Ages 6-12 (adult supervision and camp counselors on hand)

Child’s Name ___________________________________________ Age ________

Child’s Name ___________________________________________ Age ________

Child’s Name ___________________________________________ Age ________

Parent(s) ______________________________________________

Newspaper / Company ____________________________________

Total Number of Camp Registrants ______ x $20 each = ________

Please Return with SuperConvention Registration Form to:
411 S.Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 | Phone: (501) 374-1500 Fax: (50) 374-7509
Contribute items to the ANF Silent Auction.
Give something back to your industry. Journalism education needs your help!

Here are some thought-starters:
• Box or basket of gift items from your city or county
• Case of wine, food, etc. made in your city or area
• Unique product – handmade quilt gift basket/box, original jewelry
• Dinner for four with a celebrity (or at a special place)
• Autographed item from a celebrity
• Box seats at a sporting event – Cowboys, Travelers, Naturals, etc.
• Weekend mini-vacation for two – lodging, food & attractions
• Guided fishing, hunting trip or similar event

Auction Schedule:
Thursday, July 6 - Friday, July 7, 2017

Questions? Call APA at (800) 569-8762

YES! We want to help fund journalism education and internships. Count on us to contribute the following: Description of item(s), including brand names (use additional page if necessary)

1. _______________________________________________________________ $ ________
2. _______________________________________________________________ $ ________
3. _______________________________________________________________ $ ________
4. _______________________________________________________________ $ ________

Authorized by ____________________________________ Title _________________________
Company ________________________________________ Phone _______________________
Address __________________________________________ City/State/Zip ________________________

_____ Will bring item(s) to convention
_____ Will deliver item(s) to APA by June 23

Please return this form by Friday, June 23, 2017
Mail to: Arkansas Press Association, 411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 | Fax to: 501.374.7509
READ THIS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

1. Each person (except for children under 18 years of age) attending the convention must pay a registration fee in addition to meals or special events. Registration pays speaker & program expenses, continental breakfasts, breaks, etc. See specific meal prices due, in addition to the registration fee.

2. Circle the appropriate registration fee for each attendee, as well as the chosen reservations for each function each will attend. NOTE: (a) One may choose to register for ONE DAY only, prorating the registration fee, paying $25, plus any meal fees for that day. For example, Saturday award winners pay $25 registration fee PLUS $15 for the lunch. (b) A $10 (dollar) early bird discount can be taken per newspaper/company if we receive your registration form before June 16th and at least one full registration is listed. (c) Thirteen year-olds and younger children may choose a child’s plate for Friday dinner and Saturday lunch.

3. Copy this form for additional attendees if needed. List children and one-day-only people after those paying full registration.

4. Golfers and Press Camp Kids must fill out that activity’s registration form (separate page) but may pay with one check on this form if you like. Add the page totals from those forms after the convention fees on this form.

5. You may also wish to donate to the AR Newspaper Foundation if you are unable to attend or participate in the auction. Add the amount in the square before Grand Total below.

6. Dress will be summer casual for most activities. Business casual will be appropriate for the Friday night banquet.

7. DEADLINE to register is June 30th. All convention cancellations must be made 48 hours in advance of event or we expect your payment. No refunds will be made after July 3rd.

Send Convention Registration to:
ARKANSAS PRESS ASSOCIATION
411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201
or fax to APA at (501) 374-7509

FINAL DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS JUNE 30TH!

Register Online at: http://www.arkansaspress.org/event/2017SuperConvention
APA Golf Tournament

VICTORY DANCE – Members of the winning team do a victory dance at Wednesday’s soggy APA golf outing at the Country Club of Arkansas at Maumelle. The course was very wet from rain that fell right up till tee time, but this team managed to post a 9-under-par score. There was another 9 under team, but this team won a card playoff. Pictured are, from left, Kelly Freudensprung, David McCollum, Frank Fellone, Brian Fellone and Jay Edwards.

Openings remain for design consultation

If you would like to have an expert take a look at your newspaper and offer suggestions for improving its design, there’s still time.

Ed Henninger of Henninger Consulting of Rock Hill, SC, is offering these one-on-one sessions at the APA convention Friday, July 7, at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock.

Henninger is one of the featured presenters at the convention. His session on “Saving Public Notices” is at 9 a.m. Friday morning. After that he will spend the balance of the day meeting one-on-one with APA member newspapers to talk design. The 15-minute sessions are free.

If you would like to take advantage of this offer, be sure to bring copies of your newspaper and schedule a time with Ed to sit down and talk design.

Convention registrations top 200; Now underway

The 2017 Arkansas Press Association SuperConvention is now underway at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock where over 200 APA members and guests have registered to participate in the annual event.

The convention runs through the Saturday lunch where the editorial awards will be presented.

President Nat Lea will preside over the convention, one of his last official act in his one-year term as president. He will hand over the gavel at the Friday luncheon to Byron Tate, publisher of The Sheridan Headlight, who will take over as president at the conclusion of the convention.

A line of past presidents, starting with the most senior past president attending, Charlotte Schexnayder (1981), will pass the gavel to install the new president.

Morley Piper, retired executive director of the New England Press Association, will deliver the keynote address at that same Friday luncheon. Morley participated in the D-Day invasion during World War II, and relates that experience in his presentation.

The APA’s “special achievement awards” will be presented Friday evening at the annual “honors banquet.” The awards to be presented include the Golden 50 Service Award (3), the FOI Award, the Distinguished Service Award, and the Headliner of the Year Award.

President Lea will preside over the honors banquet, and members of the APA Board of Directors will present the awards.

The whole affair wraps up Saturday when the 2017 Better Newspaper Editorial Contest awards are presented. These awards are presented those who entered for consideration and over 50 newspapers participated in this year’s contest. Members of the Oklahoma Press Association judged the entries.

Rusty Turner, editor of the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette and a member of the APA board will present the editorial awards this year.

FREE PRESS
FREE PEOPLE

The “stars and stripes” will be in abundance at the 2017 SuperConvention as a patriotic theme has been selected in honor of the keynote speaker.

The convention continues the long-standing tradition of APA members coming together, a tradition that started shortly after the APA was founded in 1873.
As you are reading this, over 200 APA members and guests are convened at the DoubleTree Hotel in downtown Little Rock for the annual APA convention.

The number attending is down some from recent years, but still a strong number considering that so many families plan their annual vacations around the Fourth of July.

Several of those not attending shared with me that was exactly why they would be unable to attend the convention. It’s nobody’s fault really, but we’ve made a mental note to stay away from scheduling the convention so close to the Independence Day holiday, and certainly not in the same week.

Those who did make it are being rewarded with some excellent convention programming. There will be stuff to learn and horizons to expand. That’s sort of what these conventions are for. Well, that and the networking. That was true at the first convention after the APA was founded in 1873 and it continues to be so today. Many life-long friendships have been forged at these meetings of people who share not just an industry but also a passion for the business.

It all comes together this week in Little Rock when months of planning and organization will be put to the test as the newspaper people of Arkansas once again convene. I hope to see you here.

I have related before what the APA convention means to me. Past gatherings have created some of my fondest memories. Those memories almost all center on the people with whom I shared the experience. Some of those people still attend the conventions, and it’s always good to renew acquaintances and to re-live those convention memories we share.

In was in 1953 when I attended my first APA convention with my parents. It was in Eureka Springs. The event I first attended was a picnic at Lake Leatherwood, a park just west of Eureka Springs on U.S. Highway 62.

Over the years I attended several conventions with my parents. That was when there were two conventions each year, summer and winter. I attended more summer conventions than winters, mainly because the winters normally conflicted with my school activities. There were no such conflicts in the summer and I missed very few of the warm weather gatherings because my parents would not have even thought about missing a convention. I know they enjoyed the comradery shared with other newspaper people, but they also enjoyed the opportunity to get out of town for a couple of days and let their hair down so to speak. They always had fun with the large group of regulars who attended.

A couple of weeks ago I had a nice phone conversation with Dean Walls, publisher of the White River Journal in Des Arc and we reminisced a bit about conventions of the past. Dean was a contemporary of my parents and shared some of those great convention memories with them. Dean, now in her 90s and still getting the newspaper out each week, spoke fondly of her memories of conventions in Hot Springs and the people with whom she shared them.

She in particular mentioned having a late breakfast at Mollies in downtown Hot Springs with Jay and Patsy Jackson and others. Perhaps this happened more than once, but each must have been a fun experience for Dean as she relates them like they just happened last week. That’s what the convention does. It creates great memories of these shared experiences with other newspaper people.

It was with great sadness that I read of the closing of The Atkins Chronicle and its sister newspaper, The Dover Times recently. I am a former employee of the Chronicle so it was particularly meaningful for me.

Actually, I was a rather accidental employee of the Chronicle. I had just gotten out of the Navy in late 1972 and had enrolled at Arkansas Tech in Russellville to complete my undergraduate studies. Atkins is just nine miles up the road from Russellville. More conveniently, it was roughly halfway to Morrilton from Russellville. Morrilton is where we had to go to purchase alcohol, as Russellville and Pope County were dry. They still are, in fact.

Anyway, it was on one of those runs to Morrilton that I stopped into the Chronicle office to say hi to Tommy Gillespie, then owner and publisher of the weekly. Tommy was a fixture at APA conventions in those days, and that is where I came to know him. There’s that convention connection again.

Anyway, we had a nice visit and we talked shop for an hour or so. The industry, even the small newspapers, were making the transition to “cold type” from the hot metal days, but Tommy was still in the letterpress mode, cranking out type to fill his newspaper pages on the lone Linotype at the Chronicle.

A short time later I got a call from Tommy. He needed help. Through a series of events he had lost his staff and needed some help getting through the period he was going to be short-handed.

It was just Tommy and I getting the paper out there for a few weeks. Tommy would set all the type and I would build the ads and the pages. The two of us, along with some local volunteers, would print the newspaper on the Model E Duplex press that was worn out when Tommy bought it from The Courier in Russellville. That press was held together with baling wire and a promise, and not much else. But it got the paper printed each week and Tommy and I had fun doing it together.

In those days Tommy wrote a column called “Tom’s Tales” that ran in the left hand column of the front page each week. It was the last thing to go into the paper. I would build the front page, except for that left hand column, and when everything else was done before going to press, Tommy would sit down at the Linotype and compose his column. It was a very popular column with readers of the newspaper and won several APA awards in the humorous column category.

Those were the days, now long gone for the Chronicle.

That’s truly sad.

Have a great week.

Tom Larimer’s Potpourri
The Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) elected new officers and board members at its meeting June 28 at the Blue Canoe Brewing Co. in downtown Little Rock.

Jennifer Ellis, editor of zoned editions for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, was elected president of the chapter after serving for a year as vice president. Chelsea Boozer, a beat reporter for the Democrat-Gazette who served last year as president of the chapter, was elected vice president, while Bobby Ampezzan, managing editor of Arkansas Public Media, was elected treasurer, and Syd Hayman, a writer and editor for The Design Group of Little Rock, was elected secretary.

Named to the SPJ Pro Chapter Board are Sonny Albarado, Wendy Miller, Iveta Imre, Rob Moritz, Sarah Campbell-Miller, Kelly P. Kissel and Sarah DeClerk.

Long-time Louisiana Press Director enters retirement

Pam Mitchell, the executive director of the Louisiana Press Association for over 25 years, retired effective July 10.

A native of McGehee and a graduate of the University of Arkansas, Mitchell became executive director in October of 1992 after serving for two years as LPA’s advertising director.

“Pam Mitchell is one of my favorites in our industry,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “She was a great help in getting me started in press association management, and her counsel has continued to be very valuable over the years.”

Miles Forrest, a former President of LPA and Mitch Droge, the assistant executive director, will direct and oversee the day-to-day management of the organization.

Mitchell will serve in a consulting capacity to the organization.
The 2017 edition of the APA’s annual SuperConvention held last week in Little Rock had many high points, but there could be little question that the highest of the peaks came at the Friday luncheon. That’s where Morley Piper spoke.

Morley is a newspaperman. He once sold newspaper advertising and later went to work for the New England Press Association. He was executive director of that organization for 38 years. There can be little question that Morley is one of us.

But before all that, in almost another lifetime, Morley was a 19-year-old second lieutenant who went ashore at Omaha Beach with the 29th Infantry on D-Day, June 6, 1944. He participated in the largest amphibious invasion in the history of the world.

For many years, decades actually, Morley, like so many others who participated in that and other historic events during World War II, did not speak of the experience. He explains that he thinks that is because most don’t want to be reminded of that awful experience, even though he also admits it is on his mind every day. Every day.

Maybe that’s because of the horrendous losses in American troops on that day. As a teenager, Morley was leading a platoon of 42 when they were making their way to Omaha Beach in a landing craft. The next day, they could only account for 17 of them.

Speaking in soft tones as he always does, I had some concerns about those attending being able to hear Morley. There was no need for concern.

As some described it, you could have heard a pin drop in the room, and the floor was carpeted. It was truly that quiet, and Morley’s words as he related the experiences of that fateful day and the days that followed were easily heard even in the back of the room and moving beyond words. Everyone was silent. Nobody wanted to miss a word of it.

Frankly, I’ve never seen a room for such a gathering quite so quiet for a presentation. Everyone in the room knew we were hearing a tale of an experience that was both moving and emotional to our very core, and it was being related by someone who was there; who had experienced the horrors of that day first hand and lived to tell about it, even if it did take 50 years or so to be able do it.

Morley ended his presentation by asking the group to sing with him “My Country Tis of Thee” which they did without hesitation. As the group gave Morley a standing ovation there were few dry eyes in the room.

I have heard Morley give this speech three times now. I had honestly thought that I would be fine since I knew what was coming and what he was going to say. But in the end, as we sang, I had to stop singing. My eyes welled up with tears, and I didn’t have the wind to talk, let alone sing without my voice cracking.

I’ve always been a little embarrassed at this emotional trait I inherited from my father, but I soon saw I needn’t have been. Few in the room were unmoved by Morley’s presentation. Few had dry eyes as they made their way to Morley to shake his hand and to give him a hug.

Afterward, Morley sat at a table in the trade show area and there was a steady stream of people stopping by to share with him how much they appreciated his presentation. Some related stories of family members who were also involved in the D-Day invasion, and what it had meant to their family.

Morley greeted each with grace and thanked them for their courtesy and their compliments.

In the wake of the Friday luncheon, it became clear that this presentation was not just a high point for this convention, but perhaps the highest of high points of any APA convention in which I’ve been involved. It was a presentation that will be difficult, if not impossible, to top in future gatherings. Actually, I don’t think there is any meaningful doubt about that.

There were approximately 100 people in the room to witness Morley’s presentation. I wish it could have been more. I wish all APA members could have seen this speech, because I know it would be meaningful to all of them.

Those of us who did get to see it felt truly blessed by being witness to it. Ask anyone in attendance. I don’t presume to speak for all of them, but I heard several say exactly what I just wrote, about what a great blessing it was to hear Morley.

This was Morley’s first visit to Arkansas. A resident of Boston he still travels around the country for newspaper association gatherings, but somehow in all those years he’s managed not to make it to Arkansas. Now he has.

“You have a good group of people,” was his observation shortly before departing for his return trip to Boston.

Of course, I had to agree with that.

Brenda Blagg was presented the APA’s Distinguished Service Award at Friday night’s honors banquet. Hers was one of six awards presented on the evening. Brenda had a large contingent of family members there to see the presentation, and she shared something with me the morning after that I found meaningful.

She said some family members, none of whom are in the newspaper business, agreed after discussing the evening that they were impressed with the obvious passion for the business that was shared in the banquet room. Brenda surmises that you just don’t find that sort of passion in many other businesses.

Of course she is correct. Goodness knows we don’t get into this business or stay in it to accumulate wealth. We get in it and we stay in it because we have a passion for it. Pure and simple.

It was interesting that a group from outside the industry picked up on that after spending just one short evening, in a banquet setting.

We are passionate about this business. Some of us couldn’t imagine doing anything else.

Have a great week.

Tom
Porter named new GM at Sentinel-Record

Harry Porter, a 20-year veteran of the newspaper industry, was named the new general manager of The Sentinel-Record, a morning daily newspaper in Hot Springs on June 29.

A native of Baton Rouge, La., Porter is a graduate of Mississippi County Community College, now Arkansas Northeastern College in Blytheville, with a degree in business administration.

Porter started out in sales at The Jonesboro Sun, which at the time was owned by the Troutt family, and later purchased by the Paxton Media Group. About six years ago, Porter said his former boss from The Jonesboro Sun called about an opening for a general manager at Paragould with the Paxton Group.

For the last three years, Porter held the position of publisher at The Searcy Daily Citizen, also with Paxton, where he managed the newspaper’s advertising, circulation, editorial and accounting functions.

Porter said he has been very involved in the community in Searcy, serving on the Chamber of Commerce board of directors, with the Community Foundation and in Rotary club, and plans to be similarly involved in Hot Springs.

Porter and wife, Victoria, have an 8-year-old daughter.

Remembering D-Day

HONOR GUARD – Morley Piper of Boston, retired executive director of the New England Press Association, poses with the Little Rock Air Force Base color guard that presented the colors at the beginning of the Friday luncheon at the APA convention at which he delivered the keynote address. Morley’s story of his participation in the D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944, was both moving and entertaining, leaving few dry eyes in the crowd at its conclusion.

SPJ sets free news lab training

The Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists has scheduled a Google News lab Training event on Friday, July 21, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies in Little Rock.

The workshop will provide an overview of how Google’s tools and services can help you research stories, fact-check, find what’s trending and locate useful datasets. The workshop will highlight advanced Google Search techniques, Google Trends, Google Public Data Explorer and more to ensure you’re covered on how to fully uncover things.

You will also learn how to make a quick location-based visualization using Google My Maps.

To register for this free training email jellis@arkansasonline.com or text 501-533-0565.

Space is limited and lunch will be provided.

Friday deadline for ‘Rising Star’ nominations

The Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists has scheduled a Google News lab Training event on Friday, July 21, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies in Little Rock.

The workshop will provide an overview of how Google’s tools and services can help you research stories, fact-check, find what’s trending and locate useful datasets. The workshop will highlight advanced Google Search techniques, Google Trends, Google Public Data Explorer and more to ensure you’re covered on how to fully uncover things.

You will also learn how to make a quick location-based visualization using Google My Maps.

To register for this free training email jellis@arkansasonline.com or text 501-533-0565.

Space is limited and lunch will be provided.

The rising executives who are chosen to participate will meet for the first time with their mentors at the combined SNPA-Inland meeting at The Broadmoor in Colorado Springs Sept. 10-12. The 2017-18 NEX GEN experience will culminate with the presentation at SNPA’s 2018 News Industry Summit in Nashville.

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.

Full details and an application can be found at http://www.snpa.org/stories/nex-gen,4132191.
Guest Column:

Reporters Report; Editors Mentor, Sometimes Inevitably

By Jim Stasiowski

A recent enjoyable email exchange with a reporter I once supervised included this from him: “OK, maybe we don’t miss the inevitable entreaties to ‘make just one more phone call,’ but we do miss most everything else you brought to the newsroom.”

I do especially value the reporter who, without being prodded, makes that “one more phone call.” But I also realize that if any reporter actually required entreaties that were “inevitable,” I did a poor job of helping him or her frame the story.

I almost always resisted my editors’ efforts to guide what I wrote. Part of my attitude was immaturity – who wants to have his work follow a blueprint handed down by someone else, no matter how experienced or wise? – but part of it was my wish to have a story reflect who I am, not who my editor was.

I know, I know, I sound like someegotistical artist who cannot accept anyone’s help, advice or rules. I also know that journalism, unlike such arts as painting, music, poetry or the writing of fiction, requires a devotion to facts.

So when I became an editor and a coach (and later, a combination editor-coach), I tried to instill in reporters a set of general expectations within which they could express themselves as individuals rather than as editor-pleasers determined to finish each story and head home confident that they wouldn’t have to put up with my tracking them down with “entreaties to ‘make just one more phone call.’”

Here are a few tactics reporters should adopt to ward off editors’ intrusions:

Scratch the itch: As you’re listening to a debate in a government meeting, something tells you the course of action being considered violates some ordinance, law, charter or constitution. But no one raises that issue.

Take the trouble to look up documents that spell out or restrict what a government can do.

“But,” you reason, “the government (be it city council, county commissioners or state legislature) has lawyers who advise the decision makers, and surely the lawyers would point out the error.”

Don’t be so sure. Government lawyers are neither infallible nor immune to political pressure. Your editor probably will have the same question that made you wonder, so checking and explaining may prevent a bounced-back story.

Push the source: A former colleague wrote a story about a man in the prime of a successful career who suffered a devastating injury, leaving him a quadriplegic. The reporter included an interview with the man’s wife, who described her new, unexpected and difficult role of constant caregiver.

All of us would wonder: Will the wife stick with the man for another 25 or 30 years? None of us would be comfortable asking that question. But when the reporter did, the wife acknowledged that the future was uncertain, and although her answer was colored with hope and love, it also was realistic and no doubt painful for both her and her husband.

Get to the point: You’re convinced an anecdotal lead fits the story you’re working on, but when you write the lead you love, you realize you then need to contort five (or more) paragraphs to get back to revealing the story’s central conflict.

Many editors will either rewrite the top or, if there is time – and there often isn’t – instruct you to do so. If an anecdotal lead requires that much explanation, it is a reach. And a hard-news lead, while not as satisfying to your artistic side, almost never is wrong.

Be creative: This is a follow-up: Stop thinking that the lead sentence is the only place to show off your individuality. Find ways to weave into your stories a vivid description of a scene, an enticing slice of history, a source’s quotation that is not only relevant but also thought-provoking, original, amusing or unexpectedly emotional.

Analyze: Show your editor (and thus, your readers) that you’re thinking ahead, that the hard news means something more than just what happened that day. Maybe an isolated traffic accident is part of a pattern no one else noticed, or a public official’s latest proposal is based on some significant experience in his or her life, or a school district’s policy revision may lead to bigger problems than the one the revision is designed to solve.

Rehearse: Before your fingers hit the keys, tell your editor the story. If he or she wants more questions asked, you can find that out before laboring over the writing, then being asked to revise. You also can explain why you think you don’t need the extra call. Remember, no editor’s “entreat(y)” has to be “inevitable.”

THE FINAL WORD: In one of William Safire’s compilations of his language columns, he highlighted the verb “obnubilate,” which means “to make unclear, indistinct, vague, etc.,” something we journalists do when we’re too lazy or too busy to fully explain.

(I used to say, “I fuzzed that up,” but now I can say it more eruditely.)

(Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.)
SPJ Diamond Awards entries deadline tomorrow

The Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists has extended the deadline for entries in their annual Diamond Journalism Awards contest recognizing outstanding journalism by professionals and students from Arkansas and bordering media markets in Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas.

The new deadline is Friday, July 21, tomorrow. The original deadline was July 14.

If you live within 250 miles of Little Rock, you are eligible to enter the Diamond Awards contest.

Eligible work must have been published or broadcast between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Entries are now open and they will continue to accept entries until 11 p.m. CDT July 21.

Entries should be made online via the Better BNC Media Awards platform that can be found at www.betternewspapercontest.com.

The contest is open to professional and student journalists, including freelancers who can submit entries or have entries submitted on their behalf by news organizations that published or broadcast their work. Membership in the SPJ is not required.

More information on the contest can be found in the Better BNC Media Awards.
The Thursday “roundtable” discussion at the recent APA convention, a session facilitated by Ellen Kreth, was an interesting discussion with several of those attending adding to the discussion.

These sort of events are great because so many times we may get to thinking that we’re the only one with the problems and challenges we face on a regular basis in the newspaper business, only to come to(15,726),(982,927) out that’s far from true. There isn’t much that can happen, bad or good, at a newspaper that hasn’t likely happened at others, and perhaps even more than once. Perhaps several times.

So when someone mentions an idea that worked really well for them, or offers a solution they’ve discovered to a common problem in community newspapers, everyone in the room potentially benefits.

There were few awkward pauses in this discussion. Ellen kept the discussion moving along, but newspaper people have never been bashful about offering comments or suggestions, especially in a room full of others doing the same thing. It was all very beneficial.

Part of the discussion was the recent legislative session and the assault on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). I’m afraid I got involved in that one.

I encouraged those in the room to be ready when candidates for the legislature come calling, or when someone from the newspaper encounters them on the campaign trail. Be ready with some pertinent questions that could significantly raise their awareness of the importance of the FOIA and of public notices.

Next year is an election year. Already candidates are emerging, so there should be no shortage of these individuals to interview. Please don’t miss an opportunity to do so.

My suggestion was to get the candidate on the record as to their position on the FOIA, keeping in mind that legislators and candidates for the same are really good at paying lip service to the FOIA. They’re all for it until their all for amending it into oblivion.

Get their commitment to help support and defend the FOIA. After all, the FOIA is about government transparency and open government. They support that, right? They do favor government transparency, right?

While you’re at it be prepared to also get them on record for where they stand in keeping public notices in newspapers instead of shifting them to respective government web sites. There have been several attempts to do this in the past and there will most assuredly be attempts to do so in the future.

There are a lot of valid arguments against such a move, none the least of which is that a huge chunk of Arkansas’ population do not have connectivity to the internet and therefore would be disenfranchised by not being able to read about what their government is doing for them . . . or to them.

Taking public notices from newspapers and allowing them to be posted on a government web site is the same as hiding them from public view.

Another great argument is that the public notices placed in newspapers are already online and at NO cost to the taxpayers. Arkansas newspapers upload their public notices to the publicnoticesreads.com/AR site that is open to anyone and easily searchable.

Most newspapers have been doing this for years, but it is always amusing to see the look of surprise on the faces of those in the legislature seeking to move public notices to the internet when they learn that they are already there…for free.

Few among us would trust government agencies to consistently post public notices of vital interest to the public to their web sites. One could easily see these notices hidden on a government web site, satisfying the requirement to publish but hardly keeping the public informed.

Trusting government to publish these notices on a broad range of topics would be foolishly, and suggesting that it could be done cheaply and easily would just be wrong and misleading.

Be prepared to ask candidates for the legislature these questions. Get them on record early and remind them of their commitment regularly. Maintain contact with them regularly after they are elected. Do interview stories on their impressions on the issues of the day. Maintaining that contact in an ongoing basis keeps them familiar with you and the newspaper and will make it so much easier to make contact with them when issues come before the legislature that would impact our industry.

I added a third question to pose to candidates for the legislature, both incumbents and challengers, and that is to get their position on publicly paid lobbyists. There is an army of lobbyists working the legislature that are paid with tax dollars. They represent government entities, state constitutional officers, higher education and various state agencies.

It’s hardly a level playing field when lobbyists for private industry, like newspapers, have to go up against an army of lobbyists paid with taxpayer dollars. The field is not only not level, it’s not fair.

In my view the practice should be banned entirely. Taxpayers should not be paying for special interest lobbying efforts to work against the best interests of the taxpayers. It truly is as simple as that. Yet, the practice goes on in an ongoing basis.

So when you’re asking questions of your legislators or candidates that you may encounter, get their thoughts on this matter as well. It would certainly raise their awareness of this as an issue, and their answers could produce some interesting content for your newspaper.

Readers enjoy reading these types of stories, and it helps them make their decisions about just whom they will vote for when the time comes. This is, in fact, what newspapers do and what they have done since the beginning of their existence. They inform readers and make them aware of the positions of the candidates they’re being asked to vote for.

It’s a great public service, and one that we should take seriously. Our readers look to us for this sort of thing. If we’re not providing it for them, we’re letting them down.

So to review, here are the three questions for candidates:
1. Where do you stand on the FOIA?
2. Where do you stand on keeping public notices in newspapers?
3. Where do you stand on publicly paid lobbyists?

Now go have some fun.

Have a great week.
New ME appointed for El Dorado News-Times

Madeleine Leroux has been named managing editor of the El Dorado News-Times, according to Ronnie Bell, general manager.

A native of Chicago, Leroux attended Southern Illinois University in Carbondale where she studied news-editorial journalism and political science. She comes to the News-Times from the Columbia Daily Tribune in Columbia, Mo. Prior to that she worked at the Jefferson City News-Tribune, a sister newspaper of the News-Times.

She also worked at The Daily Guide in Waynesville, Mo., as a general assignment reporter with a focus on community journalism.

NEW ADDITION?
LET US KNOW!

We want to know about your new hires, retires and promotions!

Send your staffing changes to info@arkansaspres.org to be updated online and included in our weekly bulletin and monthly newsletter.

Mark Your Calendar!

November 9 - 10: 2017 ArkLaMiss Circulation & Marketing Conference
Ameristar Casino & Hotel
Vicksburg, MS

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Drone training on agenda at RJI Institute

The Missouri Drone Journalism program has been scheduled for Saturday, July 22, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute in Columbia, Mo.

The workshop is $195. Registration is available online, although online payment is not available. Those attending should plan on paying when they arrive.

The workshop will provide the latest issues, regulations and trends on the use of unmanned aircraft for journalists. The one-day seminar includes presentations on videography techniques and the steps to earn the Remote Pilot License to legally fly for journalistic purposes, plus an afternoon of hands-on flight.

For more information and to register: https://www.rjionline.org/events/missouri-drone-journalism-workshop1.

Online Media Campus lists upcoming webinars

The Online Media Campus lists a couple of upcoming webinars that should be of interest to APA members.

The Friday, July 28, webinar on “Effective Prospecting: Five steps to more conversion,” features Mike Centorani who was the featured presenter at the APA advertising conference in 2016.

Centorani, of Sales Transformation Now, Inc., will discuss how to get more appointments with fewer calls, cold calling, and how to work smarter instead of harder.

Click here for online registration and for more information on this webinar: http://tinyurl.com/y8jxxkks. The deadline to register is July 25.

Following that, on Thursday, August 17, from 2 to 3 p.m. Central, the topic will be “Five ways to use Facebook Live.” This webinar will feature Jason Kolnos, Cape Cod Times and Timothy Schmitt of GateHouse Media.

This webinar will address how to draw in a new audience to boost your numbers on videos or podcasts?

Reservations should be booked for this webinar by August 14. You can find more information at the same link above.

APA members interested in signing up for one or both of these webinars are reminded that APA partners with Online Media Campus and APA members can register at discounted rates.

SPJ sets free news lab training tomorrow

Don’t forget that the Arkansas Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists has scheduled a Google News lab Training event on Friday, July 21, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies in Little Rock.

The workshop will provide an overview of how Google’s tools can help you research stories, fact-check, find what’s trending and locate useful datasets. The workshop will highlight advanced Google Search techniques, Google Trends, Google Public Data Explorer and more to ensure you’re covered on how to fully uncover things.

You will also learn how to make a quick location-based visualization using Google My Maps.

To register for this free training email jellis@arkansasonline.com or text 501-533-0565.

Space is limited and lunch will be provided.
Guest Column:
Into the Issues: Dealing with Critics Using 'Fake News' Accusations
By Al Cross

In a challenging environment with fewer resources, greater vulnerabilities and increasing attacks from politicians and the politically motivated, how should news organizations respond? One editor-publisher’s approach — a calm, respectful but strong defense of journalism and its essential role in democracy — seems to work.

Brian Hunt, editor and publisher of the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin, circ. 16,000, gave a speech at the local library and boiled it down to a 2,400-word column in the May 7 edition, headlined “Community journalism in the era of fake news.” We excerpted it on bit.ly/2rxLqCi, and you can read the entire original at bit.ly/2sQtB5k.

Hunt begins by explaining that fake news “is as old as communication itself. . . . What is newer historically are the advertiser-driven platforms and technologies that now enable information to accelerate and expand without regard to any formal vetting or verification.”

With technology and consumer data held by Google, Facebook and other advertising-driven platforms, “Truth matters less today than reach,” Hunt says. “The content that wraps around these ads doesn’t need to be true, it just needs to be able to entice us to click. And we really click, motivated in part by our very human desire to improve ourselves and to belong to something. . . . They know what persuades us as individuals and they can easily help us sort ourselves into very small groups of like-minded groups. What could go wrong?”

A tribal and divisive politics, for one thing. “I don’t want to paint social media as the enemy of truth,” Hunt says. “It’s not — though a business model focused exclusively on serving ads based on our likes does present challenges in terms of what is true and what is merely effective. . . . We all gravitate to information that feels like it fits our perspective. It’s human nature. Fake news stories — like spam emails that preceded them — work because they can cheaply exploit known human behavior.”

Hunt gives a short history of journalism and explains, “As journalists, we are trained in critical thinking. In looking at all sides of an issue. In separating our personal feelings from the work of telling true and balanced stories that enable readers to make up their own mind. The rise of objective journalism had a dramatic impact on the news media — and in our world. The advent of the advertiser-funded internet particularly, and the scale at which broadcast news outlets proliferated and extended themselves, is a new wild west of information dissemination. So how do we navigate the vast amounts of information we encounter to ensure that what we read and what we share are true?”

Hunt recommends the “Stop, Search, Subscribe” motto of the News Media Alliance, formerly the Newspaper Association of America, but acknowledges, “What is true or false may not be as enticing as ‘our desire to believe in something shared.’

He gives examples: “The president of the United States declares the press the enemy of the people. In our valley, we drive by billboards that vilify our reporters and editors. Fake news accusations are now common for stories that don’t suit a particular audience, true or not. We’re increasingly intolerant about information we don’t like, for sides of the argument that disagree with our side. For community newspapers such as the U-B, this loss of collective understanding and tolerance threatens the very sense of a shared and diverse community.”

After Donald Trump was elected, “I began hearing from readers who seemed confused about what was published as a news story and what was published as a personal opinion column or an editorial — definitions that newspapers have relied on for decades are suddenly not widely understood,” Hunt says. “This became a small wave of complaints that national political coverage in the U-B did not match reader expectations — they knew things we didn’t include, and they often disbelieved what we did include.”

Hunt gives examples of the extreme without being judgmental: “I’ve been challenged on why we include people of color in our newspaper. I’ve heard from readers who question why, when two-thirds of our region voted for Trump, the U-B would ever publish anything remotely critical of his presidency. I learn things in these conversations. Most notably, the people I speak with are not unaccomplished, not unintelligent, not uncaring. We know these people. You know these people. Fake news and the isolated intolerance that can feed it gets to us all.”

Such challenges to newspapers “threaten to eat away at the core of what makes us communities,” Hunt says. “Strong communities support good community newspapers, and strong community newspapers support good communities. That’s the best way I know to show how much we depend upon each other. How much benefit we can together achieve. For that, I hope you are all subscribers, that you encourage others to be subscribers. And that you continue to challenge us to be the best community newspaper we can be.”

So, how did Hunt’s column go over? In an email to The Rural Blog, he said reaction “has, for the most part, been positive/understanding, with a fair amount of surprise around the idea that the bitterness and intolerance of our national politics does indeed have real local impact.” He also said, “I have to believe many rural papers are in the same boat.”

There is evidence the column had a positive impact, Hunt said: “A dramatic slow-down in complaints/stops based on the perception that we’re too liberal. . . . Stories that are perceived to reflect on Trump as a person seem to generate the most outcry. The policy actions, health care debate, etc. have not.”

Hunt’s column indicates that he knows and respects his readers. He mentioned Trump, but he did it factually, and he avoided attacking any politician, faction or institution. He explained journalism’s role in democracy and community, and subscribers’ increasingly important role in the news business. Every newspaper’s audience is different, but Hunt provides a good example for other editors and publishers.

Al Cross edited and managed rural 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.
The Arkansas general assembly of 2017 created a new “FOIA Task Force,” a group that will review proposed legislation that would in some way amend the state’s Freedom of Information Act, before the legislation convenes in general session again in January of 2019.

Act 923 of 2017 was signed into law this past spring by Gov. Asa Hutchinson creating the new body. The original bill to create the Task Force was sponsored by Rep. Laurie Rushing of Hot Springs, who just received the APA’s FOIA Award at the recent convention. Sen. Dave Wallace of Leachville carried the bill on the senate side.

The Task Force was created at the urging of the Arkansas Press Association after the brutal experience the FOIA had in the 2017 legislative session. That was when several bills were being considered that would in various degrees undermine the state’s FOIA, a law originally established to ensure government transparency at all levels in Arkansas.

To date, seven of the nine appointments have been made. Only the Governor and the Arkansas Broadcasters Association are yet to name appointees, although they have until September to make the appointments.

Others with appointments include:
- Arkansas Press Association: Ellen Kreth
- Arkansas FOIA Coalition: Prof. Robert Steinbuch
- Arkansas SPJ Pro Chapter: John Tull
- Senate President Pro Tem: Rob Moritz
- Speaker of the House: Prissy Hickerson
- Association of Arkansas Counties: Adam Fogleman
- Arkansas Municipal League: Brian Albright

The Task Force will have its first official meeting in November of 2018, just before the 2019 general session of the Arkansas legislature is convened. The group will make recommendations on proposed legislation that would in some way amend the FOIA.
It has always been my contention that my favorite part of this job is going on the road to visit member newspapers around this state. I was reminded of that and validated it once again last week as I went on the road to pay some courtesy calls.

Setting out early Thursday, my first stop was to be at the Malvern Daily Record to visit with Richard Folds, publisher of the Hot Spring county seat newspaper.

The last time I was through Malvern I was just passing through to avoid construction on Interstate 30 en route to Arkadelphia. That’s when I took a wrong turn and before I knew it I was headed through the timber country on the narrowest of state highways with no shoulders and big logging trucks.

I knew I was on the wrong road when, after an hour or so, I came to a sign that said “Camden 30 miles.” I had overshot Arkadelphia but a bit. Actually a large bit.

This time I was stopping in Malvern and had no intention of repeating the same mistake I made last time. Richard Folds was off work nursing a bad knee, but Michelle Cummins, advertising manager of the Daily Record, did a nice job filling in.

After that it was off to Hot Springs Village where I was met by Jennifer Allen. Jennifer has advertising responsibilities for several Gatehouse Media-owned newspapers in Arkansas, including the Hot Springs Village Voice where we met.

Concluding a brief visit there, I set off for Southeast Arkansas. En route to the Nashville News-Leader I passed through Amity and stopped by the Standard office to try to catch Joe May but missed him.

Continuing on in a southerly direction I arrived in Nashville to find Louie Graves on the job at the News-Leader along with Tracy Denny-Bailey, advertising manager at the newspaper. John Robert Schirmer, owner and publisher of the newspaper joined us a few minutes later.

After an always-enlightening conversation with Louie and John Robert, I pointed the APA truckster for my final stop of the day at the Arkansas Gazette.

That was enough for a Thursday as it had been a long day and a lot of driving, but bright and early Friday morning I found myself at the door of the Star, met me. Hope Star 

Robert, I pointed the APA truckster for my final stop of the day at the Schirmer Denny-Bailey, advertising manager at the newspaper.

Lafayette County Press briefly in Stamps but missing over 30 years, joined us for a time on the tour.

The press is still situated in the old building, the new facilities house everything but the production areas.

The new digs are impressive. Situated on two floors of a multi-story building, the new facilities house everything but the production areas.

I did make it in time to El Dorado to take Ronnie Bell, El Dorado News-Times general manager, to lunch. Larry Killian, publisher of the South Arkansas Sun at Hampton, joined us for lunch in a downtown El Dorado restaurant. Actually it’s one of many restaurants in the downtown area, which has seen a major renaissance in recent years, with some major projects still ongoing in El Dorado.

One of my stops was to be in Hampton to visit with Larry at his newspaper, but he wasn’t planning on making the 25-mile drive to Hampton on Friday. He lives in El Dorado, so it was just easier to meet up with him for lunch. It was good visiting with both Ronnie and Larry and catching up on what’s happening in their respective communities.

After lunch on Friday I headed back north on U.S. 167, a vastly improved route for making north/south trips through that part of the state. I was back in Little Rock in no time, driving through some beautiful timber country along the way.

It was a full couple of days and a lot of driving, but this trip and these visits just whet my appetite to do it more often. So, don’t be surprised if you get a call from me seeking to set up a good time to pay a call. I have no idea which direction I’ll head this time. If you’d like to be on the list for a visit, don’t hesitate to let me know and I will keep that in mind when making the next itinerary.

It’s not too early to begin planning to attend the ArkLaMiss circulation and marketing conference Nov. 9-10 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

The APA is in charge of the programming this year and Zach Ahrens, former publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway and now President and Publisher of the Topeka Capital-Journal, will be the featured presenter. Some will remember Zach’s presentation at the 2016 SuperConvention in Bentonville focusing on reaching and marketing to readers across the demographics.

It occurred to me while listening to Zach’s presentation in Bentonville that this would be a good fit for the ArkLaMiss, so when he finished I asked him if he might be available. Since that was a year and a half ahead of time, he was still open on those dates and readily agreed to bring his presentation to the annual event in Vicksburg.

The ArkLaMiss conference has steadily gained in popularity in the last decade. Part of that renewed interest has been the newspaper managers’ roundtable added to the conference agenda three years ago. This conference kick-off event brings newspaper managers from every level, publishers, general managers, circulation and marketing managers and more together to talk about issues important to them. It is a lively discussion and has added greatly to the ArkLaMiss.

That will be on the schedule again this year, so mark the dates, Nov. 9-10, and plan to be there. Come prepared to learn something, as this is a working conference filled with bright ideas and innovation.

Have a great week.

Tom

Arkansas Publisher Weekly  2  July 27, 2017
Pam Lowe has been named editor of the Clay County Courier in Corning, according to Thelma Rockwell, publisher and president of the company.

A graduate of Corning High School and graduate of Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, Lowe is a published author and former school teacher. She earned her master’s degree at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo.

She replaces Jim McIntosh who has been promoted to national distribution manager for JV Rockwell Publishing Co. He had served the last two years as managing editor and has been with the company for 18 years.

Mike Murphy, former publisher of the Searcy Daily Citizen and current publisher of the Hannibal (Mo.) Courier-Post, has been named Gatehouse Media’s vice president of operations for the state of Missouri, the company announced recently.

Murphy has been the company’s Senior Group Publisher in North Central Missouri since 2014, responsible for newspapers in Hannibal, Mexico, Moberly, Boonville, Chillicothe, Brookfield and Kirksville.

In this new role, he will retain those responsibilities, while taking on day-to-day operations for several other newspapers in Missouri, including the Columbia Daily Tribune, which Gatehouse Media purchased in October 2016. Murphy will be in charge of production at the Columbia Daily Tribune, and oversee all of the Tribune Publishing Co. operations.

Gatehouse Media also has newspaper operations in Missouri based at Lake of the Ozarks, Waynesville, and Rolla, as well as Neosho and Independence. It is one of the largest publishers of locally based media in the U.S., with 130 daily newspapers in 36 states.

Q  A newspaper reports the arrest of a local individual, but formal charges are never brought. An online search of the individual continues to show the newspaper arrest report even years later. The individual requests the newspaper remove the story from its online archive. What are the newspaper’s responsibilities in this regard?

A  “The story is still accurate and I do not know the newspaper has any responsibility to pull it down. It is not defamatory because the individual was in fact arrested. I do not believe any privacy claims exist because it was an accurate story. I do not believe the newspaper can be forced to remove the article from archives or to publish an updated story because of First Amendment protection. The newspaper can, of course, choose to remove it or to update the story but it is the newspaper’s choice.”

E&P opens nominations for Publisher of the Year

E&P is looking for a publisher who has risen above the rest and accomplished what seems like the impossible, “outmaneuvering the competition, outthinking the future while maintaining profitability.

Publisher of the Year nominations are open to all newspapers around the world, regardless of size or frequency.

Photo of the Year & I.F. Stone Award

I.F. Stone Award – Brian Fanney, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fort Smith accepts the 2017 I.F. Stone award on behalf of himself and Lisa Hammersly, also of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Fort Smith.
When was the last time you gathered your staff and took a close look at your newspaper’s design? Is it working for your readers? Is it easy to produce on deadline? Is it contemporary? Is it compelling? Is it true to your design style?

I suggest a design critique every quarter…at least every six months. Go longer than that and you risk an erosion of your design style. Inconsistencies (see illustration) begin to creep in and, before long, your “design” is no longer a design. It’s just something that happens every issue.

When you do your critique, here are key items worth reviewing:

**VISUALS**
- Is there a dominant visual on Page 1 and other open pages?
- Are your photos/graphics large enough on the page?
- Are lead visuals placed over the optical center on open pages?
- Are they good quality?
- Are they properly (read that “tightly”) cropped?
- How’s your print/reproduction quality?

**TYPOGRAPHY**
- Are you using a strong, legible type face for text?
- Are word spacing and letter spacing too tight? Too loose?
- Are your columns too narrow for easy reading? Too wide?
- Is text aligned to the baseline grid?
- Are you watching for—and fixing—widows?
- Are you careful to avoid excessive word spacing and letter spacing when you wrap text around an item?
- Are your captions set large enough?
- Are your captions set too wide?
- Are your headline type faces consistent?
- Do you avoid the use of funky fonts?
- Do you practice good headline hierarchy?
- Do you have a consistent text style for lists, such as police and fire runs, calendars and other similar items?
- Do you have a consistent text style for infoboxes, and by-the-numbers boxes?
- Do you have a consistent style for pullouts?
- Do you have a consistent style for drop caps?
- Are your typographic styles set up in your software style sheets?

**OTHER**
- Is placement of content consistent from issue to issue?
- Is placement of ads consistent from page to page?
- Does the design/typography of your nameplate need tweaking?
- Do your teasers do the job, or do they need updating?
- Are your design elements simple? Consistent?
- Do you use color carefully and with a purpose?

That’s my list. I’m assuming you have other items you’d want on your list, but those I’ve mentioned here will give you a good start.

Now that you know what you’re looking at, who does the looking, how does it work…and who’s in charge?

Want a **FREE** evaluation of your newspaper’s design? Just contact Ed: edh@henningerconsulting.com | 803-327-3322.
Publisher of Year nominations open

Editor & Publisher has opened nominations for its “Publisher of the Year” award, nominations for which can be made online at http://tinyurl.com/ycoqkyzq.

The deadline for nominations is Sept. 22.

E&P is looking for a publisher who has risen above the rest and accomplished what seems like the impossible, “outmaneuvering the competition, outthinking the future while maintaining profitability.

Publisher of the Year nominations are open to all newspapers around the world, regardless of size or frequency.

PHILADELPHIA MEETING – Executive directors of press associations in the Southeast part of the country shared a meal Tuesday evening, along with Morley Piper. The group is convened in Philadelphia with other execs from across North America. Pictured are, from left, Layne Bruce, Mississippi; Felicia Mason, Alabama; Robin Rhodes, Georgia; Morley Piper, Tom Larimer, Arkansas; and Mitch Droge, Louisiana.

NNA announces Newspaper and Education contest winners

Judging results have been processed and winners of the National Newspaper Association’s (NNA) 2017 Newspaper And Education contest have been posted online at nnaweb.org.

Winners will be recognized at the awards breakfast held Friday, Oct. 6, during NNA’s 131st annual convention and trade show at the Hyatt Regency in Tulsa, OK. Visit NNA’s events webpage to register online for the convention or to purchase breakfast tickets: www.nnaweb.org/convention.

Five newspapers spanning four states won a total of seven awards. First place winners will receive $100. All winners will receive an award certificate.

Kidsville News!, a literacy and educational newspaper based in Fayetteville, NC, sponsored the contest.

NNA believes successful newspaper education partnerships should be celebrated; thus, NNA created this enhanced Newspaper And Education contest to highlight newspaper/school partnerships (levels K through community college), which focus on developing fully informed citizens. Both traditional Newspaper And Education programs and non-traditional programs from NNA member and non-member newspapers were eligible for entry.

Established in 1885, the National Newspaper Association is the voice of America’s community newspapers and the largest newspaper association in the country. The nation’s community papers inform, educate and entertain nearly 150 million readers every week.

Questions regarding the contest winners should be directed to Lynne Lance at lynne@nna.org.
Depending on when you read this, I’ll be in Philadelphia, the “City of Brotherly Love,” for the annual Newspaper Association Managers (NAM) conference.

This is the association comprised of my counterparts from across North America. Most states have press associations, though not all by any means, and some representing press associations in Canada also participate in this organization and this conference.

I haven’t spent a lot of time in Philadelphia so this should be an interesting week. When this group gets together we spend a lot of time in a large room talking about trends and topics of interest to the newspaper industry, and of course specifically the newspaper association business.

Now you might wonder what on earth we could find to talk about for this amount of meeting time, but frankly it really isn’t sufficient time to cover all of it. Just as the newspaper industry is changing and evolving, so too is the newspaper association business. It is very important to be aware of the trends so as to have some clue as to what may be coming our way. It helps prepare to deal with changes as they occur, or at least to recognize them when they do and have a plan in place.

We are very fortunate to have some exceptional people in place managing press associations across this continent. We get to benefit from their expertise because, just like newspaper people, newspaper association managers do not hold back when asked about how they perform a particular function or address a particular challenge.

One of the more beneficial sessions includes presentations on speakers for press conventions. This is where my counterparts share the names and feedback from speakers that scored particularly high marks after presenting at their convention. This is very helpful information to have as we plan conventions in the future.

The challenge is always to get relevant presenters for the convention, and getting leads on speakers who can address topics in the ever-evolving newspaper industry of today is very helpful. Indeed, several of the speakers at the APA conventions and conferences over the years have resulted from recommendations made by my counterparts at conferences such as the one in Philadelphia this week.

I’m sure I’ll have more on this later.

One of the highlights of this NAM gathering each year is the opportunity yet again to share space with Morley Piper, who holds the title of “clerk” of the NAM organization. He says it is the title given him in lieu of any actual compensation.

Those of you who had a chance to meet Morley at the convention this year know what a great gentleman he is.

Those attending Morley’s presentation at the Friday luncheon at the recent convention can attest that it is an emotional experience as he relates the experience of going ashore at Omaha Beach during the D-Day invasion of June 6, 1944. I can honestly say we’ve never had a presenter in my experience here at APA that produced such an impact on an audience.

I should add that this is not an exceptional reaction to Morley’s story and how he relates it. This was the third time I’d seen Morley give this presentation, and I can tell you that the effect on the audience has been the same each time. There are few dry eyes at the end, and most everyone realizes they just heard an extraordinary narration of an historical event that took place almost 75 years ago.

Morley was a 19-year-old second lieutenant, a “90-day wonder,” as they were called, when he went ashore on that fateful day with thousands of other U.S. and allied troops.

Today, we still look to Morley for leadership of the NAM organization, a group he leads in his patented quiet and unpretentious manner, and with a delightful sense of humor. Virtually everyone in the NAM organization loves and respects Morley for what he’s been through for sure, but also for his decades of service to the newspaper industry in his life after surviving World War II.

We are reminded on this visit to Philadelphia just how old this city is. It’s one of the oldest in the country, and it is where a lot of U.S. history has been made and recorded.

Just up the street from the headquarters hotel for this NAM conference is Independence Hall where the Declaration of Independence was debated, written and signed. It is also where the original U.S. Constitution was debated and created. Now that’s old in terms of U.S. history.

Situated on the Delaware River, Philadelphia is a very active shipping port perhaps 100 miles from the ocean. One gets a grand view of the shipping facilities on the drive in from the airport.

Just across the Delaware River is Camden, New Jersey. The two states are connected by a series of very impressive bridges, impressive both in their structure and in the traffic they carry. This is a busy place.

The buildings and the architecture in Philadelphia reflect both the age and historical significance of the city. Some of the buildings, actually many of them are larger than life designs built on decidedly narrow streets which were probably fine for horse-drawn carriages but leave a little to be desired for handling modern vehicle traffic.

Just down Market Street from the conference hotel stands the first post office in this country. Number one. It’s now a museum and although we won’t likely have time to tour it, it comes highly recommended by several who have.

Walking along the streets of downtown Philadelphia one could spend hours, days actually, taking in all the historic spots and impressive building design.

The conference will end with the traditional closing banquet Friday evening when George White, executive director of the New Jersey Press Association, will be installed as the new president of the organization. Layne Bruce, my counterpart in Mississippi, is the 2017 president of the organization. He will hand over the “loving cup” symbol of the NAM presidency after hosting it for a year in his office in Jackson.

The cup is engraved with the names of all the past presidents of NAM. During the installation ceremony all of the past presidents present will pass the cup filled with champagne, each taking a sip along the way until the new president takes the final sip.

It’s not quite as sanitary a ceremony as passing the gavel, but it is a quaint tradition.

Have a great week.

Tom
The Arkansas State Archives has been awarded a grant in the amount of $208,128 for the digitization of historic Arkansas newspapers through the National Endowment of the Humanities, Department of Arkansas Heritage Director Stacy Hurst announced recently.

The National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) grant will allow 100,000 pages of historic Arkansas newspapers from the collections of the State Archives to be digitized and made available online for research.

The project is a partnership between the Arkansas State Archives and the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, which will provide technical support to Arkansas in the digitization.

The newspapers that will be digitized will be chosen by a selection committee, and will be announced at a later date.

Arkansas State Archives Director Dr. Lisa Speer expressed appreciation for the grant, saying, “I am delighted that the NEH selected the Arkansas State Archives' grant application for an award. Arkansas is one of a handful of states not participating in the NDNP. This grant and collaboration with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History will benefit scholarship on our state by providing convenient access to a large body of public domain Arkansas newspapers. I’m very grateful to the MDAH for their willingness to share their expertise to help us achieve this goal.”

The project will take two years to complete. Once digitized, the newspapers will be housed online through the Chronicling America website hosted by the Library of Congress (http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/) and will be accessible to the public for free.
For many the term “lobbyist” invokes disdain. Some utter the word with contempt in their tone, much like Jerry Seinfeld’s character on the Seinfeld TV show reserved for greeting his nemesis “Newman.”

It’s true that lobbyists as a group are painted with the same brush making them all the wining and dining, back-slapping goobers that shell out big money to influence decisions makers on behalf of their constituency. It is the constituency that is often key here.

When it comes to lobbyists, we generally make some assumptions. We assume they represent the corporations of this country, organized labor and other special interests and whose interests don’t always coincide with the general public.

And of course there are those, but the reality is that a huge number of lobbyists are local government lobbyists, paid with tax dollars and not always operating in the best interest of the general public. It is hardly a problem unique to Arkansas, but it is a problem here, too.

John Myers, writing in the Los Angeles Times, writes that recent lobbying report filings in California indicate that local officials collectively continue to outpace all other branches of California’s influence industry. In the first six months of this year alone, government entities in California spent more than $24.3 million on lobbying the state capital in Sacramento…tax dollars.

The numbers are surely higher in California than one would find in Arkansas, but proportionally it’s not likely all that much different.

Taxpayers might not find fault with being represented at the legislature, but they surely would if it occurred to them that a lot of that “representation” on the part of publicly paid lobbyists attempts to influence legislation that would actually undermine the rights of the public.

Take the last session of the Arkansas legislature earlier this year. It has been well documented how many attempts were made to undermine the state’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). What hasn’t been so well documented was that a lot of public money was behind those attempts to weaken a law designed to guarantee the public’s access to government at all levels in the state. It was tax money being used to attempt to weaken a law designed to insure government transparency.

Does anyone else see the irony here? Public money being used to make it easier for government officials on the public payroll to be less accountable to the general public in Arkansas should have everyone up in arms. If anything we should have more government transparency, not less, but a whole lot of public money was spent in the 2017 general assembly aimed at making government at several levels in Arkansas even less accessible, less transparent.

So who has these lobbyists? Who is using public money to pay lobbyists to influence legislation not necessarily in the public’s best interest? You name them. Government agencies at several levels do this routinely. One of the biggest fights we had at the recent legislation session was with lobbyists paid by some of the state’s higher education institutions.

And it was a fight in which we were greatly outnumbered and out-manned, working in an arena against university representatives paid with tax dollars, institutions with much deeper pockets than our own. It’s difficult not to resent expending our meager lobbying budget to go up against public institutions using tax dollars to influence laws that would be counter to the best interest of the everyday citizen of Arkansas. It makes no sense to me.

On this one case, they lost anyway but only because they should have lost. They were seeking to solve a problem that didn’t exist, and in doing so would have occluded the public’s view of just what it is they are up to. There is enough uncertainty about what’s going on at our public universities without adding yet another layer of smoke and mirrors.

The institutions of higher education weren’t alone in flooding the capitol with tax-paid lobbyists. We routinely go up against the counties and the cities on transparency issues.

So what drives local officials to spend so much of your tax money on lobbyists? Again, Myers in the LA Times:

“Sometimes it’s to make sure they’re getting a piece of the larger tax revenue pie…In other cases, locals feel they have to play defense, keeping state lawmakers from imposing too many onerous new rules.”

Again, this is California he’s talking about, but it could easily be any state, including Arkansas. I would add that some public institutions and elected officials do it to attempt to cloak themselves and their offices or agencies in secrecy. It may be difficult to believe, but there are government officials who do not believe that the public’s business is any business of the public.

Actually, I guess it really isn’t that hard to believe. When I bring up the topic of legislation to control the spending of public money on lobbyists, I get a lot of eye rolls. I also get a chuckle or two, as in a “you must be crazy” chuckle.

It’s been tried before, but with obvious little success. You can just imagine how many lobbyists paid with tax money that would turn out to work against any legislation that would impede their gravy train.

The public often feels powerless in the governing process. They feel out-manned by the army of lobbyists representing special interests that are not their own. What they need to think about it that a lot of those lobbyists are being paid with their tax money often working against their interests.

It is for this reason that I encouraged APA member newspapers at the recent convention to add this to the questions posed to candidates seeking legislative seats. The questions every newspaper should ask every candidate or office holder they encounter are these:

1. Where do you stand on the Freedom of Information Act?
2. Where do you stand on public notice advertising in newspapers?
3. What are your thoughts on publicly (tax) paid lobbyists?

These are fair and relevant questions to ask any candidate. Getting them on the record as to where they stand on each issue would be good information for the newspaper and their readers, too.

Just because things are the way they are doesn’t mean they have to stay the way they are. Exercise your voice and empower your readers to do the same.

Have a great week.

—

Tom Larimer's Potpourri

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Arkansas Publisher Weekly 2 August 10, 2017
New reporter joins Clay County Courier

The Clay County Courier in Corning has announced the addition of a new reporter. **Drew Calhoun** has been hired as a sports reporter and writer for the newspapers, according to **Pam Lowe**, managing editor.

Calhoun is a 2017 graduate of Corning High School. He replaces **Lance Hewett** who left to attend the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

New Publisher named for Daily Citizen

**David Damerow** has been named the new publisher of the Searcy Daily Citizen, replacing Harry Porter who left to become the general manager of the Hot Springs Sentinel-Record.

Damerow comes from The Shawnee (OK) News-Star where he had held the position of advertising director. He brings more than 26 years of newspaper experience to the job.

The announcement came from Paxton Media Group Regional President **David Mosesso**. Paxton is the parent company of the Daily Citizen.

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**Using Facebook, InDesign upcoming webinar topics**

You’ve heard about Facebook Live, but do you know much about it?

You can get all the information in an upcoming webinar offered through the Online Media Campus where APA members get a discount for signing up to participate.

This webinar is set for Thursday, August 17, from 1 to 2 p.m. CDT. It features **Jason Kolnos** and **Timothy Schmitt**.

Kolnos, a graduate of Boston University, has worked at The Cape Cod Times as a multimedia reporter and digital assignment editor. Schmitt has spent decades in various newsrooms, some print and some broadcast. He’s worked as an editor, staffer or longtime contributor with the Arizona Daily Sun in Flagstaff.

Register for this webinar by August 14. Then on Friday, August 25, the Online Media Campus will feature **Russell Viers** in a 1 to 2 p.m. CDT webinar focusing on InDesign.

Viers, an Adobe certified instructor who just presented at the APA convention in Little Rock, will conduct this webinar that assumes viewers already know basic use of paragraph and character styles. He will offer several beneficial tips for the InDesign user in this one-hour webinar.

Register for this one by August 22. For more information on the Online Media Campus offerings or to register, go to www.onlinemedia-campus.com.

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**Tennessee Press names new leader**

**Carol Goss-Daniels**, a former general manager of the Clarksville (Tenn.) Leaf-Chronicle, has been named executive vice president of Tennessee Press Services, the for-profit ad sales side of the Tennessee Press Association.

The Tennessee Press Association has contracted with TPS to provide government relations services, lobbying, management and oversight on behalf of the Association. Daniels will fill these roles.

Daniels has a strong background in newspapers, serving most recently as general manager of the Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle. Board members were impressed with Daniels’ experience, ideas and enthusiasm.

“Newspapers continue to play a vital role in their communities, as government watchdogs, community builders and sustainers, and touchstones that help readers and their families stay connected to what is important to them and to the places they live,” Daniels said. “I am excited to work with the 125 newspaper members of the Tennessee Press Association and Tennessee Press Service to fulfill their mission and make their businesses stronger.”

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**Morris sale to GateHouse includes Log Cabin Democrat**

The Log Cabin Democrat in Conway has new owners, as it becomes another APA member newspaper owned by GateHouse Media, Inc. The Log Cabin Democrat was part of a ten-newspaper deal with Morris Communications of Augusta, Ga., a company that had owned the Conway newspaper for several years.

The transaction is expected to close in October.

Other newspapers included in the deal are the Augusta Chronicle, the Savannah Morning News and the Athens Banner-Herald (Georgia), The Florida Times-Union and The St. Augustine Record in Florida, the Amarillo Globe-News and Lubbock Avalanche-Journal in Texas, The Topeka (Kan.) Capital-Journal, and the Juneau Empire and Kenai Peninsula Clarion in Alaska.

The move marks a shift in emphasis on the part of Morris Communications, which plans to focus more on its lifestyle publications, property development and new business.

Morris had acquired the Log Cabin Democrat years ago from the late **Frank Robins III**, APA past president (1974).

GateHouse Media is a division of New Media Investment Group, a publicly traded company (NEW) on the New York Stock Exchange. The company operates over 20 other newspapers in Arkansas, including the Southwest Times-Record in Fort Smith and the Pine Bluff Commercial, both dailies, in addition to several non-dailies.

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**Bill Lawson**

**Billy Joe “Bill” Lawson**, 68, of North Little Rock, former newspaper reporter with Stephens Media, died Thursday, July 27. He was born October 2, 1948 in Memphis, Tenn., to Jessie and Omega Lawson. He was a member of Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock.

He is survived by his wife of forty-five years, **Janie Lawson**; children, **Brian Lawson** (Kathleen), **Ben Lawson** (Amie), **Brad Lawson** (Jordan); grandchildren, Madelyn, Hudson, Eva Jean, Mark, Parker, and Peyton; sister, Barbara Moise, Trumann, and numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins. He is preceded in death by his parents and brother, **Thomas Lawson**.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, August 2, at Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock. Burial with military honors will be 10 a.m. Thursday, August 3, at Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery in North Little Rock.

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August 10, 2017
I was recently in the office of a well-respected member of Congress trying to help him understand issues of importance to the news industry – including media cross-ownership, IP protection and the roles played by Google and Facebook. One of the first things he said was, “How come I don’t hear from your members? I rarely meet with anyone from the National Association of Broadcasters, but the TV and radio station managers in my district call me all the time. How come I never hear directly from the publishers in my district?”

It was a kind of startling way to start the conversation but the underlying message had deep meaning: “You have power but you don’t use it.”

What is even more startling is that newspapers are still one of the few places left that almost every candidate for office or representative or senator in the United States Congress visits to talk to the editorial board. They come to your newspaper and yet we still have a disconnect between the issues of importance to the industry and awareness by your representatives in Congress.

I am sure there are rational historic reasons for this. Unlike broadcasters, newspapers aren’t directly regulated by the federal government and, therefore, have had relatively fewer federal issues of concern. The same was true of the underlying businesses – namely local advertising, printing and distribution. There was likely also a desire to avoid any possible impression that issues of concern to the business side of the house might affect editorial judgments.

Whatever the reasons, the time for reticence is long past. This is not a time when we can sit back and expect policymakers to naturally understand what we need to sustain this industry into the future. In a digital world, even the most local news is distributed through global platforms – and almost every aspect of the business (e.g. advertising, distribution, content protection) is impacted by policy choices at the federal level. The future of the industry will be determined by the people we send to Congress and put in the White House, and we need to use every tool at our disposal to ensure that those people understand our issues.

We work very hard here in Washington to make sure your voices are heard. But we need your help to make sure representatives hear the same thing back home.

Therefore, I am going to ask every publisher in our membership to take advantage of federal policymaker visits to your editorial boards by taking ten minutes to introduce yourself and convey a few key messages about important federal policies that will impact your business. It could be as simple as the following:

“This news business is vitally important to the future of our community. If we didn’t do what we do, people simply wouldn’t have access to good information about what is happening here and what you hope to accomplish in Washington. The void would instead be filled with absolutely ‘fake news’: patently false information designed to incite hatred and division. Unfortunately, this business is also very stressed financially. Our audience is bigger than ever but technological change means it is very difficult sustain investments in the kind of quality journalism we are known for. As an elected representative, you can’t fix all of that – and we wouldn’t ask you to. What we would ask is that you make sure that the federal government isn’t making the business any harder than it has to be.

We need (i) tax reform that maintains the ability to deduct advertising expenses, (ii) protection for our intellectual property, (iii) an end to the outdated cross-ownership ban, and (iv) a safe harbor that would allow the industry to negotiate with Google and Facebook as a group. It’s not a long list when compared with many other industries – but it’s an important one that means everything to the future of this news business.”

(David Chavern serves as President & CEO of the News Media Alliance. Chavern has built a career spanning 30 years in executive strategic and operational roles, and most recently completed a decade-long tenure at the United States Chamber of Commerce.)
Arkansas
Publisher Weekly

Zach Ahrens will keynote ArkLaMiss Conference

Zach Ahrens, president and publisher of The Topeka (Kan.) Capital-Journal and former publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, will be the featured presenter this year at the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 9-10 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

Zach’s high-energy presentation focuses on spanning the demographics, from seniors to millennials, in creating compelling content in print and digital formats.

He brings the experience gained at several key newspaper positions and with several newspaper holding groups to his presentation. He is well known in the media industry and has presented at several state press association conventions as well as for media companies focusing on audience development and significant revenue growth. His presentation is geared to newspapers of all sizes and frequencies, and his ideas are relatable to just about any modern newspaper setting.

Ahrens graduated with a BA in communications from York College in York, Neb., just six weeks after his 20th birthday. He was previously vice president of sales with Lee Enterprises and regional vice president of sales with GateHouse Ohio.

He and his wife, Heidi, have three children, Carter, Conner and Camrynn.

White River Journal furls 110-year-old flag

The White River Journal in Des Arc made it official in their last edition. In a front page, above-the-fold announcement to their readers the newspaper announced that the August 10 edition would be their last.

Ironically, August 10 was the 110th anniversary of the founding of the newspaper, which has served the Delta community and Northern Prairie County with Publisher Dean Walls at the helm for the past several decades. Well into her 90s, struggling with health issues and with no potential buyers stepping forward, Dean finally decided to call it quits and to fold the Journal.

This brings to three the number of independent weekly newspapers to fold this summer. The Atkins Chronicle and The Dover Times, both in Pope County, closed earlier this year.

NASA resources available for NIE projects

Are you looking for additional resources for your NIE or other education projects in your newspaper?

Check out https://spaceplace.nasa.gov for some colorful and insightful offerings from NASA. Actually it’s a joint project of the National Aeronautic Space Administration, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the California Institute of Technology and the International Technology and Engineering Education Association.

The site offers a wide selection of informational stories and graphics aimed at the elementary school level reader.

Information on this and other services available for newspapers can be found on the website.
Glen Campbell came home for the last time recently. He was buried in his hometown of Delight in Southwest Arkansas.

I never met Glen Campbell. I never had the opportunity to see him perform live. A lot of people I know did and had nothing but good things to say.

It’s easy to speak well of the dead, and it is human nature to do so. That’s likely based in a basic human need to be well thought of after we ourselves are gone.

Of course a lot of that sentiment is based on how we behaved while still among the living. It would have something to do with the people you’ve helped and the lives you’ve touched in a positive way.

Glen Campbell did that. He touched lives in a positive way, and the people of Arkansas for the most part held a special fondness for him because he was one of us. He was an extraordinarily talented one of us, but one of us just the same.

And he never lost touch with his roots, visiting his family often, buying them homes with the proceeds from his lucrative career. He was a self-professed momma’s boy and was never embarrassed to say so. You got to like a guy like Glen Campbell.

There are many great stories making the rounds in the wake of his passing. Some of them are likely true. My personal favorite is the story of his first meeting John Wayne when he was co-starring in the original movie “True Grit,” a movie for which Wayne earned his only academy award.

John Wayne made dozens of movies spanning several decades, some of them more memorable than others. The truth was John Wayne didn’t really act. He played John Wayne. That’s what we expected and he never failed to deliver.

Anyway, Wayne showed up on the movie set with his daughter the day he was to meet his co-star. One of his first statements to Glen Campbell was to ask for an autograph for his daughter. He, and perhaps more so his daughter, were taken with Glen’s celebrity even though there could have been no bigger celebrity at the time than John Wayne.

It was a big moment for Glen Campbell, one he never forgot and often related. He actually did well in the movie, too. He didn’t so much act, either. That wasn’t really his calling. He played Glen Campbell in an honest portrayal of his True Grit character LaBoeuf.

The people of Arkansas had more than one reason to take a special interest in the movie, I mean other than the fact that Glen Campbell was in it. The story centered around the character Mattie Ross, the role of a feisty young girl played by Kim Darby, who on more than one occasion during the movie made reference to being “from Dardanelle in Yell County.”

The part in this hit movie just added to the legacy of Glen Campbell and added even more to the list of the lives he touched while he was still with us. His music is obviously his biggest legacy and for what he will most always be remembered. His works touched many lives in a positive way.

Years ago, I was watching Johnny Carson. One of his guests that evening was Roy Clark, the country and western performer and regular at the time on the TV show “HeeHaw,” a cornball collection of skits and country music that had broad appeal in its day.

Anyway, Roy Clark, sitting in the guest chair beside Johnny, was playing the guitar and doing it quite well. Johnny was impressed, and told Roy that he must be the best guitar player in the business.

“Not even close,” was Roy’s response.

When queried by Johnny about who might be better, Roy replied, “Glen Campbell. He’s the best there is.”

High praise indeed coming from Roy Clark.

A lot has been written and said since the passing of Glen Campbell, most all of it positive. I’ve read and I’ve listened to a lot of it, and again I thought of how many lives the man touched while he was with us on this earth.

It was good hearing the good things. This is how most of us would like to be remembered, and I’m glad that Glen Campbell was remembered in this fashion.

He wasn’t perfect, but then none of us are. But he did entertain us and amaze us with his talent.

And he made us proud to say he was from Arkansas.

Zach Ahrens confirmed with me late last week that he would indeed be our featured presenter at the ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 9-10, at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

Zach was formerly the publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, and is now president and publisher of the Topeka Capital Journal. He was a presenter at our 2016 convention in Bentonville, and made a big impression on those having opportunity to attend his session.

It occurred to me while Zach was presenting that his would be an excellent presentation for the ArkLaMiss. Knowing that APA would be in charge of putting together the program for the 2017 ArkLaMiss, I asked him at the time if he would be up for bringing his presentation to the conference and he readily agreed.

That was a year and a half ahead of time, so I thought I’d better check to see if we were still on. Late last week he confirmed that we were so now we can look forward to seeing Zach again in Vicksburg.

At the convention, Zach was talking about reaching readers across the demographics. It was good information well presented by Zach and resonated with the APA members who saw it. I suspect most of those present would recommend Zach’s presentation and I hope several APA members take advantage of the opportunity to see it come ArkLaMiss time.

We’ve been fortunate to have several APA members attending in recent years, and I would hope we would this year as well, especially since APA is in charge of the programming.

Please make plans to attend. I assure you, you will be rewarded.

Have a great week.
New group publisher joins GateHouse Arkansas publications

Teresa “Tee” Hicks has taken over as publisher of The Pine Bluff Commercial as well as group publishing responsibilities for several other GateHouse Media newspapers in Arkansas.

Hicks comes to Pine Bluff from Las Vegas where she was on the staff of the Review-Journal. She has also held sales and leadership posts at several daily newspapers, including The Dallas Morning News and the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel among others.

Born in Los Angeles and raised in Denver, Hicks began her career in news radio in Dallas before moving to the Morning News. She holds an MBA from the University of Texas, Dallas.

In addition to the Commercial, she will also be responsible for oversight of the Stuttgart Daily Leader, the Newport Independent, the Arkadelphia Daily Siftings Herald, the Hot Springs Village Voice, the Hope Star, the White Hall Journal, the Heber Springs Sun-Times, the Helena Daily World, the Van Buren County Democrat and the Bastrop (La.) News.

Press Foundation fellowships to delve aging in DC setting

The National Press Foundation is offering fellowships for U.S.-based journalists for a four-day conference on covering aging October 15-18 in Washington, D.C.

The fellowships cover airfare to Washington, D.C., hotel, ground transportation and most meals.

The implications of longevity and aging will be the focus of the gathering. Journalists selected for the fellowships will learn about financial literacy and security, fraud and scams, health care and healthy living, the desire or need to work long, public policy, generational impacts, innovation and reinvention, and living beyond 100.

NPW offers this professional development opportunity for journalists to enhance skills, increase knowledge and recharge their reporting on one of today’s most critical issues. The program is for U.S.-based journalists only. The deadline for application is Sept. 6, 2017.

Support for the program was provided by a grant from AARP.

To make an online application, go to http://tinyurl.com/y7ak56uh.

Get Real: Use strong design tricks to attract, hold readers

By PETER WAGNER

There’s more to holding the attention of your readers than writing a well-crafted, exceptional story. Today’s younger readers generally have a shorter attention span and are easily distracted. They often lose interest in even the best-written story after just one or two paragraphs. Even the finest reporting needs to be paired with quality design to assure committed readership.

Good design begins with a strong visual image. A recent survey revealed that the average reader looks at 75% of the photos in a newspaper, but only 56 percent of the headlines. Worse, most readers actually read only 25 percent of the news, sports and features published in their newspaper.

The goal of every newspaper is to inform, educate and entertain. The business is to interest readers and sell as many copies of the newspaper as possible. This requires exciting and attracting the readers into the story with tighter packaging, visual excitement, contemporary design and numerous points of entry.

Ninety percent of newspaper readers are attracted into a story through a great photo, unique illustration, creative graphic or stacked headline. Stories supported by a worthy visual element are reported to experience three times the readership than those published simply as columns of text.

At The N’West Iowa REVIEW, we believe photo size does matter. One or two large photos will create more reader interest than a grouping of any number of smaller photos. The old adage remains true: “A (good) picture is worth a thousand words”.

But the key word is “good”. That means the picture must be in focus, have definition and contrast, be interesting and tell a story.

OTHER DESIGN SECRETS

Good newspaper designers have a number of tricks they use to make various feature stories draw in the reader.

One is to include one or more sidebars presenting fast facts beyond the story. The number of games coached, won and various state titles won in a basketball coach feature, for example.

Another is the inclusion of background information or personal biographies. This is the kind of material that increases the readership of a political or business story.

Checklists are also a popular design feature. They are an easy way to list what needs to be accomplished before a new structure can be opened to the public or a new community service is introduced.

Others points of entry include quote boxes, the use of large serif or san-serif letters at the beginning of important paragraphs and drop-in boxes with the final scores near the beginning of each sport story.

Quizzes, surveys and rankings are other ways to attract the reader back into a major news or feature story. Also are sub-headlines, step-by-step guides and maps. We recently used a full-page map in our N’West Iowa REVIEW to inform readers of the route that a new two-lane highway would take across our four-county market.

The way you package your news does make a difference. It inspires and motivates readers, creates a more complete recording of current history and puts you a step above the competition. It is the sign of a truly committed and caring editor and publisher.

(Peter W. Wagnen is publisher of the award winning N’West Iowa REVIEW and 14 additional publications. He is a newspaper industry “Idea Man” and noted conference trainer. Peter will present two new programs “Building a Better Community” and “It’s Classified” at the New York Newspaper Association Fall Conference in Buffalo on Saturday, September 16th. He can be contacted with questions or comments at pww@iowainformation.com.)

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.

Mark Your Calendar!

November 9 - 10: 2017 ArkLaMiss Circulation & Marketing Conference Ameristar Casino & Hotel Vicksburg, MS
Guest Column:
Into the Issues: Connecting with Readers Via Social Media
By Al Cross

Last month I shared the story of a community newspaper editor who showed an effective way to respond to concerns of readers, often not politely expressed, that his newspaper was liberally biased. Brian Hunt of the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin is an experienced editor, but an intern at a Kentucky weekly newspaper took a very similar approach in a manner that was just as professional. Here’s an adapted version of our report on The Rural Blog:

Josh Qualls was having difficulty finding a source to help him explain how the House health-insurance bill might affect seniors on Medicaid in Lincoln County, Kentucky, where he recently completed a summer internship with The Interior Journal in Stanford. So he went to the Boone Newspapers weekly’s Facebook page.

“The very first response echoed some of the most disheartening, gut-wrenching rhetoric we’ve seen directed toward journalists in recent months. Its author offered a scathing indictment of the news media and accused us of being liberally biased,” Qualls wrote in his intern report to the Kentucky Press Association, relying on memory because the poster had deleted the post. “She talked about how much ‘Obamacare’ didn’t help her health-hindered family, so I saw a way to connect with her.”

Qualls wrote, “We appreciate your feedback … and we’re sorry to learn about your health problems and your family’s health-care situation. Our hearts go out to you.” He said no one at the newspaper “was happy with the Affordable Care Act allowing premiums to increase at an alarming rate,” but said journalists must “seek the truth and report it,” as the Society of Professional Journalists’ Code of Ethics says.

“The truth, based on what we know about the American Health Care Act so far, is that these proposals may have long-term effects that are even more damaging than Obamacare,” Qualls posted. “The Congressional Budget Office reported last Wednesday that while premiums would likely decrease for younger Americans, older Americans would likely see a substantial increase and lose many of their benefits.”

Then he wrote this, which KPA highlighted in its report to members: “In this newsroom, we all have different political beliefs but respect each other. What we all have in common is that we’re biased against the things that harm the community we serve, and by community we mean people like you.” That is a thoughtful, engaging statement of which any editor could be proud.

Qualls reported to KPA, “The author quickly wrote back. She said that she never really thought about it that way and would consider what we wrote, that she appreciated our effort to connect with her and to explain what we were trying to accomplish.” He and Editor Abigail Whitehouse, who had approved his message, “were ecstatic,” yelling “We got through to someone!”

Though the reader soon deleted her post and the comments, Qualls said the episode showed the value of engaging with readers through social media: “People may think now that they have carte blanche to denigrate journalists, but Abigail taught me that we don’t have to cower in fear of what they might say or do — we must respectfully stand our ground. It simply comes down to this: People hate what they don’t understand, and some people unfortunately don’t understand journalists.”

Qualls is a May graduate of the University of Kentucky School of Journalism and Media, which includes the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues, which publishes The Rural Blog. As you might guess, we’re pretty proud of him.

National criticism of the news media continues to filter down to community newspapers, and James Warren reported on it for The Poynter Institute. Our blog item on it is at http://bit.ly/2vbqPGh.

One of the best stories we’ve read lately was by Stephanie McCrummen of The Washington Post, who profiled of a Muslim doctor in rural Minnesota dealing with religious prejudice after the presidential election. It put you inside his head and his heart, and we excerpted it at http://bit.ly/2utgcxz.

Our business: The phenomenon of newspapers in small, rural counties merging across county lines to stay alive has crossed the Mississippi River, and we reported on it at http://bit.ly/2tv0ec.

The International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors had a successful meeting at the University of Maryland and in Washington, D.C. We reported on it at http://bit.ly/2vc8K1e, and highlighted the contest-winning editorials at http://bit.ly/2tkHJG.

If you do or see stories that belong on The Rural Blog, email me at al.cross@uky.edu.

Al Cross edited and managed rural 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.
It’s not too early to plan Newspaper Week observance

The 77th annual observance of National Newspaper Week (NNW) is scheduled for Oct. 1-7, but it’s not too early to begin planning your newspaper’s activities for the special week.

Once again this year, the Newspaper Association Managers (NAM) group will be providing newspaper content designed to assist newspapers in marking the occasion. The NNW “kit” will include editorials, editorial cartoons, promotional ads and more to assist newspapers. The material will be available in late September at www.NationalNewspaperWeek.com.

This year’s NNW theme is “Real Newspapers...Real News!” The aim is to applaud and underscore newspaper media’s role as the leading provider of news in print, online or via mobile devices.

Many publishers and editors take the opportunity to also editorialize about their newspapers’ unique relevance to the community it serves. It’s a good opportunity to “toot your own horn” so to speak in reminding readers that the local newspaper is still the most trusted medium.

Still others will schedule an “open house” at the newspaper during the National Newspaper Week observance, inviting readers to stop by and get to know their local newspaper staff. It’s a great way to build community relationships, and to put a face with the names so many readers already know from reading the newspaper.

There are a lot of ways newspapers can observe National Newspaper Week, and it’s not too early to begin planning that observance in your community.

Newspaper Association Managers, Inc., is the consortium of North American trade associations representing the industry on a state and provincial, regional and national basis sponsor NNW.

‘It Can Wait’ writing contest readies for another run

The Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF), Arkansas 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 distracted driving and encouraging their peers to take the “It Can Wait” pledge.

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.

Last year ANF had entries from across the state. They are in hopes that your newspaper will participate in the program this year and encourage safe driving practices in your community.

Last year’s winner of the contest was from Eureka Springs. She received $500 in prize money, an elegant lunch at the Little Rock Club with AT&T, ANF and the local newspaper leadership, and a personal tour of the Capitol.

Newspapers are encouraged to seek appropriate local sponsors to pay for the space or to provide local prizes. This would be a great opportunity to reach out to your readers and make them more aware of the dangers of driving while distracted. Sponsors must not include businesses that sell and promote adult material, tobacco or alcohol related items, etc.

For It Can Wait contest rules and other information on how to participate, visit www.arkansaspress.org/page/anfessaycontest, or email ANF Director Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.
Arkansas Publisher Weekly

It may seem a little premature to be talking about National Newspaper Week. After all, the annual observance isn’t until Oct. 1-7, over a month away.

But it isn’t really. Premature, that is.

And it should be noted that of all times, these times call for a concerted effort to call attention to newspapers and the role they play in the communities they serve. Like so many other things that have seemingly always been with us, newspapers get taken for granted. So ubiquitous are we in the community that we but become invisible. That is, until we’re not there. Ask the good folks in Des Arc, or Atkins, or Dover about that. For decades they had newspapers reporting the news of the local community. But no more. Those community chroniclers of history are now history themselves.

For decades now the Newspaper Association Managers, the collective of my counterparts from across North America, have created and offered for free to association members a National Newspaper Week “kit,” complete with editorial, editorial cartoons, columns and other items of useful content for observing this special week for newspapers.

The material is free to APA newspapers, but it isn’t exactly free. APA pays a fee to be included in the associations that make the content available to their members. It’s not a lot of money, but it helps offset some of the related expenses.

The hope is that every APA member newspaper would take advantage of the materials provided and use them in some way to create an observance of National Newspaper Week in the local newspaper. There are a lot of ways to go about this, but it is important to at least do something to mark the annual observance.

Of course you can always do more. NNW is a great time for some reader testimonials about what the local newspaper means to them. These are not hard to come by, as several readers will likely respond if asked.

It’s always also a good time to have an “open house” of sorts at the newspaper office. Invite the community to stop by for some coffee and cookies or whatever treats may be readily available to you. This is a great way to reinforce the “partnership” the newspaper has with its local readers.

It’s also a good time to get feedback from readers on just what it is about the newspaper that they like, and just as importantly, what they don’t like. Most readers are not bashful about sharing either. It is important to hear this feedback, but it is equally if not more important for the reader to have the opportunity to give it. An open house or reception in observance of National Newspaper Week is an excellent way to solidify that relationship so essential to the success of a local newspaper.

Up in Minnesota, the Minnesota Newspaper Association couldn’t wait until National Newspaper Week to get it done. Their governor proclaimed Aug. 13-19 as Minnesota Newspaper Week, and some 200 newspaper members of the Minnesota association ran blank front pages during the weeklong observance. There are approximately 320 newspapers in Minnesota, almost three times what we have remaining in Arkansas.

The idea was to demonstrate what it might be like NOT to have newspapers. They called it a “white out.” Leaving the front page blank might seem a little extreme, but it definitely drove the point home for readers of those newspapers participating in the event.

I’m not suggesting you leave your front page blank during National Newspaper Week, but to find a way to remind readers of the function of their local newspaper and the mission newspapers have carried on since the founding days of this country.

So yeah, the observance of National Newspaper Week is over a month away, but that just means there is ample time to make plans for the observance. The important thing is to do something, and not let this opportunity pass without taking note of it with your readers.

Just FYI, the materials provided for use during NNW will be available during September at www.nationalnewspaperweek.com.

Work on the new edition, the 18th edition of the Freedom of Information Handbook is ongoing and the new handbooks should be available sometime in September.

The Handbook is revised and re-printed every other year after the general session of the Arkansas legislature. Changes in the law resulting from the legislative session are included in the new handbook. That’s why it is important to make sure you have the latest edition of the handbook, as there were a few changes since the last one.

APA produces the FOI Handbook in cooperation with the Arkansas Attorney General’s office. They do the updating and review of content while we design the book and get it printed.

The expense of the project has traditionally been shared by the Arkansas Governor’s Office, the Attorney General’s Office, APA, the Society of Professional Journalists, the Arkansas Broadcasters Association, the Associated Press Managing Editors, and the Associated Press Broadcasters Association.

The FOI Handbooks are very popular with public officials, both elected and appointed, as well as custodians of public records. It is a handy reference to the Arkansas law that ensures transparency in government.

Thousands of copies of the Handbook are printed, and as usual about this time of year we’ve run out of the little books. That’s okay because if any were left they’d need to be tossed, as they would be out of date, anyway.

We’ll make an announcement when the Handbooks become available. They are provided free of charge to anyone in Arkansas requesting copies.

It is in our best interest to have every Handbook widely circulated. The more familiar public officials and records custodians are with the state’s Freedom of Information Law, the easier it will make the job of those seeking public information.

That doesn’t mean there won’t be times when information still won’t be available, as there remain a good number of “gray” areas when it comes to public access, but for the most part the Arkansas FOIA does exactly what the original framers of the law had in mind when it was enacted over 50 years ago.

Have a great week.

Tom Larimer’s Potpourri

August 24, 2017
Still time to take NNA’s overtime survey

If you haven’t taken the time to participate in the current survey on U.S. overtime regulations being conducted by the National Newspaper Association, please do so today. You may recall that last year the U.S. Department of Labor issued new guidelines that would have raised the minimum salary for overtime exemption to over $47,000, up considerably from the $23,600 minimum established in 2004. The order was overturned in Federal court, but the new Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta has vowed to take another look at it.

NNA needs respondents to aid them in preparing a response to the overtime regulations from the community newspaper perspective. That’s where you come in.

To participate in the survey go to https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8Z8M6KC. Since the last appeal here two weeks ago, they have received only three responses from APA member newspapers.

You don’t have to be a member of NNA to participate in the survey, according to Lynne Lance, NNA chief operating officer. Please take the time to do this today.

NNA Convention coming to Tulsa site

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) will convene its annual convention Oct. 5-7 at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Tulsa, one of the closest locations for APA members in several years. Well, at least for those APA members in Northwest Arkansas.

Two years ago the NNA convention was convened in St. Charles, Mo., just north of St. Louis. Last year the event was held in the Nashville, Tenn. area, so the 2017 event continues the pattern of holding the conventions in the nation’s heartland.

Each year the NNA convention brings together community newspaper publishers from across the country. The programming at the convention is tailored for that segment of the newspaper industry.

You can take a look at the at programming and find more information on the convention, including how to register, at the NNA website at www.nnaweb.org/convention.

Intern expands horizons at Harrison assignment

By JORDAN DAVIS

Honestly, I want to start off by saying thank you. I have really enjoyed myself here at the Harrison Daily Times. They really gave me the freedom to work, and I’m happy that I was able to keep up and meet their expectations.

Before this job, I never really cared about local news. But, as I’ve worked here I’ve gained an appreciation for local news. It allows you to have a personal connection to your audience that you really can’t get anywhere else. I think my first story really highlighted the importance to me. It was about a small town (about a population of 300) that wanted to build a sewer system.

I was sent to cover the town council meeting and one of the elected aldermen didn’t show up. This left the council unable to approve the project. Because of this, the mayor tried to use a very old ordinance to fire the alderman in order to get the meeting going.

Our newspaper hadn’t covered this town in a long time, and she had clearly gotten away with a lot if she thought she could try to fire an elected official in front of a journalist like that. So, I wrote the story when I got back and I got some compliments from the people in the town, I also got some people very angry at me, but that’s just part of it. The whole experience reminded me that one of the core jobs of a journalist is to keep the government accountable.

Although, my favorite story I did was my feature for “pollinators week,” when I went to a bee farm and worked with a beekeeper for an afternoon. The beekeeper was really nice and I enjoyed shadowing him. I also found the subject really interesting and that made it an easy story to write.

My favorite part of working this story was when I got to suit up and take pictures, as he would work the different hives. I got some great pictures; it was difficult to only choose three. My favorite part of the job is taking pictures. This story gave me some interesting pictures.

The beekeeper was also a great interview. Personally, I try to make my interviews feel more like a natural conversation. I think having a conversational tone will make your story seem more genuine, and I think that gave my story a layer of “texture.”

Intern relates ‘wonderful’ learning experience

By AMANDA NETTLES

This summer I worked for Carroll County News and its sister paper, The Lovely Citizen. It was a wonderful experience and I couldn’t have been more thankful and grateful for the experience. I learned a lot about myself. All I wanted from this experience was to learn and to grow. I received both. I was challenged and supported during my internship.

I wrote various stories during my time at Carroll County News. Most of the stories were feature pieces. I was also able to attend a lot of local political meetings, which were extremely interesting. I was able to experience a real newsroom with real newsroom staff. It was absolutely wonderful. I learned so much about myself and so much about the newspaper industry. It was a wonderful experience.
As I’m writing this column, I am about halfway through “Raymond Chandler,” a 1997 biography of the renowned novelist whose books about Los Angeles private detective Philip Marlowe often are cited as the best example of the so-called hard-boiled detective genre. (“Hard-boiled” means the detective has scruples and grit, but seems habitually weary and can summon little sympathy for his or her fellow man.)

Biographer Tom Hiney tells an unsparring story of Chandler, who prospered as an oil company executive until he drank himself into unemployment, thus paradoxically igniting a spectacular, albeit late-blooming, writing career.

Chandler’s life is full of drama, missteps and U-turns — for instance, he changed residences as if constantly on the run from the thugs he wrote about — that pre-date his success, but what really engaged me were the descriptions of some of his writing techniques from which we all can glean wisdom.

One example: The sheets of paper on which he typed his stories were short horizontal strips, each one deep enough to accommodate only about a dozen lines.

“It was a trick,” Hiney wrote, “which forced him to put ‘a bit of magic’ on to each small sheet; be it an image, description or wisecrack.”

The Marlowe novels included plenty of violence and depravity, but Chandler tried never to waste space, even in writing about mundane actions: “Whether Marlowe was waiting for a client to show up, or making coffee, Chandler had given these moments the attention as much attention as he gave to the dramatic showdowns.”

Of course, Chandler was writing fiction, so he had the freedom to be more creative than the newspaper reporter; still, we should attempt to make each paragraph a reward for the reader, something valuable, memorable or revealing.

Notice I used the verb “attempt”; it is possible to overdo, to strain for creativity or color and end up with embarrassment or worse. My defense against overwriting is what I call “the wince test.” If I take a risk, then wince when I read it, I’ve gone too far.

Which leads into the next technique Hiney described: Chandler “also decided never to try to revise weaker scenes, but instead rewrite them from the start.”

Recognizing “weaker” sentences or paragraphs, deleting them, then “rewriting them from the start” are brilliant moves, assuming deadline allows. Way too often, we write as if we’re assembly-line workers, producing adequate but predictable prose. When one flat sentence expands into five or 10, we are telling readers we have no enthusiasm for the story, and they shouldn’t either.

By immediately stepping in and eliminating the mediocre stuff, we’re raising our standards, always a good thing.

(Historical note: Back in the early days of newsroom computers, losing whole stories to electronic whimsy was a too-common occurrence. When that would happen to me, I would curse flamboyantly for about a minute, then start over. My second try at the story always was better, and usually much better, than the version I lost.)

This next Chandler tactic most certainly is not for deadline, but is the kind of exercise a reporter determined to improve should try: Finding a good story someone else had written, Chandler would “try to rewrite it and then reread the original. By doing this he found that he could spot structural weaknesses in his own writing, and found, too, that he was beginning to understand some of the invisible effects seasoned writers managed to create without the reader noticing.”

We all learned to write by reading and imitating, and Chandler was taking that one logical step further. I can vouch for that technique. When I became a writing coach, I spent untold (and unpaid) hours rewriting stories by both excellent and not-so-excellent writers. Doing so taught me how to teach, how to spot both the gems and the flaws I would have to recognize in coaching others.

Chandler, Hiney said, wasn’t the strongest creator of plots, nor did he care for Agatha Christie’s preoccupation with challenging readers to spot, as her plots unfolded, clues to whodunit. Rather, Chandler was a master at describing moods, background and scenes. Here is his most famous (in my opinion, anyway) paragraph, with which he started a story called “Red Wind”:

There was a desert wind blowing that night. It was one of those hot dry Santa Anas that come down through the mountain passes and curl your hair and make your nerves jump and your skin itch. On nights like that, every booze party ends in a fight. Meek little wives feel the edge of the carving knife and study their husbands’ necks. Anything can happen. You can even get a full glass of beer at a cocktail lounge.

Imitate that.

THE FINAL WORD: The down-and-out part of a town today is called “skid row,” but the phrase originated in early Seattle as “skid road,” a road made of greased logs. Workers would slide raw timber along skid road en route to the mills.

(Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.)
Guest Editorial: Slow Mail Costs Money

By Matthew Paxton IV

Most people get mail every day, Monday through Saturday. But what happens when the mail comes later than we expect?

We found out a few years ago, when the Postmaster General had to take away overnight First-Class and Periodicals mail from most of the nation. That caused a problem for a lot of consumers and businesses. Now, we may be facing a new slowdown, if Congress doesn’t do something very soon.

Who needs the mail, some people ask? We have the Internet now. But a lot happens in the mail, and a lot goes wrong when it is late. To begin with, mail is the backbone for about $1.3 trillion in jobs, products and services. And then there is the personal impact.

People send in their credit card payments at the last minute when cash is tight. The payment reaches the credit card company late, and credit scores take a beating. That causes loans for cars and houses to get more expensive.

Many people count on the mail for medicines. A missed dosage can mean a trip to the hospital.

Small businesses count on the day’s mail to bring in cash from customers. A few days’ delay can mean a trip to the bank for a loan. Loans cost money, and put pressure on the business to raise prices.

Some things just can’t be emailed. It is hard to send your grandkid’s birthday cake overnight by the Internet. Some farm supply houses use the mail to deliver small animals quickly. They certainly can’t zap them across broadband, or allow them to die in a post office waiting for a mail truck. And then there are legal documents that have to arrive by certified mail. Also, I have to mention late newspapers, where sales coupons are missed and public event announcements arrive after the event. Newspapers like this one that rely on the mail for delivery to readers took it on the chin the past few years, with disappointed readers canceling their subscriptions.

We are at another crunch point. The US Postal Service has a $57 billion deficiency on its balance sheet, most of it caused by Congress. Fixing it may require the Postmaster General to close more post offices and mail sorting plants, eliminate mail-hauling truck routes and ground the airmail. The mail would be slowed down even further.

USPS last received a major overhaul by Congress in 2006. The next year, Steve Jobs appeared on a stage with a new gadget called an iPhone. Since then, Congress and the Postmaster General have been grappling with the tough problem of collecting enough postage for a system that must reach ever more mailing addresses in America, but with less mail—though still important mail—to pay for the service. So far, Congress has done nothing but tinker.

This is nothing new. Since the birth of the nation, Congress bogged down many times in finding resources for this essential economic backbone—one of the few government services actually in the Constitution! Usually a slow Congress results in slower mail.

The choices are tough, and Congress is never good at tough choices. Businesses that buy postage cannot afford big increases and will simply find alternatives if the rates are jacked up too much. Consumers cannot afford to pay more for slower mail. USPS wants to protect jobs for its workers.

Of course, USPS is not supported by tax dollars, but by postage. And no taxpayer money should be needed unless Congress lets the system deteriorate further. There is a better choice.

The House committee sent a bill to House Ways and Means Committee last March responsible for overseeing the US Postal Service. The bill, HR 756, is now sponsored by Republican Rep. Mark Meadows of North Carolina, and three Democrats: Reps. Elijah Cummings of Maryland; Gerald Connolly of Virginia; and Stephen Lynch of Massachusetts. All are experts on postal matters. That this group, who agree on little else, could come up with a solution says a lot about this bill.

The legislation would require about 77,000 retired postal workers who draw benefits from a federal benefits health fund to use Medicare instead. Medicare taxes were already paid for these workers. The Medicare fund owes these retirees their benefits anyway. It is just that this group has chosen a different benefit for themselves, which they were allowed to do. Now it is time for them to follow the practice of most private sector workers and draw their earned benefits from Medicare instead.

Commercial mailers would have to accept a small postage increase to pay most of the new cost to Medicare. But the benefits to the federal budget and to USPS would be substantial. Overall, the federal deficit would be $6 billion less if the bill passed.

And the US Postal Service would save about $30 billion over 10 years. The rest of its red ink would have to be erased through new efficiencies, and many steps have already been taken to find those, without creating slower mail. All that needs to happen is for House Speaker Paul Ryan to put the bill up for a successful vote before it is too late.

If you are concerned about losing more mail service, particularly in rural America, the way to protect it is to contact your Representative and ask for a big push for HR 756 in September. www.house.gov will take you to a message page for your Member of Congress.

(Matthew Paxton IV, is publisher of The News-Gazette, Lexington, VA and president of the National Newspaper Association)
NNA Convention handy for APA members

Tulsa, Okla. will be the setting Oct. 5-7 for the annual convention and trade show of the National Newspaper Association (NNA), the closest the annual gathering will be to Arkansas until it returns to Little Rock.

Jason Taylor, president of Western U.S. Publishing for GateHouse Media and president of GateHouse Live, will deliver the keynote address at the opening breakfast and “Parade of Flags” Friday morning, Oct. 6.

Bill Ostendorf will provide “Strategies to Boost Advertising Sales via Print and Digital Friday morning.

Each year the NNA convention brings together community newspaper publishers from across the country. The programming at the convention is tailored for that segment of the newspaper industry.

You can take a look at that programming and more information on the convention, including how to register, at the NNA website at www.nnaweb.org/convention.

Essay contest materials, ads now available

The “It Can Wait” editorial writing contest for Arkansas students ages 14-19 is ready for kick-off with local newspapers. More information about the program can be found on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arkansas-Newspaper-Foundation/157891060935155.

Contest ad and information for newspapers is available for download on the APS Ad Clearinghouse site in the ANF Folder as well as the ANF Facebook page.

The 2015 statewide winner was from Ft. Smith and last year’s statewide winner was from Eureka Springs. Statewide winners receive a $500.00 prize sponsored by AT&T, a hosted luncheon by AT&T, and a private guided tour of the Arkansas Capitol. Newspapers are encouraged to seek local sponsors and the contest may be used for a revenue generating feature.

For “It Can Wait” contest rules and other information on how to participate, visit http://www.arkansaspress.org/page/anfessaycontest, or email ANF Director Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

APA office closed on Labor Day

Like many offices across the state and the nation, the APA office will be closed Monday, Sept. 4 in observance of Labor Day. The office will re-open on Tues., Sept. 5.

“Labor Day is one of six holidays on which the APA offices closes during the year,” said APA Executive Director Tom Larimer.

“Since we labor so hard on a daily basis, we felt it appropriate that Labor Day be included in our list of holiday closings.”

That last part is a little tongue in cheek, but mainly we wanted to let our members know that the office won’t be open Monday. Some APA members actually do work on Monday holidays to get out a newspaper. Still others move up their production schedules to allow them to take Monday holidays off.

From the APA staff we wish you a happy and safe Labor Day weekend.

Mark Your Calendar!

September 4: Labor Day Holiday - APA Office Closed

November 9 - 10: 2017 ArkLaMiss Circulation & Marketing Conference Ameristar Casino & Hotel Vicksburg, MS
And now for something completely different.

Twice in recent weeks U.S. Navy ships have collided with other ships. These are rare events, thank goodness, as they more often than not result in loss of life.

In the case of the most recent collision at sea off of the exotic port of Singapore, there were initially ten sailors that were unaccounted for after the accident.

The shipping lanes around Singapore are incredibly busy. Singapore is a financial center and trading port that brings ships from all over the world. They’re coming and going all the time.

Without casting any aspersions on just who might be to blame for this latest accident, one can understand how it can happen with all that traffic. The truth is there’s likely plenty of blame to go around. Somebody wasn’t doing their job.

I once bobbed around the seas in that part of the world. Well, as much as one can “bob” on an aircraft carrier, which isn’t much. It was a long time ago. In fact, it seems a lifetime ago three-quarters of the way through the last century. Singapore was a port of call a time or two. To label it exotic does it an injustice.

Situated on the southern tip of Malaysia, the Straits of Singapore provide passage, albeit tight passage, between Singapore and Sumatra. It’s not like two ships can’t pass each other in the Straits, but as these things go it’s pretty snug, and certainly not like the open seas where it’s a little easier to avoid running into other mariners.

I didn’t really choose to go to Singapore. I would have preferred Hong Kong where we had visited a few times and which I fell in love with on the first visit. In fact, when we would visit Hong Kong I would take leave and stay at the Hyatt Regency on the Kowloon side of Victoria Harbor and feel like I was back home for a few days. It was very western in those days, and everyone, or at least the majority, spoke English. That’s because it was at the time a British Crown Colony. The indigenous folks, the Chinese who lived there, spoke English with a British accent. At least those who spoke English did. That was a hoot.

I found out how little Mandarin I spoke or understood one evening when I was trying to communicate to a shop keeper that I was craving peanuts. We weren’t communicating effectively, so I started pantomiming cracking open peanut. Surely he could see what I was talking about. Nope. That went on for a few minutes before I gave up and headed on down the street with no peanuts.

But I digress.

Since I was assigned to an aircraft carrier and since I had little input as to where we actually made port, I rode along on the trip to Singapore. Not that I had any choice, you understand. In this case I was glad I did.

The thing about aircraft carriers is that you can’t just take them anywhere. They are just really big and with all the security concerns surrounding them, well, we had to be choosy where we stopped over. Not every port has docking facilities that will handle an aircraft carrier, either. Hong Kong did not. Singapore did, or at least one that sufficed.

We’d been through straits before, at least one even tighter than the Straits of Singapore, but it was entertaining watching the ship navigate the narrow channel. We didn’t have to worry about running into other ships because they were all giving us a wide berth.

Once there, we were treated to some of the most amazing hospitality I had encountered in that part of the world. We found friendly, outgoing locals who accommodated us ways we didn’t even know we needed accommodating.

After all, they get a lot of shipping in and out of there, but not often an American aircraft carrier. At least not in those days with the war raging just north of there in Vietnam.

My memories of those visits to Singapore are recalled with great warmth and appreciation. I’m sorry those sailors on the U.S. ship involved in the accident won’t get to enjoy what all Singapore has to offer, and certainly I feel badly for those sailors who were lost in the collision.

We forget sometimes that what sailors do is inherently dangerous; that lives can and sometimes are lost.

The narrowest of straits we encountered on the aircraft carrier, the USS Midway by the way, was the San Bernardino Strait in The Philippines. The strait cuts through the islands connecting the Philippine Sea to the Samar Sea. Cutting through the straits saved us at least a couple of days sailing time, and at the time we were in a bit of a time crunch. I’ll explain why later.

We made the passage through the San Bernardino Strait early in the morning. In fact, it was barely daylight as we headed into the narrow passage. The strait is lined with volcanic islands, the majority of which are uninhabited. It was an eerie sight as smoke, or steam, was coming out of some of the islands giving one the impression that some of the volcanoes weren’t far from being active.

We crept through the strait at a snail’s pace affording us plenty of time to take in the scenery. It also gave time for the locals to come rowing out in their giant outrigger canoes to get a closer look at us.

An aircraft carrier makes a big wake, especially when it’s barely moving along. One after another of the canoes approaching the ship would tump over when they hit the wake. It was quite a funny sight and entertaining. None of them got close enough for us to throw them anything, which is likely what they were wanting.

We were passing through the San Bernardino Strait because we were in a hurry to get to the combat zone off of Vietnam. This was in late April of 1972, and if we could make it to the combat zone by the last day of April, we could draw combat pay for the entire month. The skipper was looking out for us, cutting through the strait so we could get there in time.

And that, as I said at the beginning, is something a little different.

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Have a great week.

Tom
**Internship provides career growth opportunity**

**By NICHOLAS POPOWITCH**

This summer, I was fortunate enough to receive a guidance and invaluable experience through my Arkansas Newspaper Foundation sponsored internship with The Daily Record, a Little Rock-based weekly newspaper. My time with the staff, and on assignment were my first real-world experiences in the print journalism industry, and they helped set the tone for my future career.

My internship with The Daily Record included writing business profiles, transcribing interviews, and covering events that were of interest to the readership. Through these actions, I gained experience in reporting, writing, and photography, all under the direct guidance of Jay Edwards, Publisher of The Daily record.

With every story, Mr. Edwards included me in the development process, valuing my opinion as he offered insight from his years of experience. The pinnacle of my experience during this internship came when I was asked to play an active role in developing a new story format for The Daily Record.

Internships allow new members of an industry to learn from experienced professionals. My summer at The Daily Record, working with Mr. Edwards has given me an improved vision of what the newspaper industry is like, and what my role will be in my future career. I am grateful to The Daily Record and the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation for the opportunity to learn and grow as I begin my journalism career.

**Deadline extended for EPPY Awards entries**

The deadline for entries in the annual EPPY Awards has been extended to Sept. 14. The awards honor the best in digital media across 30 diverse categories including excellence in college and university journalism.

Now in its 22nd year, this international contest sponsored by Editor & Publisher has broadened its scope and also includes categories for investigative features, mobile apps, videos, webcasts, advertising/marketing, photography and community service.

For more information on the EPPY contest, go to http://www.eppyawards.com/CategoryList.aspx.

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**Interns gains skills at Walnut Ridge assignment**

**By AUBREE HUGHART**

“I was absolutely amazed at just how many things I learned during my 12 weeks interning at The Times Dispatch (Walnut Ridge). I never knew just how much work went into publishing a weekly newspaper. I also didn’t realize how much other work went into the business. I’ve always been on the newswriting and reporting side of things, but there’s also advertisements, business and office work, and our in-house print job station.

“I enjoyed getting to know every aspect of the business. Mr. (John) Bland was happy to let me dabble in whatever areas I showed interest in, and the employees in each area helped me hone my skills and learn new ones as well. I did a bit of everything: report, write, sell ads, mail out bills, photograph events, and so much more. Everyone was always happy to help me and explain new things; I felt so welcome in the office.

“I am grateful to both the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation and The Times Dispatch for giving me this summer opportunity. I feel equipped to return to school, finish my college education and jump into the workforce with the skills I have learned and the experience I have gained this summer. I hope that I am able to work in the newspaper industry in some way, shape, or form after graduation from Arkansas State University.”

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**Gettman to head spa city chamber**

**Gary Troutman** has been named the new CEO and President of the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce. He takes over the new challenge Sept. 18. The job includes leading the Hot Springs Metro Partnership, an economic development arm.

A former member of the APA Board of Directors and general manager of the Hot Springs Sentinel-Record, Troutman has since 2015 been a vice president at First Security Bank in Hot Springs. He is a Hot Springs native.

He replaces Jim Fram who will remain on the Chamber staff and Metro Partnership.

Troutman was one of 24 candidates considered for the job. He’s been a member of the Chamber’s executive board since 2013, and was on the search committee to find a new Chamber leader until he withdrew to apply for the job himself.

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**Courier-Index marks 146th years in publication**

The Courier-Index in Marianna (Lee County) recently marked its 146th year of publication.

Founded in 1872, the newspaper is published each Wednesday morning at Times-Herald Publishing in Forrest City, a sister publication. Both publications were acquired last November by Argent Arkansas News Media.

The Courier-Index has also announced a single-copy price increase to 75 cents effective Sept. 6, along with an incremental bump in subscription rates for the newspaper.

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**Tate photos help NYT tell story from Fort Smith**

The New York Times featured a story in its Sunday edition on the vandalism of a mosque in Fort Smith that featured photos taken by Ethan Tate, son of APA President Byron and Pat Tate of Pine Bluff. Byron is publisher of The Sheridan Headlight.

The story was also printed in the Sunday edition of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette with some of Tate’s photos included.

The story is one of hate, forgiveness and redemption in Fort Smith. Some are calling it a “must read” story.
**Arkansas Publisher Weekly**

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**Members In the News**

Allen promoted to GM at GateHouse newspapers

Jennifer Allen has been promoted to general manager of five APA newspapers owned by GateHouse Media. She will be responsible for advertising and overall operations at the Hot Springs Village Voice, the Daily Siftings Herald in Arkadelphia, the Nevada County Picayune in Prescott, the Gurdon Times and the Hope Star.

She had previously been regional advertising director for 13 GateHouse newspapers in Arkansas.

The announcement came from Matt Guthrie, vice president of GateHouse Media’s Southwest Region.

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**APA honoree Jordan awarded fellowship**

Gerald Jordan, a University of Arkansas journalism professor and a recipient of the APA’s Distinguished Service Award in 2016, has been tapped for the 2017 Barry Bingham Sr. Fellowship.

The fellowship, given each year to an educator to recognize efforts that encourage minority-group students to study journalism, comes with a $1,000 award.

Jordan, who worked at The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Kansas City Star and The Boston Globe before joining the UA faculty in 1995, helped establish the Lemke Journalism project, which is designed to bring more minority-group students interested in journalism to the university.

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**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.

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**Just one month till Newspaper Week Observance**

We are now just a month away from the 77th annual observance of National Newspaper Week scheduled for Oct. 1-7.

The traditional NNW “kit” provided by the Newspaper Association Managers group will be available later this month at www.nationalnewspaperweek.com. The kit will contain content in various forms, including features, columns, editorials and cartoons for use during the designated week.

This year’s NNW theme is “Real Newspapers…Real News!” The aim is to applaud and underscore newspaper media’s role as the leading provider of news in print, online or via mobile devices.

APA pays for the kits for APA member newspapers so there is no cost at least for the content associated with creating an observance in your newspaper.

"I am in hopes that most of our member newspapers will take advantage of this content and do something special in their newspapers for this special newspaper week,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “It is important to remind readers of the vital role the newspaper plays in their community, and this is a great way to do it.”

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**Real Newspapers... Real News!**

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**— 30 —

Luther W. "Sonny" Sanders**

Luther W. “Sonny” Sanders, 79, died August 22, 2017, in Columbia, Mo.

He taught journalism at the University of Memphis, the University of Missouri and retired from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock after 26 years of service. He was advisor to the student newspapers at all three institutions, and he was APA’s “Journalism Educator of the Year” in 2000.

Sanders earned a doctoral degree from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; and master’s and bachelor’s degrees from Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, and the University of Memphis respectively.

A member of many professional and honorary organizations, he was the recipient of numerous awards including the Journalism Educator of the Year by APA and Kappa Tau Alpha’s national Taft Outstanding Adviser Award.

A Celebration of Life is scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 10, 1 to 3 p.m., at the Arkansas Press Association, 411 S. Victory, Little Rock.

Graveside service will be Sat., Sept. 9, at the Little Prairie Cemetery near Caruthersville, Mo. Memorials may be made to the American Heart Association or to the no-kill animal shelter of your choice.

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**Save the Date!**

ArkLaMiss Circulation & Marketing Conference

Nov. 9 - 10, 2017

Ameristar Casino & Hotel, Vicksburg, MS
Arkansas Newspaper Foundation has announced Continuing Education Grant opportunities for eight member newspapers of the Arkansas Press to send representatives to the ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing Conference November 9-10 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss. “The ANF Board of Directors is excited about this opportunity to provide continuing education for member newspapers and their employees,” said Karen Brown, executive director of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation. “We are happy to provide up to eight Continuing Education Grants in the amount of $200 each for one person per newspaper to attend the ArkLaMiss Conference. We have had good participation and hope newspapers continue to take advantage of this grant opportunity.”

“In addition to adding three additional grants this year, we have also incorporated a waiting list so that, in the case of a grant recipient becoming unable to attend the conference, another application will be eligible to receive the grant for attending the ArkLaMiss Conference.”

The application, with specific details and instructions, can be found on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/Arkansas-Newspaper-Foundation-157891060935155/. The application may be downloaded and should be emailed to Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com when completed. Email Karen directly with any questions regarding the application process at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

The grants are awarded on a first-come basis.

Foundation offering eight ArkLaMiss Conference grants

‘Real Newspapers… Real News’ theme for ‘17 NNW

At a time when we’re hearing far too many references to “fake news,” the theme of the 77th annual National Newspaper Week, “Real Newspapers…Real News!” seeks to call attention to the vital role continuing to be played by newspapers in the communities they serve.

The week set aside for the 2017 observance of National Newspaper Week is Oct. 1-7. In an effort to assist newspapers in observing the annual event, the Newspaper Association Managers, the trade association of press association executive directors across North America, is offering the traditional NNW “kit” free of charge.

The kit will contain content in various forms, including features, columns, editorials and cartoons for use during the designated week. APA pays the NAM group so that APA members may access the content.

“National Newspaper Week” is a great time to remind readers of the important role newspapers play in a community,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “I hope all APA member newspapers set aside some space to mark the occasion of the 2017 observance.”

Larimer also encourages member newspapers to schedule open house events or community event of some kind to mark the special week for newspaper.

Materials for use in marking National Newspaper Week will be available this month at www.nationalnewspaperweek.com.

SPJ event to critique Central High coverage

“The Central High Crisis and the Press” is the topic for a discussion planned by the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) Arkansas Pro Chapter on Wednesday, Sept. 13, 6:00 to 7:45 p.m. at the Darragh Center Auditorium of the Central Arkansas Library facility on Rock Street in Little Rock’s River Market District.

The event is billed as a “media critique 60 years on,” and marks the 60th anniversary of the 1957 Central High School integration crisis that made headlines across the country.

A panel including, Ernie Dumas, Phyllis Brandon, Roy Reed, John Kirk and Tafi Mukunyadzi will discuss the 1957 press coverage of the Central High School Crisis.

There is no admission for this event.
Hurricane Harvey dominated the news in recent weeks and for good reason. The storm brought all the elements that comprise a story that will survive well beyond the 24-hour news cycle. There was plenty of wonder at the sheer power of the storm and there was plenty of drama to go around as thousands had to be rescued from the floodwaters in that low-lying area.

Through it all the major newspapers in the metro area in Houston and surrounding area did not miss a beat or an edition. The presses kept rolling, and while normal distribution systems were entirely disrupted, the papers still got out there to people starved for news of what’s happening around them, beyond what they could see with their own eyes.

That makes for an interesting side story to the bigger story dominating the headlines, but it is a feat that should not go unnoticed or unreported. It takes a higher level of dedication for those involved to make the effort not only to get to work but to put out a quality product for their news consumers.

It takes people to do the production, to handle the pre-press, the editing, and to run the presses. It takes even more to prepare the end product for distribution, and then to figure out where it is even possible to distribute the newspaper considering the widespread flooding the area experienced.

Keeping in mind too that those doing it also have homes and families imperiled by the storm and subsequent flooding. They have personal concerns and responsibilities, yet they manage to handle those while doing what it takes to get the news out to those who seek it desperately.

I’m sure there will be additional stories, perhaps even convention presentations, on just how they managed to continue getting out newspapers while surrounded by the chaos of Hurricane Harvey. And just as likely, they will be very compelling stories to relate and to hear.

Reporting the news is what we do. It is never routine as each day holds additional challenges. That’s part of what makes our business fun; it’s what holds our attention. But to continue to do that with the huge challenges of doing so while in the midst of hurricane-related mayhem is something entirely different.

It is the kind of thing that brings out the best in us. We need to know we can still do these things even under the worst of conditions, and the Texas coast newspapers proved it once again.

Congratulations, and thanks to those who went above and beyond to keep your readers informed.

Naturally occurring disasters like Hurricane Harvey do produce at least one positive aspect in that it brings out the best in those who feel compelled to come to their aid. We’re seeing plenty of that in the Harvey-affected areas, and no doubt it is appreciated by those dispossessed by the storm and its aftermath.

During these times we remain able to put aside the differences that we may have and offer help regardless. America has almost always responded in this fashion and it is reassuring to see that this is still the case. Honestly, I can’t imagine it ever being otherwise, but anything is possible in today’s upside down and backward world.

It is times like that, and events like Hurricane Harvey, that brings out the best in us. Unfortunately, it can also bring out the worst like the looters taking advantage of vulnerable businesses. The recovery will also produce any number of stories about unscrupulous contractors and construction companies looking to cash in on the thousands of homes that will need repair. Thankfully these remain in the minority, but it us inevitable that they will be there and there will be news stories of their victims.

And of course there will be lots of federal money…another term for tax dollars…flooding into the area. There’s no problem too big or small that can’t be fixed by throwing tax money at it, and there in we’ll also find some abuses. Inevitably, federal money will be used in many ways, not all of them aimed at aiding the victims of Harvey.

We don’t argue much with using tax money in this fashion. It is the humanitarian way after all, and truly an American trait. The abuses will come, for sure, but that’s just part of aiding in the recovery of this area.

Journalists also flocked to the area to cover the storm. That’s of course in addition to those already working in that area. There was certainly no shortage of those who are there to record for the rest of us the “real” story of Hurricane Harvey. No “fake news” here. It’s just a whole lot of reality, a whole lot of suffering for those in that area of Texas and Louisiana.

This is a human story, filled with all the drama, tragedy and determination that always make for a good story. There have been a lot of those emerging from the Harvey disaster just as there almost always are in these huge news events.

There’s some really good news this week and in this edition about the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation increasing to eight the number of grants available for attending the ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 9-10 in Vicksburg, Miss.

The grants are $200 each and are open to any APA member newspaper in good standing. One per customer, please.

The grants will come close to paying the out-of-pocket expenses for sending someone to this conference, and attending will pay dividends for months. The ideas that come out of the conference alone will be their own reward.

Those ideas begin being shared at the managers’ roundtable discussion that kicks off the annual event, and continues through the “hot ideas” session when a host of great ideas are shared by those attending in a fast-paced, one-hour session.

Zach Ahrens, president and publisher of the Topeka Capital-Journal, former publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, will be the featured presenter at the conference.

The grants offered by the Foundation will be claimed so please do not hesitate to get your application in for one of them. Read the story in this APW for details.

Have a great week.
Fishers celebrate 50th anniversary

David and Mary Fisher of Danville, both APA past presidents, recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They were married July 28, 1967 in Oklahoma City.

The couple publishes newspapers in Danville, Dardanelle, Morrilton, and Perryville, and they have a family interest in the newspaper in Clarksville.

Son David B. Fisher and granddaughters Ally and Ella of Bentonville hosted the celebration on August 5 at the Danville United Methodist Church.

Meek retires as Village Voice ME

Jeff Meek recently retired as managing editor of the Hot Springs Village Voice. He has been with the newspaper in various capacities since 2007.

Although retired from the ME’s desk at the Village Voice, Meek will continue writing as a stringer for the newspaper, covering assignments and writing veterans stories. He had started with the newspaper as a columnist writing World War II veteran stories.

Texas judge trumps DOL overtime changes

U.S. District Court Judge Amos Mazzant of the Eastern District of Texas last week struck down the U.S. Department of Labor’s decision in 2016 to more than double the minimum salary requirements for employees exempt from overtime rules, giving the Labor Department a new opportunity to create a more realistic rule.

Mazzant said the Labor Department overstepped its bounds with the dramatic increase in minimum salary requirements. Congress, he said, laid out the rule that administrative, executive and professional employees (AEP employees) would be exempt from the overtime requirements. With the 2016 threshold change, he said, the Labor Department effectively invalidated the meaning of these three types of job descriptions. Many workers performing duties consistent with the AEP descriptions would have lost their exempt status.

NNA President Matthew Paxton IV said the Mazzant decision would buy employers and employee groups some time to find a better standard. “NNA met with the Obama Administration last year and agreed that the salary threshold was due for an increase. But by ratcheting it up so high, the Labor Department had pretty much guaranteed most employees would not see a fatter paycheck, but rather were in danger of layoffs or simply being handcuffed in their abilities to chase the stories they wanted to cover. Overall, the industry is in no position to meet the 2016 standard. Now we can all work on finding something that actually works,” Paxton said. Acosta is accepting comments on the standard through September 25. NNA will file comments on behalf of community newspapers.

Newspapers encouraged to promote essay contest

APA newspapers are encouraged to promote the “It Can Wait” editorial writing contest for Arkansas students ages 14-19 now underway. The theme of the contest refers to texting and driving. It can wait.

More information about the program can be found on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arkansas-Newspaper-Foundation/157891060935155.

Contest ad and information for newspapers is available for download on the APS Ad Clearinghouse site in the ANF Folder as well as the ANF Facebook page.

‘Innovation Starts Here’ NNA convention theme

“Innovation Starts Here” is the theme of the 131st annual National Newspaper Association convention and trade show scheduled for Oct. 4-7 in Tulsa, Okla. The event will take place at the Hyatt Regency Tulsa.

Online registration and hotel reservations can be completed at www.nnaeweb.org/convention. Other information on the annual gathering, including those planning to attend, can also be found here.

Jason Taylor, president of Western U.S. Publishing for GateHouse Media and president of GateHouse Live, will deliver the keynote address at the opening breakfast and “Parade of Flags” Friday morning, Oct.6. Bill Ostendorf will provide “Strategies to Boost Advertising Sales via Print and Digital Friday morning.

Each year the NNA convention brings together community newspaper publishers from across the country. The programming at the convention is tailored for that segment of the newspaper industry.
Ahrens featured at ArkLaMiss; Tate to facilitate roundtable

Zach Ahrens will be the featured presenter at the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 9-10 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss., and APA President Byron Tate will facilitate the newspaper managers’ roundtable that kicks off the annual gathering.

Ahrens is president and publisher of the Topeka Capital-Journal, a position he’s held since October of 2015. He was previously the President and Publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway. Both newspapers were recently acquired by GateHouse Media.

Tate, who as installed at APA president in June, is owner and publisher of the Sheridan Headlight. He also stepped in to facilitate the roundtable at last year’s ArkLaMiss conference.

Current trends in the newspaper industry, including all phases of a newspaper operation, is on the table for discussion at the roundtable. The event is open to newspaper managers at any level. Attendance to the roundtable is included in the registration fee for the ArkLaMiss conference.

Ahrens will take over for his presentation Thursday afternoon, Nov. 9, and will discuss how newspapers can reach across the demographics to appeal to a wide and diverse reader base. His high energy presentation will be relevant to anyone in the newspaper business, but will be especially relevant to the circulation and marketing folks who are charged with selling as well as delivering the newspaper in their respective communities.

A particularly popular feature of the ArkLaMiss conference, the “hot ideas” exchange, will again be on the schedule for Friday morning of the conference. This fast-paced sharing of hot newspaper circulation and marketing ideas can earn some hard cash for those idea presentations voted best. There will be enough ideas coming out of that one-hour session to last a newspaper for a year.

“The hot ideas session alone is worth the price of admission to the ArkLaMiss,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “I’m always impressed with the creativity on display in this session.”

More information on the conference along with registration information is available at www.arklamissconference.com.

ArkLaMiss attendance made easier by ANF grants

Grants provided by the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation can make it a lot easier to attend the ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 9-10 in Vicksburg, Miss.

The $200 grants will cover most of the costs of attending the conference, including the registration fee and a night in the Ameristar Casino Hotel, site for the event.

The grant application, with specific details and instructions, can be found on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Facebook page at http://tinyurl.com/y9zwoujb.

The application may be downloaded and should be emailed to Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com when completed. Email Karen directly with any questions regarding the application process at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

The grants are awarded on a first-come basis.
You just had the sense didn’t you that press coverage of Hurricane Harvey and its devastation in Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana was better than it was in the wake of the also devastating affects of Hurricane Katrina?

Remember the chaos of coverage of Katrina? The rampant rumors of anarchy, open hostility including gunfire on police and rescue workers? It was all there with Katrina and the media coverage was frankly lacking. It wasn’t that there was a shortage of media coverage, but the coverage in retrospect was, sad to say, not all that credible.

The mainstream media let us down on Katrina, acting as the conduit for the latest outrageous rumor coming out of the chaos in New Orleans. It was as if all of a sudden we shunned the vetting of rumors and reported them as news. So much of what was reported after Katrina didn’t actually happen. It was the product of someone’s vivid imagination and we all got caught up in it.

And frankly, again in retrospect, it’s downright embarrassing.

Not that it wasn’t chaotic because it was. It just wasn’t the free-for-all it was portrayed to be, a story that was not for weeks sufficiently cleared up by the media.

Perhaps we learned our lessons from that experience. I’m not sure that’s the case, but for some reason the coverage of Houston and Harvey were much better, much more orderly and less sensationalized.

The elements for sensationalism were certainly there with Harvey, just as they were with Katrina. But Harvey’s coverage was less like theatre of the absurd and more like professional journalism. What’s the difference? You decide.

Recommended for your reading pleasure is the take on this subject by W. Joseph Campbell writing for the Poynter Institute, a global leader in journalism. I posted it to the APA Facebook page last week. Campbell is the author of the book “Getting It Wrong,” a scathing critique of the performance of the media in the coverage of Katrina and the days and weeks after. He’s literally written the book on the media regarding Katrina, and now offers an early take that we did a much better job with Harvey.

“In the days following Katrina’s landfall,” Campbell wrote, “news reports described apocalyptic horror that the hurricane supposedly had unleashed. They reported snipers firing at medical personnel. ... They told of bodies being stacked there like cordwood. They reported that roving gangs were preying on tourists and terrorizing the occupants of the Superdome [where hundreds of storm evacuees took shelter], raping and killing. They said that children were victims of sexual assault, that one seven-year-old was raped and her throat was slit. They reported that sharks were plying the flooded streets of New Orleans.

“None of those reports was verified or substantiated.” Little of it was true.

He’s gives the media a a “D-minus” for Katrina coverage. It sounds as though the letter grade for the Harvey coverage will be much better. (In fact he gives the Harvey coverage a “B.”)

Why? Well, for one thing the flow of information from local government leaders was much more credible in the Houston area when compared to the information, or misinformation, that flowed from New Orleans community leaders like Mayor Ray Nagin who apparently saw the devastation as an opportunity for enrichment rather than concerning himself with helping the citizens of his community and getting the story straight for the world.

There were, as there almost always are, wild reports such as sharks entering the flooded streets of Houston. Those reports were quickly debunked. There were, too, those doctored photos depicting storm damage that was non-existent, and again they were quickly proven to be fake.

According to Campbell, the Washington Post kept a blog dedicated to listing the storm-related hoaxes and exaggerations that promptly showed up on social media outlets. The mainstream media was not only doing it’s job in accurately and thoroughly reporting the devastation of Harvey, they were also reporting the fake news reporting and chronicling each of them for all to see.

It’s a mystery why some devote their time and talents to creating such misinformation, especially at a time during which so many are suffering from the effects of the storm; when so many are suddenly forced from their homes by flood waters or when their homes were destroyed by Harvey’s high winds.

Worse yet, when some lose their lives as a result of the storm. The last total I saw was 60 dead.

I suppose we can take some solace in the fact that the media did redeem itself from the coverage of Harvey. It was and is a multi-faceted story and will be in the coming weeks and months. Just like Katrina, you just know we’ll be hearing and reading about the aftermath of Harvey for a long, long time.

For a news junkie, it’s hard to look away from the coverage of such horrendous natural disasters like Katrina or Harvey. The difference is that now we can be a bit more confident that what we’re seeing reported is actually what is transpiring.

Hats off to the journalists that did what journalists do in these difficult times. They went to the epicenter of the disaster and reported often vividly what they were seeing.

Indeed their efforts have produced what I believe we’ll come to see as one of our finest hours.

Have a great week.
Grants remain for attending Annual ArkLaMiss event

Two of the eight grants from the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation for attending the Nov. 9-10 ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference in historic Vicksburg, Miss., have been spoken for. All eight grants, awarded on a first-come basis, will be claimed so don’t hesitate to apply now.

Larry Killian of the South Arkansas Sun in Hampton, and Daryl Robinson of the News-Times in El Dorado, were the first to claim one of the $200 grants. The grant application, with specific details and instructions, can be found on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Facebook page at http://tinyurl.com/y9zwoujb.

The application may be downloaded and should be emailed to Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com when completed. Email Karen directly with any questions regarding the application process at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

The ArkLaMiss conference takes place over two days at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, where the event has been held for the past several years. Each year between 60 and 80 newspaper circulators and marketers attend the hear discussion of the latest in challenges and solutions in the newspaper industry.

The APA is in charge of the programming for this year’s ArkLaMiss event. The three press association sponsors of the conference take turns arranging the program.

“I am in hopes that we can bring another good contingent of APA members to this year’s ArkLaMiss conference,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “The conference is inexpensive but the rewards for attending are great, and with the Foundation grants it’s an even bigger bargain for APA member newspapers.”

The event kicks off Thursday morning, Nov. 9, with a newspaper managers’ roundtable discussion, to be facilitated this year by APA President Byron Tate. That will be followed Thursday afternoon with the kickoff of the annual conference which this year features Zach Ahrens as the keynote presenter. Zach, president and publisher of the Topeka (Kans.) Capital-Journal, was formerly publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway before assuming the Topeka job in October of 2015.

More information on the conference and online registration is available at the APA website at www.arkansaspress.org.

Still time to register for NNA Tulsa gathering

There’s still time to register to attend the 131st annual National Newspaper Association convention to be held Oct. 4-7 in nearby Tulsa, Okla.

“Innovation Starts Here” is the theme of the NNA convention and trade, which will take place at the Hyatt Regency in Tulsa.

Online registration and hotel reservations can be completed at www.nnaweb.org/convention. Other information on the annual gathering, including those planning to attend, can also be found here.

Jason Taylor, president of Western U.S. Publishing for GateHouse Media and president of GateHouse Live, will deliver the keynote address at the opening breakfast and “Parade of Flag” Friday morning, Oct. 6.

Bill Ostendorf will provide “Strategies to Boost Advertising Sales via Print and Digital Friday morning.

Each year the NNA convention brings together community newspaper publishers from across the country. The programming at the convention is tailored for that segment of the newspaper industry.

Oct. 1 deadline for filing US Postal Service 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 Oct. 10, while non-dailies may publish the form in any edition during October. But the form itself must be filed with the USPS by Oct. 1.

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.
A couple of important things are coming up for APA member newspapers, and both of them I’m talking about happen at roughly the same time.

First, October 1 is the deadline to file your annual Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation, perhaps better known as USPS Form 3526. This is the form that is required of newspapers that possess and use a USPS Periodicals Class mailing permit to distribute their newspapers.

The form requires information on the ownership, management and circulation of the newspaper. The circulation figures are broken down into several categories.

Form 3526 must be filed with the post office by October 1. The form must also be reproduced in the newspaper during the month of October. Weeklies have the entire month of October in which to publish the form, while dailies must publish their form by October 10.

It should also be noted that it is the newspaper circulation listed on Form 3526 that APA uses as the circulation number included in the data published in the annual Arkansas Media Directory for the respective newspapers. Thus has always been the case, but inevitably each year we’ll get a call from a member newspaper inquiring as to where we got the circulation number we used for them in the Directory.

Now you know.

The second thing coming up in early October is the annual observance of National Newspaper Week. For 2017, the week is October 1-7.

This special weeklong observance began several decades ago and continues to be a pet project of the Newspaper Association Managers organization. This group is the association of my counterparts from across North America.

It is the NAM group that provides some suggested content to assist newspapers in marking the annual Newspaper Week observance. That content, which includes house ads, a logo for NNW ’17, columns, editorials, editorial cartoons and more, can be found at www.nationalnewspaperweek.com.

If we don’t inform our readers of this special week, they’re not going to hear about it. It is, or at least should be important to all newspapers to remind readers of the importance of the local newspaper in their lives.

The local newspaper is so easy to take for granted, largely because they’ve seemingly always been there. Some assume they always will be, but we’ve seen evidence even in recent months that that’s not necessarily the case. The folks in Atkins, Dover and Des Arc are learning to live their lives without a local newspaper. Of course they will survive, but when the newspaper dies a huge part of what makes the community a community dies with it. Like the local schools, the local newspaper is a huge part of the community identity. In most cases, the local newspaper is the oldest, continuously operating business in town.

It’s only natural then, and easy to see why some take the newspaper for granted. So we use National Newspaper Week to remind them about the newspapers vital role, both in the lives of readers and in recording of posterity the history of the community.

Regardless of the situation, you can bet, and so can your readers, that nobody cares for the local community like the local newspaper. Nobody else reports your local news, supports your local fund-raising projects, and gets the word out about events and project vital to the community like the local newspaper.

We should remind readers of this at every opportunity, but certainly during National Newspaper Week.

Please make it a point to do something in your newspaper on this special week, whether you use the content provide by the NAM group or make up your own. The important thing is to make the effort.

Back in my newspaper publishing days, a time that now seems a lifetime ago, we would take the opportunity of National Newspaper Week to do something for our readers. That could be anything from hosting a Chamber of Commerce coffee in the newspaper, or throwing open the doors and inviting the community in for an open house.

We would crank up the newspaper press and let people in the community see the press run. Often they’d never seen the press run. When the timing was right, we’d utilize this press time to print the Sunday comics. That was always a crowd pleaser.

I’m aware that the majority of our newspapers no longer have presses, but opportunities still exist to invite the community to the newspaper office for coffee, punch and cookies...something. Anything. The community will appreciate it and you’ll get a chance to speak with your readers in a very personal way, rather than through the columns of your newspaper.

Readers are full of ideas for stories or features they’d like to see the newspaper do, and they’re often not bashful about sharing those ideas. Sometimes they can point out story ideas that perhaps we have completely overlooked or perhaps of which we even unaware.

I always enjoyed this sort of interaction with readers in a casual setting, and National Newspaper Week is an excellent reason to invite them to the newspaper. And you don’t have to ask them to bring ideas to share. Many will do that all on their own.

Newspaper carriers are also recognized and feted in October, for those newspapers who still have carriers. I will admit that this observance was a lot more fun when we still had youth carriers because we’d take them to a local park or batting cages or skating rink and treat them to some fun.

So many people in communities whose newspaper utilized youth carriers had their first gainful employment with the newspaper. That experience gave them a life-long tie to the newspaper because it is an experience they never forget. That’s partly because of their impressionable age, and partly because for the first time they were earning money.

Many times when I’ve gone to speak at civic clubs or other groups, I’ve had people relate that the newspaper in their community gave them their first opportunity to earn money. Considering some of them were now drawing Social Security, I’d say they’ve felt good about the newspaper for a long time.

Don’t forget to relate these stories and create these events during National Newspaper Week. It really is important.

Have a great week.

Tom
2017 REGISTRATION

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:
Newspaper/Company Name: ______________________________________________________
Street Address: __________________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip: __________________________________________________________________
Phone: __________________________ Fax: ____________________________________________

Name: ___________________________________________ Email: _________________________
Check all that apply: [ ] Conference ($99) [ ] Newspaper Management Roundtable (No Charge)

Name: ___________________________________________ Email: _________________________
Check all that apply: [ ] Conference ($99) [ ] Newspaper Management Roundtable (No Charge)

Name: ___________________________________________ Email: _________________________
Check all that apply: [ ] Conference ($99) [ ] Newspaper Management Roundtable (No Charge)

Sponsorship: $____________ Event: ________________________________________________
Total Registrants: __________ X $99 = $____________ Total Amount Due: $______________

Exhibit During the Conference? _____ Yes _____ No
Payment: _____ CREDIT CARD _____ CHECK _____ BILL ME
Card #: __________________________________________________________ Expiration Date __________
VCN# __________ Signature _________________________________________________

Deadline to Register: October 25, 2017

Return Form and Payment to: ArkLaMiss/APA, 411 S. Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201 or fax to (501) 374-7509
Questions? Call Terri Cobb at (501) 374-1500, 1-800-569-8762 or email to terri@arkansaspress.org
# 2017 Conference Agenda

## Thursday, November 9, 2017

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<th>Event / Activity</th>
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| 8:00 a.m. | Vendor Setup, *Bottleneck Blues Bar*  
Registration Opens, *Magnolia Lobby* |
| 9:00 a.m. | Newspaper Management Roundtable  
Moderator: Byron Tate, President, Arkansas Press Association; Publisher, *The Sheridan Headlight*  
*Magnolia Room* |
| 11:00 a.m. | Lunch Available in Casino Buffet |
| 1:00 p.m. | Welcome, Paul Keane, President, Mississippi Press Association; Publisher, *Wayne County News*, Waynesboro, Miss.  
*Magnolia Room* |
| 1:30 p.m. | Opening Session - Zach Ahrens, President & Publisher, *Topeka (Kans.) Capital-Journal*  
*Magnolia Room* |
| 3:00 p.m. | Break with Vendors, *Bottleneck Blues Bar* |
| 4:00 p.m. | Zach Ahrens (Continued)  
*Magnolia Room* |
| 5:30 p.m. | Hospitality Hour with Vendors, *Bottleneck Blues Bar* |
| 7:00 p.m. | Dinner on your Own |

## Friday, November 10, 2017

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event / Activity</th>
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<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Continental Breakfast, <em>Magnolia Room</em></td>
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| 8:45 a.m. | Hot Ideas Session, Moderator: Dennis Dunn, Anniston Star  
*Magnolia Room* |
| 9:45 a.m. | Break with Vendors, *Bottleneck Blues Bar* |
| 10:30 a.m. | Group Discussion on Current Issues  
*Magnolia Room* |
| 11:30 a.m. | Conference Wrap-up: Tom Larimer, Executive Director, Arkansas Press Association  
*Magnolia Room* |

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**Ameristar Casino & Hotel, Vicksburg, Miss.**  
Call 855-888-7281 and reference “sarkla7” | Room Rate: $74 | Deadline: Oct. 25, 2014  
Sponsored by the Arkansas-Louisiana-Mississippi Press Associations
Title of Idea: ________________________________________________________________

Submitted by: __________________________________________________________________________

Newspaper: ___________________ Circulation: ___________ [ ] Daily [ ] Weekly

Phone: ___________________ Email: ________________________________________________

Briefly describe your idea:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Tell us the results of your effort:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What was the revenue/benefit generated?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Use the back of this page for additional comments or ideas. Please enclose samples if available.

Send this form and any samples or illustrations along with your conference registration to:
ArkLaMiss Circulation Conference/Arkansas Press Association | 411 South Victory, Little Rock, AR 72201

We will share each of the ideas submitted in a booklet to be presented at the conference.

Last day to submit ideas is October 25, 2017.
Deadline looms for papers yet to file USPS statement

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 Oct. 10, while nondailies may publish the form in any edition during October. But the form itself must be filed with the USPS by Oct. 1. 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.

Don’t miss marking 77th National Newspaper Week

National Newspaper Week is Oct. 1-7 this year, the 77th observance of this special week. That’s next week so hopefully you’ve got plans to mark the occasion and to remind readers of the importance of the local newspaper.

If you need help creating content for the observance, there’s plenty at www.nationalnewspaperweek.com. There you’ll find editorials, columns, artwork, editorial cartoons and more. This information is provided by the Newspaper Association Managers organization, the trade association of press associations across North America.

“Read Newspapers . . . Real News!” is the theme for the 2017 National Newspaper Week.

This is a great opportunity to newspapers to “toot their own horn,” something most are often reticent to do. If we don’t, however, nobody else will.

SPJ Pros set ‘Death Scrawl’ obit contest

Need to add some creepy to your “Black Friday?”

On Friday, Oct. 13, the Arkansas SPJ Pro Chapter is inviting student journalists across Arkansas to the faux funeral of beloved local radio and TV celebrity, Craig O’Neill, at the Roller Chenal Funeral Home, 13801 Chenal Parkway in Little Rock.

Participants will interview his friends and family to help you write a death notice worthy of a creepy-cool award and cash – $50 for first place, $30 for second and $20 for third. The “deceased” will rise to help choose the winners.

Need a crash course in obit writing? It all starts at noon with a presentation by national award-winning obituary writer Evin Demirel.

Bring your laptop. You’ll have just one hour for the write-up of Craig’s life. Then join them at Larry’s Pizza, 801 S. Bowman Road, where they’ll mourn the man with a slice of R.I.P. Craig — ham, cheese on a thin crust — and awards will be presented in honor of the crusty ol’ guy.

To register for this free event (courtesy of a chapter grant from the Society of Professional Journalists) email Arkansas SPJ President Jennifer Ellis at jellis@arkansasonline.com or text (501) 533-0565.

A pro category will be added if there is sufficient interest, according to organizers of the event.
There have been times in the past when we’ve gotten the impression we’re the only group working to preserve transparency in government in Arkansas, namely the state’s Freedom of Information Act.

Thanks to a group of citizens dedicated to preserving transparency in government, we’re now feeling like we have company in this effort.

I spoke to such a group in Fort Smith last Thursday evening. The Transparency In Government Group (TIGG) organized a couple of years ago here in a city that has had its share of FOIA challenges. That would include the landmark Harris vs. the City of Fort Smith case settled by the Arkansas Supreme Court in 2004. In that case, David Harris, a Fort Smith resident, sued the city for conducting “serial meetings,” one-on-one meetings to approve a proposed real estate purchase by the city.

The Supreme Court said the city violated the law in this case, conducting serial meetings to circumvent the public meeting requirements of the FOIA.

As it happens Mr. Harris was in attendance at Thursday evening’s meeting. There were also city council members, a school board member or two and at least one member of the Sebastian County Quorum Court.

In all there were approximately 60 people attending the meeting. This alone was a bit of a surprise since I was expecting maybe 10 to 20 people. The number attending is very encouraging as it indicates the interest in preserving transparency and an interest in engaging to help defend the FOIA.

And engage some of them did in the last legislative session, contacting their respective legislators regarding pending legislation that would have potentially undermined the FOIA.

I always tells these groups that we work the halls of the legislature aggressively, but it’s always a plus when citizens…voters…contact their legislators independently to voice their concerns or doubts about a piece of legislation. That really does help.

Legislators tend to vote their conscience, or how other legislators encourage them to vote, if they do not hear from constituents. So when they do hear from a constituent regarding an issue, it gives them pause to reconsider their vote. It is a very effective way of influencing legislation, and more importantly how to stop bad legislation, some of it aimed at eroding the guarantees of the Freedom of Information Act.

This is exactly how the system of enacting laws is supposed to work. Lawmakers, elected by their constituency, vote according to the wishes of that constituency. Of course that can only happen if members of the constituency let their elected lawmakers know they’re feeling on a given subject.

There was a lot of questions fielded during the two-hour TIGG meeting Thursday evening, and the questions were broad ranging. The questions indicated that many of those in the audience had been thinking about the FOIA. That’s a good thing. It’s a healthy thing.

I am scheduled to address another TIGG group in Harrison Oct. 12. This was actually the original TIGG group and provided the inspiration for the Fort Smith group to organize.

I look forward to that one as well.

Next week is National Newspaper Week. I hope you have something planned to observe this special week for newspapers.

Now in its 77th year, National Newspaper Week is sponsored by the Newspaper Association Managers (NAM), the collective of our counterpart press associations from across North America. This group has long taken pride in taking the lead on this annual observance, and providing content for newspapers to use to mark the occasion.

That content can be found at www.nationalnewspaperweek.com.

If you’re at a loss as to what to do for NNW, you’ll find some ideas at the web site, including some columns, editorial, cartoons and more to use as you wish courtesy of NAM.

Just so you know, APA pays NAM a per-newspaper fee so that the content is offered to APA members free of charge.

“What Newspapers . . . Real News!” is the theme of the NMW observance for 2017. At a time when so much news is being branded as “fake news,” it’s a good idea to remind readers that newspapers have been and continued to provide “real” news for local readers for a long, long time.

Newspapers are the trusted medium in the communities across our state. That’s not my opinion. That position is the result of every reader survey that’s been taken in Arkansas for the past several years. People look to their newspapers for accurate reporting of local news and events, and newspapers consistently deliver.

It’s good to remind readers of these things occasionally, but certainly during National Newspaper Week. Don’t be bashful about pointing out this and other reasons the newspaper is important to the community year round, but especially next week during National Newspaper Week.

If we don’t tell this story, then who will?

Also don’t forget that next week, October 1, in fact, is the deadline to file your annual USPS Form 3526 with the post office. This is for newspapers who possess a Periodicals Class mailing permit and who use that permit to mail their newspapers.

The filing is a requirement of the USPS to maintain your permit. It is also required that the form be published in your newspaper. Weekly newspapers have throughout the month of October to publish the form, while dailies must publish the form by October 10.

The forms are available at the post office or can be downloaded from online at http://tinyurl.com/mwuloung.

Remember too that it is the newspaper circulation listed on Form 3526 that APA uses as the circulation number included in the data published in the annual Arkansas Media Directory for the respective newspapers. Thus has always been the case, but inevitably each year we’ll get a call from a member newspaper inquiring as to where we got the circulation number we used for them in the Directory.

Your APA staff is in the process of creating the Arkansas Media Directory for 2018. It takes a lot of organizing and gathering of data to be included. Circulation figures are just one element.

If you’ve had changes in staff or management since the last Directory, please make sure we are aware of them so that the information included in the annual Directory is as up to date as possible.

Have a great week.
Health insurance plans that America’s small business associations could create to serve members across state lines should be a piece of the nation’s health care solution, according to National Newspaper Association (NNA). Legislation to authorize national association health plans by Sen. Mike Enzi, R-WY, could make such plans a reality.

NNA President Matthew Paxton IV, publisher of The News-Gazette, Lexington, VA., this week applauded Enzi’s introduction of S. 1818, Small Business Health Plans Act of 2017. Paxton said Enzi’s leadership had encouraged NNA to explore plans mothballed in the 1990s, when efforts to permit association health insurance plans looked likely, and then failed to pass into law.

“Small business owners have been frustrated for years with the lack of health insurance options,” Paxton said. “It is no secret that the Affordable Care Act offered just a patch on a badly raveled health care fabric for us. Plans are unavailable at reasonable cost for small business owners. Our community newspaper publishers struggle to find coverage that can help keep themselves and their staffs healthy. We see the possibility of plans to be offered by small business organizations across state lines as a vital tool in our national toolkit to keep America’s small newspapers healthy and on the job.”

Enzi’s bill would enable multiple, unaffiliated small employers to form risk pools across state lines to participate in the large group health insurance market. The plans would be overseen by the US Department of Labor but would still require state licenses in states where members are insured.

Enzi’s approach addresses one objection that similar bills met in the ‘90s from state insurance commissioners, who were reluctant to lose control over plans operating in their states.

“Senator Enzi understands the challenges of insuring small businesses,” Paxton said. “He has fought for more than a decade to enact plans to help us, and we appreciate his undying determination to inject more fairness into the health care options we have today. It is pretty clear that in order to solve the problem of the uninsured American, we need to be creative and flexible and to find as many different workable approaches as we can. Senator Enzi’s bill is a gigantic step in that direction.”

The bill has been referred to the Senate Finance Committee. NNA said it expected to actively seek passage of the legislation.

‘It Can Wait’ essay contest remains open to students

APA newspapers are encouraged to promote the “It Can Wait” editorial writing contest for Arkansas students ages 14-19 now underway. The theme of the contest refers to texting and driving. It can wait.

More information about the program can be found on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF) Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arkansas-Newspaper-Foundation/157891060935155.

Contest ad and information for newspapers is available for download on the APS Ad Clearinghouse site in the ANF Folder as well as the ANF Facebook page.

The 2015 statewide winner was from Ft. Smith and last year’s statewide winner was from Eureka Springs. Statewide winners receive a $500 prize sponsored by AT&T, a hosted luncheon by AT&T, and a private guided tour of the Arkansas Capitol. Newspapers are encouraged to seek local sponsors and the contest may be used for a revenue-generating feature.

For “It Can Wait” contest rules and other information on how to participate, visit http://www.arkansaspress.org/page/anfessaycontest, or email ANF Director Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.
If ever there were a time for newspaper publishers and editors to forge stronger bonds with nearby high school and college journalism students through mentoring programs, it is now. Here’s why.

A report, published in the June 2017 issue of *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, describes results of the most recent (2015) national survey of U.S. collegiate journalism and mass communication programs, and the results were distressing. The report notes that undergraduate enrollments in the field declined once again, mimicking survey results from 2011, 2012, and 2013 that also showed declining enrollments. Of particular concern regarding the most current data was that declines in journalism sequence enrollments were particularly prevalent.

R. Glenn Cummins, Associate Dean for Research in the Texas Tech University College of Media & Communication and co-author of the report, said in an e-mail interview, “Across the journalism and mass communication programs that responded to the survey, we saw a drop in the number of students focusing specifically on news/editorial journalism sequences.”

He continued, “We do have to temper this a tiny bit because programs across the country have different sequences within their journalism curricula. But the 14 percent drop we saw from 2013 to 2015 is something worth paying attention to because these were same-school comparisons. So those data points across time are from the exact same journalism programs.”

It is also worth noting that the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication began commissioning national surveys of collegiate journalism and mass communication enrollments in 1988, and that this is the first time since then that four consecutive surveys have reported enrollment declines. The report of the 2013 annual survey reminded readers, “Undergraduate enrollments declined year-to-year only four times prior to 2010.”

Clearly, without sufficient numbers of journalism students passing through academic journalism pipelines, newspaper publishers and editors eventually will have great difficulty hiring qualified journalism employees; thus there exists the need for ever-stronger print media support for high school and college news-editorial journalism programs – specifically, to keep promising journalism students interested in journalism.

While it is true that many Arkansas newspapers offer internships for journalism students, and that some newspaper employees often visit journalism classrooms and also volunteer to present workshops at various scholastic journalism workshops and conventions, these efforts are not enough. To keep students truly interested in news-editorial journalism, more intense mentoring needs to occur between professional journalists and journalism students.

The good news is that mentoring is more a time commitment than a financial commitment, and perhaps that is why various mentoring programs have been created by numerous universities.

For example, one of the oldest mentoring programs for business majors was established in 1990 by the School of Business Administration at the University of Miami. In 2001, UCLA began a mentorship program in which UCLA students from diverse majors mentor pre-college students from nearby communities. And in 2008, the Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences developed a mentoring program for Harvard graduate women in science and engineering.

In the same vein, nearly 10 years ago the Society of Professional Journalists created the “Mentor Match-up Program,” which in turn created a Mentor Page Facebook Group. According to its mission statement, the Facebook Group “aims to promote great journalism by introducing journalists of different experience levels and interests. The group is designed to create a networking opportunity for journalists to share ideas, experiences and goals. It is not intended to be a job placement tool.”

Exactly what is mentoring? Although scholars have identified approximately 50 definitions for the process, an article titled “Toward a useful theory of mentoring: A conceptual analysis and critique,” published in the journal *Administration & Society* in 2007, summarized the essence of many proposed definitions as follows:

“Mentoring is a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and the psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development; mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé).”

To integrate mentoring into the Arkansas journalism mix, newspaper publishers and editors first should consult several of the numerous mentoring program resources available online and in libraries. Any mentoring program should be highly structured, with expectations for all parties clearly defined.

Next, identify employees willing to make a sustained effort to meet regularly with promising journalism students identified by journalism program advisers. These mentors must be prepared to show genuine interest both in helping students understand such basic concepts as the workings of a newsroom, on-the-job reporter behavior and reportorial skills, as well as in coaching students about more subtle aspects of journalism.

After identifying potential mentors, mentoring program directors logically would reach out to nearby high school and college journalism programs by contacting journalism program advisers, to share details of proposed mentoring programs and to provide handouts outlining guidelines for the programs and expectations for students being mentored.

Finally, newly formed programs should be implemented with a limited number of students, at least until program success can be evaluated and perhaps tweaked to improve shortcomings.

Does mentoring work? Mentors undoubtedly experience varying levels of success, but if history may provide comfort, remember (thanks to the Mentor Hall of Fame Website) that former SPJ president Phil Record mentored Bob Schieffer; Arthur Krock, Washington correspondent and bureau chief for The New York Times, mentored Pulitzer Prize winner James Reston; Gloria Steinem mentored Annie Leibovitz; and Walter Cronkite mentored Katie Couric.

Not a bad foundation for future mentoring programs!

(UALR Journalism Professor Emeritus Bruce Plopper may be reached by e-mail at blplopper@ualr.edu.)

**Guest Column:**

**It's Time to Increase Print Media Mentoring Programs**

**By Bruce Plopper**

September 28, 2017
Four grants remain for ArkLaMiss event

Four of the eight grants from the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation for attending the Nov. 9-10 ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference in historic Vicksburg, Miss., have been spoken for. All eight grants, awarded on a first-come basis, will be claimed so don’t hesitate to apply now.

The grant application, with specific details and instructions, can be found on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Facebook page at http://tinyurl.com/y9zwoujb.

The application may be downloaded and should be emailed to Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com when completed. Email Karen directly with any questions regarding the application process at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

The ArkLaMiss conference takes place over two days at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, where the event has been held for the past several years. Each year between 60 and 80 newspaper circulators and marketers attend the hear discussion of the latest in challenges and solutions in the newspaper industry.

The APA is in charge of the programming for this year’s ArkLaMiss event. The three press association sponsors of the conference take turns arranging the program.

“I am in hopes that we can bring another good contingent of APA members to this year’s ArkLaMiss conference,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “The conference is inexpensive but the rewards for attending are great, and with the Foundation grants it’s an even bigger bargain for APA member newspapers.”

The event kicks off Thursday morning, Nov. 9, with a newspaper managers’ roundtable discussion, to be facilitated this year by APA President Byron Tate. That will be followed Thursday afternoon with the kickoff of the annual conference which this year features Zach Ahrens as the keynote presenter. Zach, president and publisher of the Topeka (Kans.) Capital-Journal, was formerly publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway before assuming the Topeka job in October of 2015.

More information on the conference and online registration is available at the APA website at www.arklamissconference.com.

Publish USPS form during October

Publishers of APA member newspapers utilizing Periodicals Class mailing permits are reminded of the requirement to publisher USPS Form 3526 during October.

Daily newspapers have until October 10 to publish the form, while non-dailies have the entire month of October to publish.

Form 3526, also known as the Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation, is one of the requirements for having and utilizing a Periodicals Class mailing permit to mail newspapers at a discounted rate.

Also be reminded that the circulation number you include on the form is the number APA will pull to use in the new Arkansas Media Directory presently in production.
It’s still early yet, well sort of early, but lest we forget the annual filing and publication of USPS Form 3526, the Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation, for newspapers utilizing a Periodicals Class mailing permit for distributing their newspapers is upon us.

Actually, October 1 was the filing deadline. That was the date the forms were to be filed with the USPS. Non-daily newspapers have all of October to publish the report in their newspapers. Dailies are required to publish the form by October 10.

The Second Class mailing permit, renamed Periodicals Class years ago, is a cost effective way for newspapers, especially those in the rural areas, to deliver their newspapers to subscribers. It’s not cheap mind you, but it is certainly cheaper than mailing them First Class.

Horror stories still abound on the poor delivery performance of the USPS for Periodicals Class publications, but for most it remains a low-cost alternative. Actually, there isn’t much alternative, especially in the rural areas where great distances between deliveries make utilizing carriers impractical.

We’ve mentioned here before the amazing success Charles Walls had in improving USPS delivery service for the now-defunct White River Journal in Des Arc. Charles, working closely with Max Heath, the postal guru, rode the hair off anyone he could reach at the USPS about the poor service. His complaints went up the line sufficiently to come back to the delivery level personnel at the USPS and his service dramatically improved.

Then each week Charles would produce a “grade card” of USPS performance to track the delivery of his newspapers in an ongoing basis. He shared the grade card up and down the line at the USPS.

The “squeaky wheel” approach worked wonders for the Journal in improving their delivery performance. Before starting this approach, Charles said at the time that the poor delivery was costing them subscribers regularly.

This is a lesson, I suppose, for those experiencing similar problems. It can be improved with diligent persistence.

Making a nuisance of yourself is sometimes the only way to get action.

Tuesday of last week I had a meeting with Dr. Lisa Speer, the Arkansas State Historian. What, you didn’t know we had a state historian?

Well we most certainly do, and she manages the Arkansas State Archives. What, you didn’t know we had a state archives?

Indeed we do and a fairly proficient one it is. In fact they house one of the only permanent archives of Arkansas newspapers. They have a huge room full of cabinets in which microfilmed copies of all Arkansas newspapers are, well, archived.

And the state archives makes available to the public these microfilmed copies of newspapers for those doing research. They do this in three spots in the state, including at the state archives located in the Big Mac building just behind the State Capitol building.

One of the biggest issues they have with newspapers is getting all of them to send them a copy of their newspaper for archiving. Most do. In fact, almost 90 percent of APA newspapers send copies of every publication to the state archives to be included in this massive collection.

It’s a huge job collecting, ironing (yes ironing) and photographing each copy of each newspaper to be included in the archives. They first remove mailing labels, then iron the newspapers so they’re nice and flat and will photograph well. Then they proof every reel to make sure it’s legible. There’d be no point in archiving something that wasn’t readable.

From the photographs they create a negative microfilm reel, and from this negative they make multiple positive reels for viewing. It is the negative microfilm reels that are housed in the huge, permanent collection at the archives.

While you’re at it, please check to make sure your newspaper is still sending a copy of every newspaper you produce to the archives. They would most dearly enjoy getting the number received to 100 percent.

The actual reason for the meeting with Dr. Speer and her staff was to discuss how best to go about archiving newspapers in the digital age. Some newspapers have transitioned to digital only and more certainly may in the future. They are concerned about losing these newspapers from the archive.

We had a rather lengthy discussion about the ongoing concerns about securing information, even newspaper feeds, online. At this point, nobody has devised a way to guarantee security of information in the digital world. In short, the digital approach presently does not offer a good option when it comes to archive ability.

We make this argument all the time at the legislature as to why moving public notices and legal advertising to the internet is a really bad not idea. There are just too many things that can happen to the data that could potentially change the entire meaning or intent of the original posting.

One of those threats is the “hacker factor,” where someone intent on causing mayhem can “hack” into just about any site devised my man to date, and make all manner of changes. Or they can delete data altogether. In either case, the archive is corrupted and therefore not to be trusted.

Until someone figures out a way to prevent this, nothing is going to change to improve the situation.

I had a bit of an experience finding the State Archives. It’s located on the second floor of the aforementioned Big Mac building. I entered the building, stepped into an elevator, pushed the “two” button and away I went.

The doors opened depositing me on the fifth floor. I didn’t know it was the fifth floor until I asked for directions and was told that the elevators were not supposed to access the fifth floor without a key card.

Okay, so I was escorted back to the elevator, pressed two again and it stopped me on the third floor. “Forget it,” I muttered to myself, and entered the adjacent stairwell to go down one floor.

When I arrived on the second floor, the door from the stairwell was locked. Foiled again. I headed back up to the third floor and that access door was locked as well. It became apparent I was about to become a news story, stuck as I was in the stairwell of a state office building.

Luckily, a custodian heard me frantically rattling the stairwell doors and opened one for me...on the second floor where I was supposed to be.

Have a great week.

Tom
Time remains to sign up for ‘Death Scrawl’

There’s still time for journalism students to sign up for the Arkansas SPJ Pro Chapter’s obituary writing event set for Friday, October 13. Cash prizes are offered for the winners of the Black Friday “death scrawl” contest.

Participants will interview friends of radio and TV personality Craig O’Neill at the Roller Chenal Funeral Home at 13801 Chenal Parkway in Little Rock, then write an obituary for the “deceased” who will then rise up to pick the winners.

First place gets $50; second $30, and third gets $20.

The event will begin with a crash course in obit writing from award winning obituary writer Evin Demirel. SPJ Pro Chapter President Jennifer Ellis adds that professionals are welcome to join this noon session and to stay over for the “faux funeral” event.

To register for this free event (courtesy of a chapter grant from the Society of Professional Journalists) email Arkansas SPJ President Jennifer Ellis at jellis@arkansasonline.com or text (501) 533-0565.

A pro category will be added if there is sufficient interest, according to organizers of the event.

E&P seeks nominees for ten newspapers

The March issues of Editor & Publisher magazine will profile what they label “10 newspapers That Do It Right.” Nominations are now open for newspapers to be considered for inclusion in this group.

NNA Convention convenes today in Tulsa

The 131st annual convention and trade show of the National Newspaper Association (NNA) gets underway today at the Hyatt Regency in Tulsa where among other things the awards in the NNA editorial and Newspaper In Education contests will be present.

Jason Taylor, president of the GateHouse Media Western Division, will provide the keynote address at Friday morning’s breakfast, which will also feature the traditional “Parade of Flags” with every state flag paraded one at a time into the meeting hall. Jason has presented at both tri-state conventions in which APA members participated, and he also was the feature presenter at the APA’s annual advertising conference a few years ago.

Another presenter on the program familiar to APA members is Ryan Dohrn who presented at last year’s APA advertising conference. His presentation will be on “Boosting Advertising Sales Via Print and Digital.”

This is just part of an intensive program that awaits those attending the annual NNA gathering.

APA Past President David Fisher (1987) of Danville continues to represent this district on the NNA Board, which convenes this afternoon at the convention site.

Illinois, Pennsylvania name new Executive Directors

Sam Fisher has been named executive director of the Illinois Press Association (IPA), replacing Dennis DeRosset who resigned in May.

Fisher, who had been with Shaw Media for 34 years, is the immediate past chair of the IPA board of directors. He graduated from the University of Missouri School of Journalism before joining Shaw in 1983.

Mark Cohen has been named the new president of the Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association, replacing Teri Henning who left the position earlier this year.

He was formerly publisher of the Akron Beacon-Journal in Akron, Ohio.
Guest Column:
Into the Issues: Got Motto? Slogan?
By Al Cross

Does your newspaper have a motto? Or a slogan? Do you know the difference?

Mottoes, slogans and marketing pitches were common in the days when most big newspapers had competition, as they tried to give themselves a distinguishing character. As the big newspaper markets became monopolized, there was less need for them, but now, when every information source competes for audience with every other source, even in small towns, slogans and mottoes are worth reviving, and some papers are doing it.

The Washington Post’s nameplate got an underline on Feb.: the slogan “Democracy Dies in Darkness.” That’s the most prominent example of newspapers adding a promotional explanation of what they do or what they stand for. Two papers from Warren Buffett’s BH Media Group have similar slogans: The Bristol Herald Courier says it offers “Truth. Accuracy. Fairness” and the Omaha World-Herald says it is “Real. Fair. Accurate.”

Such slogans or mottoes are needed at a time when the very idea of independent, professional journalism is under attack from the highest levels of government and partisan media. Print circulation is down, but newspapers still have broad audiences and provide most of the accountability other newspaper mottoes or slogans, many at rural or community newspapers, and I wrote about it on The Rural Blog recently. The blog post is at http://bit.ly/2f1cWqs. It linked to an explanation of the difference between a motto and a slogan; here’s a capsule version:

A motto contains a belief or an ideal that can serve as a guiding principle and the identity of a newspaper. The Amarillo Globe-News still uses a saying coined by publisher Gene Howe, who died in 1952: “A newspaper may be forgiven for lack of wisdom, but never for lack of courage.”

Slogans can serve the same purpose, but tend to be simpler and catchier, and used more as marketing tools. The best are those that serve not only as a slogan for the public, but a motto, perhaps implicit, for the staff. One of my favorites is used by The Blackshear Times, a Georgia weekly: “Liked by many, cussed by some, read by them all.”

Some slogans or mottoes are implicit, as in the simple warning of hard-nosed editorial policy at the Aspen (Colo.) Daily News: “If you don’t want it printed, don’t let it happen.”

Whether you call it a motto or a slogan matters less than having a line that accurately describes your newspaper. The most common slogans for rural papers are like the one used by the Mason Valley News in Nevada: “The only newspaper in the world that gives a damn about Yerington.” It’s a natural; most newspapers’ reason for existence is to publish news of their locality, and in most cases they own that franchise. The Greene County Democrat in Alabama, which competes with the Greene County Independent, puts it more subtly: “Serving Greene County Like No Other Newspaper.”

Some mottoes are blunt and simple, like that of The Star in Johannesburg, South Africa: “Tell it like it is.” Another conveys the same principle, but in more friendly, flowery fashion. It was written by British poet and politician Lord Byron (1788-1824): “Without or with offense to friends or foes, we sketch your world exactly as it goes.” Andrew Jackson Norfleet adopted it when he founded The Times Journal in Russell Springs, Ky., in 1949. The weekly still posts it on its editorial page.

Another idea: Speaking of editorial pages, that’s where newspapers can best explain who they are, even if they don’t have regular editorials.

If I were a newspaper editor again, my paper’s home page would have a button called “How We Work,” taking readers to a policy statement on the editorial page, explaining our editorial philosophy, policies such as correcting errors and separating news from opinion, a call for readers to let us know when we fall short, and a link to The Elements of Journalism by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, with a few examples, such as:

Our first obligation is to the truth, not in an absolute, philosophical or scientific sense, but “the truths by which we can operate on a day-to-day basis;” and the essence of journalism is a discipline of verification, using an objective method. The authors explain: “Being impartial or neutral is not a core principle of journalism. Because the journalist must make decisions, he or she is not and cannot be objective. But journalistic methods are objective.” I doubt most readers understand those important distinctions, so we need to explain them at every opportunity. They need to know we’re on their side, and how we work.

(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.)
There’s still time to apply for one of the remaining $200 grants to attend the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 9-10 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

The grant application, with specific details and instructions, can be found on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Facebook page at http://tinyurl.com/y9zwouj.

The application may be downloaded and should be emailed to Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com when completed. Email Karen directly with any questions regarding the application process at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

This annual gathering brings together some of the most creative and innovative newspaper people in the tri-state area to talk about opportunities to grow revenues, audience, and circulation.

Zach Ahrens, president and publisher of the Topeka Capital-Journal, will be the featured speaker at this year’s ArkLaMiss. Zach, former publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, made a presentation at the APA’s 2016 SuperConvention in Bentonville and the feedback was very positive from those attending.

His entertaining and enlightening presentation deals with growing newspaper audience across demographics with innovation and creativity.

“When I heard Zach’s presentation in Bentonville, I knew it would be ideal for the ArkLaMiss conference,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “I immediately invited Zach to be our featured presenter and he graciously agreed to provide this for us in Vicksburg.”

The ArkLaMiss will kick off once again with the newspaper managers’ roundtable Thursday morning, Nov. 9. Byron Tate, publisher of The Sheridan Headlight and current APA President, will facilitate this event. On the table for discussion will be newspaper challenges and opportunities across the spectrum. This popular feature was added three years ago, and is always a lively and informative discussion.

Also featured at the conference will be the lively “hot ideas” session, a fast-paced session featuring newspaper representatives sharing successful promotions, how they did them, and the revenue generated. This session alone can more than pay for the conference.

The APA is in charge of the programming again this year. The three states involved in the annual conference take turns arranging the conference programming.

More information on the conference and online registration is available at the APA website at www.arkansaspress.org.

**APA launches annual photo contest for ‘Directory’ cover**

The Arkansas Press Association this week announced the annual photo contest to find just the right photograph for the cover of the 2018 Arkansas Media Directory. The deadline for submissions will be Wednesday, Nov. 1.

“This is a great opportunity for the talented photographers at APA newspapers to showcase their work,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “We’ve got some great news photographers at APA member newspapers, and we always get a lot of compelling images submitted for consideration.

The photos will be judged by a panel to determine the top entries. A $100 prize awaits the photographer whose work is chosen best among the entries. Second place will receive $50 and third $25.

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. Submit photos to graphics@arkansaspress.org.
As you are reading this **Pam** and I are plowing through 60-plus years marriage accumulation left by my parents when they passed.

Since Dad passed in 2011 we’ve left the family home in Green Forest pretty much like it was when he died, staying there occasionally on visits to check on the place. Now it’s time to do something about all of it, a day frankly I’ve been dreading for some reason.

Many of you will recall my parents. Dad was APA president in 1963, and Mom was president of the Arkansas Press Women the same year. What many of you may not have known was that Dad and Mom met on a blind date in Wichita, a date in which Mom did not really want to participate. She agreed to do it for a friend. The blind date was Dad.

**It must have been one heck of a date as they were married at 7 a.m. the next morning in El Dorado, Kans. It was one of those World War II stories. Dad was about to ship out. There was a sense of urgency fueled by the uncertainty of the war. They decided not to wait.**

**It was a marriage that lasted over 60 years before Mom passed away.**

Mom and Dad were children of the Depression and all that that implies. They were frugal, and more significantly they never threw anything away. They just found a place in the large family home to store things. There was plenty of room in the huge, unfinished attic of the home, in the basement, or in the three-car garage they added to the century old home back in the 1970s.

So yeah, it’s quite an accumulation to sort through. There’ll be decisions to make on whether to keep, toss, or put up for sale in a yard sale we plan next weekend. I’m sure we’ll be weighing sentimental value with actual value. A lot of the stuff, junk really, will end up in a dumpster.

We’ve held onto the house all these years, at times putting it on the market but with no serious inquiries, because we thought this might be our retirement home when that time finally comes. As luck would have it, after all this time, there is a good chance the property will be sold.

While I knew this day would come, it comes with a huge dose of bittersweet. I grew up in this home after all, and shared a ton of experiences here with my two older brothers and extended family members. Dad bought this home in 1953. I was five years old when we moved in.

Dad bought the Green Forest newspaper in 1946, right after his discharge from the U.S. Navy following the war. He paid the outrageous sum of $5,500 for the newspaper. Actually, that was a huge amount of money at that time. He wanted to be in business for himself, and the newspaper was the only business in town for sale. I guess if the locker plant had been the only business, I’d likely be a butcher today.

Dad knew absolutely nothing about the newspaper business, but his baby brother, who was still in high school in Green Forest, was working at the newspaper. Together they figured it all out.

**Over the years Mom and Dad were very active in and supportive of the Arkansas Press Association. Some of my fondest childhood memories were of attending press conventions at various sites in the state. I always looked forward to these events and hanging out with the Graves boys from Nashville, David Fisher of Danville, Bill Whitehead, Jr., of Fordyce, Becky Walker of McCrory, and several other offspring of APA members who attended the APA gatherings over the years. Together we made a lot of nice memories, some of which we still share on meeting today.**

The family published the newspaper for 42 years before selling out in 1988 so that Mom and Dad could retire. They remained active in the APA till the end. Dad was to receive his “Golden 50 Service Award” in 1993. We all planned to attend the winter convention to witness the presentation. Unfortunately, an ice storm prevented any of us from attending.

He still received the plaque which hangs today on the wall of the den in the family home in Green Forest, and is just one of those things we’ll be removing this week.

**I’m sure we’ll get to re-live several memories as we work our way through my parents’ possessions and determine the disposition of same.**

The opportunity to get a $200 grant to attend the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 9-10 in Vicksburg, Miss. still exists but I would not hesitate as they would be gone.

The grants are made available by the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation, and will just about cover the expense of attending the conference, including registration and hotel room. If the grant doesn’t cover all expenses, it will come close.

The real payoff is what is learned by attending this conference. Enough “hot” ideas will be shared during the conference to keep your newspaper in promotions for the next year or so. It’s always interesting to see how newspapers are promoting themselves and how they’re going about creating revenue opportunities while growing circulation.

Growing revenue opportunities is a topic near and dear to most newspapers these days, and there’s always a new way to approach the challenge. Several ideas will be shared at the conference to assist in revenue growth, audience development, newspaper promotion and much more.

Those attending are reminded the bring samples of their promotions they intend to present. Those “hot” ideas voted best by the group will receive cash award, $100 for first, $50 for second and $25 for third.

This is a fun conference, but it’s also a great way to get new approaches to doing what we do at newspapers today. Those attending are always willing to share their successes in promotions and projects that will work at newspapers of just about any size. Creativeness and innovation are the words for the day at the ArkLaMiss conference.

**Don’t miss out on the opportunity. More information on the ArkLaMiss grants can be found on the APA web site at** www.arkansaspress.org.

Have a great week.

**—**

**Tom**
**Arkansas Publisher Weekly**

**October 12, 2017**

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**‘It Can Wait’ essay contest underway**

APA newspapers are encouraged to promote the “It Can Wait” editorial writing contest for Arkansas students ages 14-19 now underway. The theme of the contest refers to texting and driving. It can wait.

More information about the program can be found on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation (ANF) Facebook page: [https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arkansas-Newspaper-Foundation/157891060935155](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arkansas-Newspaper-Foundation/157891060935155).

Contest ad and information for newspapers is available for download on the APS Ad Clearinghouse site in the ANF Folder as well as the ANF Facebook page.

The 2015 statewide winner was from Ft. Smith and last year’s statewide winner was from Eureka Springs. Statewide winners receive a $500 prize sponsored by AT&T, a hosted luncheon by AT&T, and a private guided tour of the Arkansas Capitol. Newspapers are encouraged to seek local sponsors and the contest may be used for a revenue-generating feature.

For “It Can Wait” contest rules and other information on how to participate, visit [http://www.arkansaspress.org/page/anfessaycontest](http://www.arkansaspress.org/page/anfessaycontest), or email ANF Director Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

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**‘Death Scrawl’ obit event set for tomorrow**

The Arkansas SPJ Pro Chapter’s obituary writing event, dubbed the “death scrawl,” is set for Friday, October 13. Cash prizes are offered for the winners of the Black Friday “death scrawl” contest for Arkansas journalism students.

Participants will interview friends of radio and TV personality Craig O’Neill at the Roller Chenal Funeral Home at 13801 Chenal Parkway in Little Rock, then write an obituary for the “deceased” who will then rise up to pick the winners.

First place gets $50; second $30, and third gets $20.

The event will begin with a crash course in obit writing from award winning obituary writer Evin Demirel. SPJ Pro Chapter President Jennifer Ellis adds that professionals are welcome to join this noon session and to stay over for the “faux funeral” event.

To register for this free event (courtesy of a chapter grant from the Society of Professional Journalists) email Arkansas SPJ President Jennifer Ellis at jellis@arkansasonline.com or text (501) 533-0565.

A pro category will be added if there is sufficient interest, according to organizers of the event.

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**Nominations open for E&P ‘Ten Newspapers’**

The March issues of *Editor & Publisher* magazine will profile what they label “10 newspapers That Do It Right.” Nominations are now open for newspapers to be considered for inclusion in this group.

The list was never meant to be a “10 Best” list, but rather to spotlight select newspapers that have earned a notable achievement in at least one particular area, carried out a successful innovation, implemented cost savings procedures or developed programs that have generated revenues or increased circulation.

This year E&P is including ideas, strategies and tactics, which individuals have knocking around in their attics – whether or not they have been implemented or tested.

The objective of the story is to bring ideas together and share the best and the brightest in one comprehensive feature. All ideas are welcome.

The deadline for entries is January 15, 2018.

For more information and to enter, to go [http://www.editorandpublisher.com/10newspapers](http://www.editorandpublisher.com/10newspapers).

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**Don’t forget to publish USPS form in October**

Non-daily newspapers are reminded that you have until the end of October to publisher USPS Form 3526, the Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation.

Dailies had until October 10 to publish the form that should have been filed by October 1 with the U.S. Postal Service.

This form filing and publication requirement is for newspapers that possess a Periodicals Class mailing permit. It is one of the USPS requirements for continuing to use the permits to distribute your newspapers.

Also, be reminded that it is the circulation figure published on this statement that APA picks up and uses in the annual Arkansas Media Directory, which is presently in production.

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**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.

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**Mark Your Calendar!**

**October 25:**
ArkLaMiss Registraiton Deadline

**November 9 - 10:**
2017 ArkLaMiss Circulation & Marketing Conference
Ameristar Casino & Hotel
Vicksburg, MS

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*Arkansas Publisher Weekly*
Guest Column:
Release Your Inner Storyteller to Create Great Copy
By Jim Stasiowski

What the young woman said decades ago still haunts me.

In those days, I was a youngster in the ranks of writing coaches, most of whom were renowned writers or editors from prestigious newspapers. I had had a good run as a reporter, columnist and editor, though only at feisty yet modest local papers, so in the early coaching days, I had neither a glowing reputation nor an ego brimming with journalistic savvy.

I was coaching Eileen, an enthusiastic fact-gatherer, but instead of composing stories, she made lists, practically chained to the format of the inverted pyramid by placing Fact No. 1 in the first paragraph, Fact No. 2 in the second, then No. 3, etc., until the product was precisely 15 facts, translated to 15 inches, adhering to the preferred story length of that follow-the-leader (meaning: USA TODAY) era.

What her stories lacked, however, was a voice, a drill sergeant that would turn a disorderly collection of facts into a powerful, cohesive, readable unit.

When I told her she needed to be not a mere displayer of information but rather a fervent teller of stories, she responded with: “But I’m not a natural writer.” Condemned though she assumed she was to a life of fulfilling half the role of a newspaper reporter, Eileen at least had the self-awareness to ask for help.

My help.

To that point, I had been more of a schoolmarm than a real coach. I had worked with reporters on technical things – grammar, word usage, transitions, story organization, which quotations worked with and which were of little use – but with Eileen I was facing the challenge of guiding a motivated young woman who was convinced she lacked the skill to assemble significant facts into something readers would find either enjoyable or compelling, preferably both.

Instead of trying to dazzle Eileen with slogans (“Tell it to mom”) or academic processes (“First, make an outline”), I told her of the time I had been assigned to look into a sensitive, complex situation concerning a prominent local judge.

I spent weeks gathering information and interviewing sources, I told Eileen. I had notebooks overflowing with facts, statistics and the mandatory both sides. But I was stalled; I didn’t know how to knit all the elements together. My editor ordered me to stop reporting and write the story, so I devoted a full afternoon to it, and after I had written 18 paragraphs, I read them.

They were awful.

Frustrated, I stood up from my desk, walked to the newsroom water cooler, took a long drink, turned from it and met the eye of a colleague, Bruce.

“Jim,” he said, “how’s it going?” “Lousy,” I said, practically collapsing in defeat.

“Your judge story?” Bruce said.

“A disaster.”

“Tell me about it,” he said.

Without thinking, without planning, without a goal except to banter with a friend, I started talking. Words poured forth in full sentences, paragraphs, even, and they were inspired words, organized totally by the storyteller – the natural storyteller, I must add – who lives within us all.

And I realized that nothing I was saying had appeared in what I had written to that point on that afternoon. I returned to my desk, deleted all 18 paragraphs and started over.

It still was far from perfect, but it was a real story, the development of a single central conflict. As I read it, I heard my own voice.

I said to Eileen, “You say you’re not a natural writer. OK. But what you are is a storyteller. You could not have arrived at where you are today – 16 years of school, a respected worker, a family member, a friend to many – without being able to carry on meaningful, engaging, conversations. And conversations almost always are stories. We talk about what we are trying to do, we talk about what we have overcome or failed to overcome. We listen to others telling us the same things. That’s conflict development. Storytelling.”

As you’re gathering facts, I told her, see the story coming together. At the time, I didn’t have the words of one of our most successful newspaper-storytellers to bolster my guidance, but here’s what Mark Bowden, author of “Black Hawk Down” and other celebrated stories, once wrote: “Reporting is more than just collecting information or investigating. It is an ongoing process of drawing, disassembling, and then redrawing the story in your mind, letting your vision of the story feed your reporting and letting the additional reporting, in turn, reshape the story.”

Eileen didn’t lack natural talent; rather, she feared making a mistake, so she relied on the safety of simply recording facts.

All journalists must cultivate the confidence to free their inner storyteller.

The best way?
Tell it to Bruce.

THE FINAL WORD: You probably have written that graffiti was spray-painted on a wall, and that’s OK, provided the wall bore two or more such messages.

If, however, the wall had but one spray-painted message, that was a graffiti.

(Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.)
Zach Ahrens will keynote ArkLaMiss Conference

Zach Ahrens, president and publisher of The Topeka (Kan.) Capital-Journal and former publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, will be the featured presenter this year at the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 9-10 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

“We are delighted to have Zach on the schedule for this year’s ArkLaMiss conference,” aid Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “We asked Zach to take this assignment right after hearing his presentation at the 2016 SuperConvention in Bentonville. His session is ideally suited to the ArkLaMiss audience.”

Zach’s high-energy presentation focuses on spanning the demographics, from seniors to millennials, in creating compelling content in print and digital formats.

He brings the experience gained at several key newspaper positions and with several newspaper holding groups to his presentation. He is well known in the media industry and has presented at several state press association conventions as well as for media companies focusing on audience development and significant revenue growth. His presentation is geared to newspapers of all sizes and frequencies, and his ideas are relatable to just about any modern newspaper setting.

Ahrens graduated with a BA in communications from York College in York, Neb., just six weeks after his 20th birthday. He was previously vice president of sales with Lee Enterprises and regional vice president of sales with GateHouse Ohio. He recently re-joined GateHouse when the Topeka newspaper was acquired by that growing newspaper holding company.

He and his wife, Heidi, have three children, Carter, Conner and Camrynn.

Grants remain for ArkLaMiss attendance

A couple of those Arkansas Newspaper Foundation grants of $200 remain for those wishing to attend the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference Nov. 9-10 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

The grant application, with specific details and instructions, can be found on the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation Facebook page at http://tinyurl.com/y9zwoujb.

The application may be downloaded and should be emailed to Karen Brown at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com when completed. Email Karen directly with any questions regarding the application process at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

The grants are issued on a first come basis, so please don’t delay. Apply for yours today and your trip to the ArkLaMiss conference becomes almost free.

Ad tax meets favor to offset corporate tax cuts

Tax cuts are often viewed favorably but the reality is that taxes cut on the one hand most often result in taxes added somewhere else. That is the case with the ad tax exemption, which may come to an end to offset proposed corporate tax cuts.

Media organizations, such as the National Newspaper Association (NNA), are vehemently opposed to the ad tax. Advertisers do not presently pay taxes on advertising, but that would change if the ad tax is added. Newspapers and other media outlets would have to begin collecting taxes on advertising to pass along to the government. The taxes, of course, would be passed back to the advertiser, an act that historically resulted in advertisers cutting back on advertising.

The U.S. House Ways and Means Committee is working on finding new federal revenues to pay for a corporate tax cut proposed by the Trump administration. NNA, while not opposing the corporate tax cut, does add that trimming our advertisers’ expense deductions is a really bad idea.

NNA is urging you to CALL, don’t email. Your member of Congress to let them know we need them to put this bad idea to rest immediately.

“I need to know back from you who you called and what response you got,” says Susan Rowell, NNA president and publisher of the Lancaster (SC) News. “If you talk to a staff member, who cannot give you the congressman’s or congresswoman’s position, you are on solid ground if you ask for a call back with an answer when they have one. We need to count votes.”

You can contact Susan at srowell@thelancasternews.com, or email NNA’s public policy director, Tonda Rush at tonda@nna.org.
The APA museum at the world headquarters in Little Rock has a new item on display. It’s a late 19th century “proof press” that was in use at the newspaper in Green Forest when Dad bought the newspaper in 1946, right after he was discharged from the Navy at the end of World War II.

The proof press, I’m told, was a Dr. Miles Medical Co. apparatus. The newspaper also had a Dr. Miles “wing mailer” that is also on display in the APA museum.

**Dr. Miles** was a peddler of patent tonic medicine. They were home remedies for nervousness, sleeplessness, hysteria, headache, epilepsy, spasms, anxiety...just about everything that might ail you. The company provided this equipment to newspapers in exchange for a tiny ad in the newspaper that would run each week, seemingly forever. They weren’t the only company doing this, but they are the only company whose equipment provided my family’s newspaper that survived.

The 666 cold remedies was another of those early trade ads. The 666 products are still available at drug stores today.

The Dr. Miles Medical Co. later operated as Miles Laboratories based in Indiana, before becoming a wholly owned subsidiary of Bayer AG. Bayer moved the headquarters to Pittsburgh, Pa. in 1992, and in 1995 eliminated the Miles brand altogether.

Home remedies were once the big thing, back before there was a Walgreens or CVS on every corner or a Wal-Mart in every town. There were outlets for these types of “cures,” so the availability of the home remedies for everything that could possibly ail you was a great convenience. I can’t testify as to actually how effective the home remedies, or patent tonics, were but you can find some excellent feedback online from those who have taken the medicines.

The only time I can recall taking one of them was on an extended stay with my grandfather when Mom and Dad were on a press junket somewhere. I was probably 8 or 9, and came down with an upset stomach. Granddad gave me a dose of some home remedy that set my throat on fire, but it settled my stomach in no time. I have a suspicion that particular home remedy had a fairly significant alcohol content.

The old proof press was one of the few items my Dad kept when we sold the newspaper business in 1988. It had not been used as a proof press for many years at that time. It was a holdover from the hot metal typesetting days. When “cold type” came along, the proof press, like a lot of other equipment at the newspaper, became an instant relic.

The old press was made of cast iron with a steel bed and steel roller. (I’m including a photo so you can get the idea.) It’s heavy as all get out, and for this reason it had remained in the garage of Dad’s home in Green Forest until the past weekend when we were emptying the house of all their accumulated possessions.

It makes a nice addition to the APA museum, and is in keeping with the theme of the museum, which is all letterpress equipment. While we’ve had lots of offers for donations of electronic typesetting equipment, we frankly don’t have room for all of it. So we limit the display to the letterpress era equipment.

That includes a Linotype, a Washington hand press, handset type in a California box, casting box, sample printing kit, wing mailer, and much more. There’s even an old Associated Press teletype machine on loan to the museum by Dennis Byrd. If you haven’t seen the museum plan on stopping by the APA building the next time you are in town and have a look.

One other item among the many newspaper remnants I brought to the APA museum was a lead “pig” once used on one of the family Linotype machines. The elongated lead castings weighed approximately 22 pounds and made excellent doorstops. Dad was using a couple of them in his garage to stop his car when he’d entered the garage far enough.

We had a picker or two visit the house when we were cleaning it out, and one of them bought two of the pigs. He’d never seen one before and didn’t even know what they were. You can make a lot of fishing sinkers or muzzleloader shot out of one pig. He was excited to buy them, and I was equally as excited to sell them.

Have a great week.
Photographers: It’s APA contest time

APA photographers are reminded that the 16th annual APA photo contest is now accepting entries, with cash prizes and bragging rights on the line. The deadline for photo submissions is Wednesday, November 1, so don’t delay.

The winning entry will receive a $100 cash prize and the winning photo will be featured on the cover of the 2018 Arkansas Media Directory. Second place receives $50 and third $25. The other top entries will be featured throughout the directory on a space available basis.

A panel of judges will select the winners.

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.

Survey: Newspapers still number one local news source

A recent survey of 1,000 households across the country once again validates that newspapers remain the number one source for local news, and newspapers are being encouraged to promote their products with the survey results.

Susquehanna Polling and Research of Harrisburg, Pa. conducted the survey, commissioned by the National Newspaper Association (NNA), in early 2017.

NNA is providing materials touting the survey results that newspapers may use to promote their newspapers. The materials include ads, both print and digital, ad fliers, and a web site as a landing place for the digital ads at www.knowlocal.news.

The key takeaway from the survey is that newspapers remain the number one source of local news and information. Newspapers are challenged to promote that message and the results of the survey by using the materials provided by NNA.

These can be found at http://tinyurl.com/y7lgtoug.

FOIA Task Force meets: Kreth elected chair

The newly established Freedom of Information Task Force held its first meeting Wednesday, Oct. 11, at the state Capitol building, and Ellen Kreth, representing the Arkansas Press Association on the Task Force was elected to chair the nine-member group. Kreth is also a member of the APA Board of Directors.

The initial meeting was largely organizational and to afford the Task Force members an opportunity to get acquainted. Kreth says she will be calling a second meeting in the near future, and asks that anyone wishing to be notified of the meeting time and place to contact her at ekreth@sbcglobal.net.

The Task Force is tasked with studying proposed legislation that would amend the state’s FOIA prior to it being introduced during the general sessions of the legislature. The group will be making sure the proposed legislation is not already covered in the existing law, and to weigh the constitutionality of the proposal. The group would offer recommendations to the legislator proposing legislation regarding whether he or she should proceed.

Legislators seeking to propose legislation to amend the FOIA would not be required to run it by the Task Force, according to the law that created the body.

The Governor, President Pro Tem of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the Arkansas FOIA Coalition, the Arkansas Broadcasters Association, the Association of Arkansas Counties, the Arkansas Municipal League, and the SPJ Pro Chapter made the other Task Force member appointments.

Pending postal rate increase ‘Modest,’ bigger to come

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) has issued a warning that the 2018 postage increase will likely be its last modest increase confined by a 2006 law.

National Newspaper Association (NNA) President Susan Rowell, publisher of the Lancaster (SC) News, announced to community newspapers that publishers could expect significant increases in postage rates in 2019 if Congress does not enact a postal reform law this year.

“Every postage payer faces an additional 1-cent stamp increase on January 20, 2018, and overall mailers will pay about 1.9 percent more next year. We are gratified that the increases for within-county newspaper mail, which our newspaper members use so heavily to reach readers, will see a slightly smaller increase of 1.8 percent,” Rowell said.

But she said NNA expected much difficulty in 2019.

“The Postal Service signals its plans to the Postal Regulatory Commission, as it is required to do. This year, it said the coming 2018 increase was likely the last under the 2006 law that has kept postage rates relatively stable. For 2019, we have no idea what to expect although we know several things. First, USPS thinks Periodicals publications are generally not covering their costs, as USPS handling costs have risen faster than inflation. Second, the cost of handling mailing sacks will go up. Third, we could see a significant restructuring of postage rates for newspapers overall because USPS is in financial trouble,” Rowell said.

NNA Postal Committee Chair Max Heath said NNA was working hard to find solutions for newspapers.

NNA has distributed materials to its members in support of HR 756, the Postal Reform Act of 2017. More detail on the proposed 2018 rates will be available in Heath’s Postal Tips in the November Publishers’ Auxiliary.
Is your news making you unhealthy?

Think about what you consume: Is it clickbait and garbage shared by a crazy cousin on Facebook? Do you go out of your way to consume nutritious and balanced news? It can be hard to tell if you’re not careful.

We decided to have a little fun at this year’s mediaXchange. We thought it would be interesting to test the top media professionals on their knowledge of news, with a little game designed by Nucleus called “Do you know real?” During breaks, attendees were quizzed on headlines — having to decipher what was an actual headline versus what was fake news. Do you know what a room full of industry experts scored?

59 percent.

A passing rate, but it’s certainly not something to write home about (though, I guess that’s what I’m doing by sharing that score with all of you). The point is, telling real news from fake news is tricky, and it’s easy to consume garbage. Fake news rips off the look and feel of real websites. It is designed to deceive. This is why we’re focusing on media literacy with the Support Real News campaign.

Media literacy is identifying different types of media and understanding the messages they’re sending. It’s the equivalent of checking the nutrition label before you eat. Being media literate encourages a balanced diet of news so you can avoid bias and get the full truth. Creating a good news diet is imperative. Not all news is created equal, and it is vital in the digital age to round out what you’re consuming.

It used to be easy to tell where your news was coming from — it was the names on the masthead. It was like buying straight from the farmer; the content and delivery platform came from the same place. Now, it’s not so easy. Delivery platforms and content are not from the same place, and the platforms don’t differentiate where the news is coming from.

Your news is not coming from Facebook, Google or Apple, just like Wal-Mart doesn’t grow your food. These businesses do not employ hard-working, ethical reporters. Your news appears on the platforms, but it comes from publishers that pay those hard-working, ethical reporters who work to get you the truth.

There is a strong emphasis on reader discretion. The platforms expect you to know who the sources of news are and whether they are credible and responsible. Some are, but many are not. It’s your job to watch what you consume.

In a study of fake news by Stanford, it was revealed that top news sites are more frequently accessed via direct browsing (48.7 percent) than by clicks brought in from social media sites (10.1 percent). Compare this to fake news sites, which are accessed less by direct browsing (30.5 percent) but see a staggering 41.8 percent of traffic arriving through social media referrals.

At the News Media Alliance, we are working hard to encourage the distribution platforms to distinguish between real news and all the other trash. However, there is no substitute for readers paying attention to where their news really comes from and whether those sources have a history of producing quality, real journalism.

It’s time to get in shape as readers. Know where your news comes from and make sure it’s the real deal.

David Chavern serves as President & CEO of the News Media Alliance. Chavern has built a career spanning 30 years in executive strategic and operational roles, and most recently completed a decade-long tenure at the United States Chamber of Commerce.
Registrations grow for ArkLaMiss event

Registrations continued to come in this week for the Nov. 9-10 annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference set at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

The Arkansas Press Association is in charge of the programming this year and have contracted with Zach Ahrens to be the featured presenter. Zach is the former publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, and is presently president and publisher of the Topeka Capitol Journal. His presentation is both entertaining and highly informative.

Dennis Dunn, operations manager at the Aniston (Ala.) Star, is also on the conference agenda. Dennis will lead the “hot ideas” exchange on Friday morning of the conference, as well as facilitating a group discussion on challenges and solutions.

APA President Byron Tate, publisher of The Sheridan Headlight, will facilitate the newspaper manager’s roundtable, which kicks off the conference Thursday morning. This lively discussion is open to newspaper managers from all departments, including publishers, general managers, advertising, production and circulation.

Those attending are encouraged to bring examples of newspaper promotions for presentation at the “hot ideas” session Friday morning. Those ideas voted best by the group will receive cash awards. First place gets $100, second $50 and third $25.

“This session alone is worth the trip to Vicksburg,” says Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “There will be enough ‘hot ideas’ shared in this session to last a newspaper for year or more.”

You can find more information on the conference at the APA’s web site at www.arkansaspress.org.

Deadline nears for cover photo entries

The deadline for photo entries to be considered for the cover of the 2018 Arkansas Media Directory is rapidly approaching, and APA photographers are encouraged to get their entries in to be considered.

Wednesday, November 1, is the deadline for submitting photos for consideration. That’s now less than a week away.

APA members and associate members are eligible to enter the contest.

The winning entry will receive a $100 cash prize and the winning photo will be featured on the cover of the 2018 Arkansas Media Directory. Second place receives $50 and third $25. The other top entries will be featured throughout the directory on a space available basis.

A panel of judges will select the winners. 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.

FOIA Handbooks ready for distribution


The Arkansas Press Association produces the handy handbooks with a lot of assistance from the Arkansas Attorney General’s office. The revised edition contains the FOIA amendments passed in the legislative session earlier this year.

The Handbooks are available from APA and from the Office of the Attorney General. The Handbooks are free, and provide a helpful guide to the state’s open meetings and open records act. The Handbooks are updated every other year, after the adjournment of the Arkansas general assembly.

The expenses of producing the FOIA Handbook come in part from the Arkansas Governor’s Office, the Arkansas Attorney General’s Office, the Arkansas Press Association, the Society of Professional Journalists, the Arkansas Broadcasters Association, the Associated Press Managing Editors and the Associated Press Broadcasters Association.

The 18th Edition has expanded to 64 pages up from the 56 pages in the 17th Edition. The increase is largely due to new amendments to the FOIA coming out of the general assembly.

“I encourage everyone to make sure your local elected and appointed government officials as well as your local records custodians have a copy of this handbook made available to them,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director.
The ArkLaMiss circulation and marketing conference is upon us once again. This fun and informative conference is set for November 9-10 at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss. This has been the site of the conference for several years now.

The genesis of the conference was an idea to promote newspaper circulation, and to provide post-graduate training for experienced circulators as well as the newbies to the industry. At the time of the formation of this conference, we did little for circulators in the way of training, and the few attempts we made did not bring very many registrants.

There is always synergy to be gained in joining with other state press associations to enhance the training offered, and to bring delegates from the other states together to provide them some education but just as importantly to allow them to learn from each other. A lot of the latter has gone on at every conference from day one. I believe this is the secret to the success of this conference.

Initially the conference was solely about circulation, and how to sell the newspaper’s products. Over the years it has evolved to include newspaper marketers, who quite often are also the circulation directors at the newspapers. The conference now brings together circulation and marketing from Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi, some of whom have attended the conference for years and who continue to attend because it benefits them to do so.

The role of the newspaper circulation manager was once limited to maintaining the subscription list and to make sure the newspapers got delivered to the subscribers and to the news racks and vendors. Some utilize the mail, while others use carriers, but the roles were pretty much the same.

Over time newspapers have come to look to the circulation managers to also help sell the newspaper’s products. Quite often, the circulation managers had little information or background in marketing, so the ArkLaMiss conference expanded its scope to include this end of the business.

A few years ago we added a newspaper manager’s roundtable to the conference. This was offered for newspaper managers from all levels of their respective organizations, to discuss challenges in the industry and more specifically to address solutions to these challenges. The first event proved very successful so it has been a permanent addition to the ArkLaMiss programming, getting underway on Thursday morning and adjourning before lunch.

This year APA President Byron Tate, publisher of The Sheridan Headlight, will facilitate the roundtable.

The ArkLaMiss conference gets underway right after lunch on Thursday and continues until just before lunch on Friday. In that short amount of time, a lot of information will be imparted, hot ideas exchanged, and social time to allow the aforementioned networking to take place.

It’s all very informative and fun, and most importantly it provides some top quality training for those challenged with the task of promoting both the newspaper and newspaper circulation. All that and it’s one of the cheapest conferences of this sort that you will find.

It gets even less expensive to attend if you’re lucky enough to get one of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation grants of $200 to cover expenses of the conference. These grants will cover the registration for the conference and a night’s stay in the beautiful Ameristar Hotel.

The grants were still available early this week, but all eight will likely all be spoken for so if you are interested in one of them I would suggest making inquiries as soon as possible. Karen Brown, executive director of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation would have that information. She can be reached at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com.

Since APA is in charge of the programming again this year, it would be great to have several from APA newspapers attend the conference. We already have about 10 representing, but with grants remaining I am hoping we can add to that number.

I am confident also that if you need more information on the ArkLaMiss conference you can speak to anyone who has attended and they will give you a positive reference for attending and joining this group of newspaper executives. That is to say, you don’t have to take my word for it. I know the conference will get good references because I hear the positive comments that always come from those making the trip to Vicksburg for this annual gathering.

I sure hope I get to see you there.

The 18th edition of the Freedom of Information Act Handbook is at the printer, which means we should be having copies ready for distribution in the next week or so. The FOI Handbook has been updated to include amendments to the law made in the general session of the legislature held earlier this year.

The staff at the Attorney General’s office did the updating. I figure they are the experts so it’s only fitting that they perform this task for us and they always do it well. They certainly have more lawyers than we do here at APA world headquarters, which at this writing would be zero.

The Handbooks are always in big demand, and we encourage everyone to make sure their local elected and appointed officials, and their local records custodians have a copy made available to them. The Handbooks are free for the asking, so just let APA know if you need copies and how many and we’ll get them to you.

There were more amendments to the FOIA during the legislative than I believe were really necessary, but they are now law and are included in the new Handbook. Most of those amendments were passed over our objection.

Again, it was ironic that in the 50th year since the enactment of the Arkansas FOIA, it was open season on undermining at this past legislative session. Not all of the attempts to erode the protections the FOIA provides residents of Arkansas were successful, but some were.

Get your copy of the new Handbook and familiarize yourself, as there will likely be questions coming up resulting from those changes. Of course we’ll try to answer questions if you have them, but you may also call the APA’s FOIA Hotline at 501-379-1700. That’s the one operated by Attorney John Tull and his team, experts on the FOIA.

Have a great week.

Tom Larimer's
Potpourri

—

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

—

October 26, 2017
Democrat-Gazette names new section editors

Rachel O’Neal has been named editor of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette’s Sunday “High Profile” section, and Jim Kordsmeier has replaced O’Neal as the newspaper’s business editor.

O’Neal has been the newspaper’s business editor since April 2013. She succeeds Cyd King who was High Profile editor since May 2016.

Kordsmeier has been the Democrat-Gazette’s assistant business editor since May 2006.

Originally from Alexandria, La., O’Neal earned a bachelor’s degree in journalism from Louisiana Tech University in Ruston before joining the newspaper in 1989. She interrupted that tenure with nine years at Axiom before returning in 2009.

Materials offered to promote newspapers

News consumers remain high on newspapers to deliver the credible news they seek, that according to a recent survey seeking feedback from readers on their newspaper reading habits.

The National Newspaper Association is offering materials that can be used to promote newspapers and more specifically to promote recent survey results that indicate once again that newspapers remain the number one source for local news.

NNA commissioned the survey of 1,000 households in early 2017. The survey results show that newspapers remain strong with local readers.

The materials include ads, both print and digital, ad fliers, and a web site as a landing place for the digital ads at www.knowlocal.news.

Newspapers are challenged to promote that message and the results of the survey by using the materials provided by NNA. These can be found at http://tinyurl.com/y7lgtoug.

Nominations open for E&P ‘Ten Newspapers’

The March issues of Editor & Publisher magazine will profile what they label “10 Newspapers That Do It Right.”

Nominations are now open for newspapers to be considered for inclusion in this group.

The list was never meant to be a “10 Best” list, but rather to spotlight select newspapers that have earned a notable achievement in at least one particular area, carried out a successful innovation, implemented cost savings procedures or developed programs that have generated revenues or increased circulation.

This year E&P is including ideas, strategies and tactics, which individuals have knocking around in their attics – whether or not they have been implemented or tested.

The objective of the story is to bring ideas together and share the best and the brightest in one comprehensive feature. All ideas are welcome.

The deadline for entries is January 15, 2018.

For more information and to enter, to go http://www.editorandpublisher.com/10newspapers.

Young subscribers flocking to ‘old’ media: Politico

As President Donald Trump continues to wage daily war against the press, millennials are subscribing to legacy news publications in record numbers and at a growth rate far outpacing any other age group, according to Politico.

Since November’s election, the New Yorker, for instance, has seen its number of new millennial subscribers more than double from over the same period a year earlier. According to the magazine’s figures, it has 106 percent more new subscribers in the 18-34-age range and 129 percent more from 25-34.

The Atlantic has a similar story: since the election, its number of new subscribers aged 18-24 jumped 130 percent for print and digital subscriptions combined over the same period a year earlier, while 18-44 went up 70 percent.

Newspapers like The Washington Post and The New York Times typically do not share specific subscriber data, but according to a Post spokesperson, its subscriber growth rate is highest among millennials. A New York Times representative relayed that the paper was “seeing similar trends” in subscriptions and pointed to public data on digital traffic that showed its online reach among millennials to be up 9 percent from the same period a year ago.

Even The Wall Street Journal, not a newspaper usually known for being left around dorm rooms, said that it has doubled its student subscribers in the last year. And a spokesperson for the famously staid Economist reported, “We are seeing that the 18-24 and 25-34 age groups have been key drivers of new subscriptions.”

More information on this story can be found at http://tinyurl.com/y97wrn94.
Guest Column: Postal Rate Increase Jan. 21 Likely About 2%
By Max Heath, NNA Postal Chair

The official inflation factor used to file price increases under the current postal reform law of 2006, in which the National Newspaper Association (NNA) was instrumental, is 1.9 percent for the 12-month average used by the Postal Regulatory Commission.

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is likely to file an increase for the average percentage amount this month. Due to rounding, and possibly other factors, such an unused rate authority from prior cases, as well as competitive reasons, some categories within classes could be more, others less. Each class must average correctly to stay beneath the inflation cap.

For instance, the price of Saturation and High-Density “Marketing Mail,” a new terminology given Standard Mail last year, has been historically low as USPS tries to keep higher volumes of this mail flowing. Its cost coverage is high (revenue higher than costs) as calculated by USPS, whereas Periodicals mail is judged to only cover 75 percent of its costs. So, this price used by shopper and free newspapers might go up less than 2 percent. We’ll just see where USPS places its emphasis.

By the way, mailers should not change bulk rate indicia yet to say “Marketing Mail.” The mailing industry is still arguing with USPS, as some don’t want to use the new designation, which the Postal Service thinks more accurately explains the purpose of the advertising-content class. Nonprofits among others disagree. Final implementation has been postponed, and until details are worked out, NNA members should continue to use “Standard Mail” on its permit indicia.

Repots are that increased discounts are likely to be granted mail entered at DDUs (delivery offices) by the mailer. That may well help Standard Mail and in-county Periodicals, both heavy user of this best practice.

The Post Service has already announced an implementation date of Jan. 21, 2018, for the next round or price changes. Custom is to make a filing for permission from the PRC 90 days prior, which would be around Oct. 21.

NNA’s Postal Committee is deeply disappointed that a hoped-for discount for using more efficient Flats Trays (white tubs) available only for Periodicals mail, was not included. We had worked hard to convince the decision makers in postal headquarters that it was deserved, and NNA was on track for success. NNA has been seeking this discount for a decade, and the Postal Regulatory Commission has agreed it should be considered. But USPS cannot seem to keep it at the top of the pile.

Tonda Rush, Brad Hill and I have been particularly focused on this issue during our representation of NNA members at the quarterly Mailers Technical Advisory Committee meetings, annual National Postal Forum, and in briefings for association heads attended month where Rush is prominent among mailer leadership.

However, the lack of a robust board of governors took its toll. The Postal Service board was down to one governor, who approved the inflationary filing. And there are currently no governors, because Congress has failed to act on appointees from the current and past administration. The Trump Administration has appointed no one so far, so Congress could not consider confirmation of even one governor even if it tried. USPS believes it lacks legal authority to implement new discounts without the backing of its board.

USPS has promised to put a line item on Postage Statement 3451 to track the use of tubs starting in 2018, with an eye toward providing a discount later – something NNA asked for in 2007.

With the relatively small total volume of newspapers using tubs, it may not be an impressive number. But a small number isn’t necessarily bad. If we can persuade USPS more Periodicals mail would abandon sacks for tubs, we could prove to USPS that it could save money.

Although participation is good among newspapers after NNA’s promotion of this best practice since 2006, the magazine industry has largely spurned the use of Flats Trays since they are wedded to pallets, and then sacks for the “tail of the mail” that can’t be palletized.

NNA’s Postal Committee has also been pushing for adoption of un-lidded flats trays to make their use more palatable to printing/mailing plants, and likewise for many postal mail-processing plants that can more readily recognize the time-sensitive contents.

A second test of their usage from a larger printer of newspapers in Western Kentucky, with mail flows into both Nashville and Louisville, should help the Postal Service operations folks make a positive decision soon. Many postal plants and individual post offices have informally advised newspapers to prepare tubs without the green lids which can allow them to be nested one inside the other on newspaper or printer delivery trucks, and on postal transportation to Hubs and processing plants.

All member of NNA who want to improve distant delivery times should adopt the use of flats trays and get out of sacks completely. Let me know at my email address below if you have any problems at any level with the adoption of tub use.

NNA members, and all mailers, badly need passage of postal reform legislation, which is hung up in the House after coming out of committee with bipartisan support earlier this year. I encourage all members to run NNA President Matt Paxton’s guest editorial on service, etc., if they haven’t, ASAP. And contact your representatives. The editorial can be found on NNA’s web site at nnaweb.org.

Higher postage rates are extremely likely without legislation that frees some unneeded monies being diverted to the U.S. Treasury for no good reason. And another round of plant closures could occur.

We are waiting a PRC decision on whether to loosen the inflationary cap during the 10-year review of the 2006 major postal reform that introduced the cap. The Commissioners have promised a decision in very soon.

(Max Heath, NNA postal chair, is a postal consultant for Landmark Community Newspapers, LLC, and NNA members. He is sponsored by Interlink Softwar. Email him at maxheath@lcni.com.)
Only one week remains till ArkLaMiss event

Only one week remains before the start of the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing Conference set at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

This annual conference draws representatives from the three participating states to hear presentations on best practices in circulation and marketing, and to hear presentations on “hot ideas” to put to use back home.

The three participating press association take turns hosting the ArkLaMiss program. This year it falls to APA to make the arrangements for the conference and we have contracted with Zach Ahrens to be the featured presenter. Zach is the former publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, and is presently president and publisher of the Topeka Capitol Journal. His presentation is both entertaining and highly informative.

APA President Byron Tate, publisher of The Sheridan Headlight, will facilitate the newspaper manager’s roundtable, which kicks off the conference Thursday morning. This lively discussion is open to newspaper managers from all departments, including publishers, general managers, advertising, production and circulation.

A popular annual feature of the conference is the “hot ideas” session Friday morning. Dennis Dunn will again be on hand to facilitate this fast-paced one-hour session with cash awards awaiting the hot ideas voted best.

Those planning to attend are reminded to bring examples of your hot idea for presentation. It could earn you cash.

More information on the conference, including registration and hotel information, can be found on the APA web site at www.arkansaspress.org.

Arkansas Press Women plan mini conference

The Arkansas Press Women will convene for a Mini Fall Conference Saturday, November 11, in the Mirror Room in McAlister Hall on the campus of the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. The event will be from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch is included in the $20 conference fee. Registration is available at https://uaex.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3gQV0Eeh61bDfFX.

Tom Larimer from the Arkansas Press Association will start the program at 9:30 a.m. and discuss what’s going on with the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act and a task force recently created by the legislature.

Melanie Kramer, Rob Moritz, Dr. Donna Lampkin Stephens and Evin Demeril will participate in a panel discussion on freelancing. Mike Taylor from Henderson State University will talk about using drones in journalism.

During lunch, the conference will hear from Dr. Ruth Hawkins, director of Arkansas State University Heritage Sites. The conference will conclude with a short Tool Take Away about how to use Canva to build graphics for social media.

Deadline extended for cover photo entries

The deadline for photo entries to be considered for the cover of the 2018 Arkansas Media Directory has been extended until Wednesday, Nov. 8, less than a week away.

“We were late sending out the call for entries so we thought it only fair to allow a little more time for photo entries,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director.

APA members and associate members are eligible to enter the contest.

The winning entry will receive a $100 cash prize and the winning photo will be featured on the cover of the 2018 Arkansas Media Directory. Second place receives $50 and third $25. The other top entries will be featured throughout the directory on a space available basis.

A panel of judges will select the winners.

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.
It’s November, and I would ask where in the world this year went but I know the answer is the same place last year went.

My tenure here at APA has now been more than 13 years, yet it seems like just yesterday we were making the drive over from Nashville, Tenn. to join, or rather re-join, the newspapers of Arkansas, this time as their association executive.

It was amusing that a newspaper in Nashville, in reporting the news of my departure as publisher of now defunct The City Paper in Nashville reported that I was leaving for my “dream job.” Actually, I had never said that to anyone but in this case they were correct. It was, and still is, my dream job.

I had attended APA events for years, beginning when I was a child attending with my family, but it was only after six years on the APA Board that I began to understand the many good works, above and beyond the staging of those fun conventions, that the association does for its members. Like so many other such jobs, I learned there is more to it than meets the eye.

So there was a bit of a learning curve to go from publishing daily newspapers to managing a press association. Actually, that may be an understatement. Yeah, we’re all in the same business, sort of, but the two have few other similarities.

I had to learn the newspaper business from an entirely different perspective. It certainly helped that I grew up in family weekly newspapers and had been publishing daily newspapers in different states for several years before accepting this position. At least I could identify with the problems and challenges the newspapers, and to do what we can on this end to help address them and to find solutions for the most troubling challenges.

The job had its initial challenges for me. A good example was that almost from day one I was fielding calls regarding Freedom of Information Act challenges. That’s when it occurred to me that perhaps I should at least familiarize myself with the law since I was expected to be somewhat of an expert on it.

That was just one example. There were others, of course. Like when the legislature came to town. I came to this job in July of 2004, and in February the general session of the legislature began. That’s when I got my baptism in the lobbying waters in the halls of the legislature.

It’s not like I hadn’t lobbied legislatures before, as I certainly had in Missouri, Kansas and Tennessee before I came here, but never as a registered lobbyist representing the interests of all newspapers in Arkansas. That comes with a bit of pressure. Why? Well, because the newspapers of Arkansas look to us to protect them and their interests from legislative interference.

I caught a break, though. In those days the legislature wasn’t as flagrant in its disregard for the FOIA in particular and newspapers in general. Things were all cordial and collegial in those early days of my lobbying for APA. Conversations in the legislative halls were certainly more affable than they have become these days.

In those early days of my tenure, lobbying on behalf of newspapers was actually one of my favorite parts of the job. Man, how times have changed. Lobbying the Arkansas legislature these days has become a fount of frustration and exasperation.

It helped also that I had a good example to follow in the lobbying of the Arkansas legislature. Milton Scott was still filling the role of lobbyist for APA when I took this job, and I was happy to have him retain the lead in the first two general sessions for which I was responsible. He was a big help in preparing me to fulfill this role of the job before he retired a couple of years after I came here.

Nothing could have prepared me for the role in dealing with the new age legislators we now have in the general assembly. I think, no I know, Milton would find it an amazingly different place these days.

Speaking of the legislature, the APA now has a big inventory of the new, 18th Edition of the Freedom of Information Handbook. They are free for the asking, so don’t hesitate to call APA and make requests for the Handbooks, or email requests to info@arkansaspress.org. Make sure all of your elected and appointed officials have a copy, as well as your public records custodians.

We are now just a week away from the start of the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing Conference, Nov. 9-10, at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

Registrations are still coming in and I remain confident we will have a good representation of APA members at the conference.

Almost all of the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation grants had been committed by the first of this week, with only a couple remaining available. Check with Karen Brown, ANF executive director, at arknewspaperfoundation@gmail.com for availability of the $200 grants.

APA is in charge of the programming for this year’s ArkLaMiss, and has arranged for Zach Ahrens, president and publisher of the Topeka Capital Journal, former publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway, to be the featured presenter.

The deadline for photo submissions for the annual Arkansas Media Directory cover has been extended to Wed., Nov. 8.

Several photo entries have already been received but since the request for entries was delayed this year, a week has been added to the deadline.

The winning entry not only adorns the cover of the Directory for a year, but the winning photographer also receives a $100 cash prize. Second place receives $50, and third $25.

If you’ve been thinking of submitting one or more photos for the contest, you have another week to send them to graphics@arkansaspress.org.

The contest is open to APA members and associates who may submit up to seven photos.

Have a great week.
Helena World Offices trashed in burglary

The Helena-West Helena World has reported that a burglar or burglars broke into the newspaper office recently, stole some items and ransacked the office. The break-in apparently took place Monday night, October 23.

The thieves forced open a fire-proof safe, stole at least one computer and rifled most desk drawers in the offices while also helping themselves to employee drinks and snacks in the refrigerator.

The break-in was discovered Tuesday morning, October 24, by David Taylor, a newspaper employee.

Helena-West Helena Police are investigating.

Request FOIA Handbooks now

Orders are now coming in to APA for the recently released 18th edition of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Handbook. APA has a large inventory of the handbooks available upon request. There is no charge for the handbooks.

“Every elected or appointed official in Arkansas should have one of these handy little books made available to them,” says Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “The Handbooks make clear the responsibilities of officials as well as records custodians under the state’s FOIA.”

The Arkansas Press Association produces the handy handbooks with a lot of assistance from the Arkansas Attorney General’s office. The revised edition contains the FOIA amendments passed in the legislative session earlier this year. The Handbooks are available from APA and from the Office of the Attorney General. The Handbooks are free, and provide a helpful guide to the state’s open meetings and open records act. The Handbooks are updated every other year, after the adjournment of the Arkansas general assembly.

The expenses of producing the FOIA Handbook come in part from the Arkansas Governor’s Office, the Arkansas Attorney General’s Office, the Arkansas Press Association, the Society of Professional Journalists, the Arkansas Broadcasters Association, the Associated Press Managing Editors and the Associated Press Broadcasters Association.

The 18th Edition has expanded to 64 pages up from the 56 pages in the 17th Edition. The increase is largely due to new amendments to the FOIA coming out of the general assembly.

Nominate your newspaper for Editor & Publisher recognition

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Materials offered to promote newspapers

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The materials include ads, both print and digital, ad fliers, and a web site as a landing place for the digital ads at www.knowlocalnews.

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Arkansas Publisher Weekly
Register Today!

ArkLaMiss Circulation & Marketing Conference

What: ArkLaMiss Circulation & Marketing Conference

When: Nov. 9 - 10, 2017

Where: Ameristar Casino & Hotel
       Vicksburg, MS

Register Online: www.ArkLaMissConference.com
ArkLaMiss gets underway today in Vicksburg

The annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference gets underway today at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss.

Representatives from the respective press associations in Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi come together for an extended discussion of challenges and opportunities in selling newspapers. Among those attending will be 11 from Arkansas. At last report there were 44 registered to attend.

The three state press associations involved rotate the responsibility for arranging the ArkLaMiss programming. The APA is hosting this meeting.

Zach Ahrens, president and publisher of the Topeka Capital-Journal, will be the featured presenter at this conference. Zach brings some excellent insights into newspapers reaching readers across the demographic spectrum.

Dennis Dunn, operations manager at the Anniston (Ala.) Star, will return to the ArkLaMiss conference again this year to facilitate the “hot ideas” session Friday morning. This fast-paced session can produce some great idea to take home and turn into revenue.

The conference kicks off Thursday morning with a newspaper manager’s roundtable discussion. Byron Tate, publisher of the Sheridan Headlight and president of the Arkansas Press Association, will facilitate this discussion. Topics will range from revenue growth opportunities, to expenses, to publication in the digital age and anything in between.

The ArkLaMiss officially begins right after lunch on Thursday and concludes right before lunch on Friday.

“The ArkLaMiss continues to be one of my favorite conferences both to attend and to host,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “I’m always impressed with the creativity and innovation shared by those attending this meeting.”

More information on the conference can be found on the APA web site at www.arkansaspress.org.
It’s very likely that when you’re reading this a whole raft of us from Arkansas newspapers are in Vicksburg, Miss. attending the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference.

I’m not sure the definition of a “whole raft” but it’s at least 14 as that’s the last head count I have of those from APA newspapers attending. That’s not the largest number ever to have attended this conference from Arkansas, but it is definitely above average. At last report there were over 44 registered for the ArkLaMiss conference, and that number is also very near the average attendance number.

A positive factor in keeping the numbers of APA members attending is the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation grants of $200. The Foundation offered eight of these grants this year and six were allocated. Thanks again to the Arkansas Newspaper Foundation for continuing this program.

We will be convened at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg right up until lunch on Friday when we’ll adjourn and go our separate ways.

If you’ve never attended the ArkLaMiss conference, I suggest you talk to those who have attended and get their thoughts. There’s a reason so many of our people attend every year and it’s because there’s always something to learn. More often than not, it’s several things.

Even APA Past President Rusty Fraser of the Stone County Leader in Mountain View, who has been in the newspaper business for a few years and knows as much about publishing a community newspaper as anyone, says he always learns something at the ArkLaMiss. That is a huge compliment to the conference, but it’s also a valid one. I’ve been in the business for a few years myself and I always learn something at this conference.

Rusty started attending the ArkLaMiss conference a few years ago and has been a regular for the last several of the events. In fact, a lot of those attending the ArkLaMiss conference are “regulars,” as they continue to come back for the fun little conference year after year.

If you missed this one, there’ll be another next year. I encourage you to talk to those who regularly attend and make plans to be there yourself next year.

The ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference is one of three major conferences we do each year. The other two are, of course, the APA advertising conference in March, and the annual convention, which this year will be June 26-30 in Eureka Springs.

The Advertising Conference will be held March 15-16, 2018, again at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on top of Petit Jean Mountain in Central Arkansas.

I hope you’ll make plans to attend the advertising conference this year. There’s always something to learn here, too, and this year we’ll be focusing in on the APA advertising networks and how they can work for and help generate significant revenues for APA member newspapers.

That won’t be all we’ll be focusing on at the ad conference, but it will be an addition to the traditional programming that is sure to be helpful. If you can’t attend I hope you would make a serious attempt to have someone there from your newspaper. You won’t be sorry.

The annual convention in June will feature one of Arkansas’ most unusual cities, Eureka Springs. This destination, often dubbed the “Little Switzerland of the Ozarks,” has traditionally been one of our most popular sites for the convention, and I have no reason to believe that will be any different this year. The last two conventions we’ve held at the Inn of the Ozarks in Eureka Springs received some of the highest marks in feedback from those attending.

The convention committee will be meeting in January to begin planning the gathering. If you have suggestions for what you would like to see on the program for the convention please let me know and I will pass them along. If you would like to serve on the convention committee, please let me or APA President Byron Tate hear from you. That committee appointment will be coming in December.

The first part of this week I spent in New Orleans attending the annual meeting of my colleagues in the Southeast part of the country. The organization, dubbed SERNAM, (Southeast Regional Newspaper Association Managers) provides one of the best continuing education opportunities I have each year.

It won’t come as news to anyone that these are challenging days for newspapers of all sizes. The same could be said for press associations. While our business is hardly the same as newspapers (in fact, not even close), we are of course forever tied to the newspaper industry. There’d be no need for us without newspapers.

So while newspapers have their challenges to remain viable (read that profitable), so do newspaper associations. Some are doing better at it than others.

Also like newspapers, when the going gets tough we look for other opportunities to keep the train moving along the track so to speak. A lot of those ideas were on the table for discussion in New Orleans. And discuss we did.

I always enjoy these sessions and the interaction with my counterparts. As individuals we couldn’t be much different, but for what we do we share the same issues and same challenges. The commiseration is good, but even better is the insight into how to address the myriad challenges of the day.

These can range from revenue generation issues to legislative issues. We talk about it all, and in the end I always coming out knowing more. In short, these are great sessions.

The fact that they took place in one of the great cities of this country, New Orleans, is a major plus. The SERNAM members take turns hosting this annual gathering. This year just happened to be Louisiana’s turn. Last year it was Florida. Next year it’s Virginia. The year after that, it will be Arkansas’ turn once again.

We stayed in New Orleans until Wednesday when we traveled to Vicksburg for the ArkLaMiss conference.

Have a great week.

Tom
Help sought in distributing handbooks

APA members are encouraged to help in the distribution of the newly released 18th edition of the Arkansas Freedom of Information Handbook.

The handbooks are free for the asking.

“Ideally every elected and appointed official in Arkansas at all government levels would have one of these handbooks made available to them,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “These are the people with responsibilities under the FOIA and it is in their best interest to have this available to them as a resource.”

APA produces the FOIA Handbook, which is produced every other year, right after the general session of the Arkansas legislature. The handbook contains changes to the law enacted in the session.

The Handbook is produced in conjunction with the Arkansas Attorney General’s office. The expenses of producing the FOIA Handbook come in part from the Arkansas Governor’s Office, the Arkansas Attorney General’s Office, the Arkansas Press Association, the Society of Professional Journalists, the Arkansas Broadcasters Association, the Associated Press Managing Editors and the Associated Press Broadcasters Association.

“The Arkansas Freedom of Information Act remains one of the strongest in the country,” Larimer added. “It is really important that APA members and their government representatives have an understanding of the law.”

Contact the APA office at 501-374-1500 or email FOIA Handbook requests to info@arkansaspress.org.

APW Mini Conference on for Saturday

The Arkansas Press Women will convene a Mini Fall Conference Saturday, November 11, in the Mirror Room in McAlister Hall on the campus of the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. The event will be from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch is included in the $20 conference fee. Registration is available at https://uaex.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3gQV0Eeh6ibDFX.

Tom Larimer from the Arkansas Press Association will start the program at 9:30 a.m. and discuss what’s going on with the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act and a task force recently created by the legislature.

Melanie Kramer, Rob Moritz, Dr. Donna Lampkin Stephens and Evin Demeril will participate in a panel discussion on freelancing. Mike Taylor from Henderson State University will talk about using drones in journalism.

During lunch, the conference will hear from Dr. Ruth Hawkins, director of Arkansas State University Heritage Sites. The conference will conclude with a short Tool Take Away about how to use Canva to build graphics for social media.

E&P seeking nominations for top newspapers

The March issues of Editor & Publisher magazine will profile what they label “10 newspapers That Do It Right.”

Nominations are now open for newspapers to be considered for inclusion in this group.

The list was never meant to be a “10 Best” list, but rather to spotlight elect newspapers that have earned a notable achievement in at least one particular area, carried out a successful innovation, implemented cost savings procedures or developed programs that have generated revenues or increased circulation.

This year E&P is including ideas, strategies and tactics, which individuals have knocking around in their attics – whether or not they have been implemented or tested.

The objective of the story is to bring ideas together and share the best and the brightest in one comprehensive feature. All ideas are welcome.

The deadline for entries is January 15, 2018.

For more information and to enter, go to http://www.editorandpublisher.com/10newspapers.
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The APA offices will re-open on Monday, November 27.

Grant allows digitization of APA newspapers

A grant of just over $200,000 is allowing the Arkansas State Archives to digitize Arkansas newspapers titles from 1819 to 1922, according to Dr. Lisa Speer, State Historian and Director of the Arkansas State Archives.

The grant is from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Arkansas State Archives is partnering with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History on the grant. The grant runs through August 31, 2019.

An advisory board composed of historians, journalists, librarians, educators and archivists are assisting in the title selection process. The first meeting of the group was held Monday at the Archives headquarters adjacent to the State Capitol in Little Rock. APA Executive Director Tom Larimer is assisting in the selection process as a member of the advisory board.

The National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) is a partnership between the National Endowment for the Humanities (NED), the Library of Congress, and state projects to provide enhanced access to United State newspapers published between 1690 and 1963. The NEH awards support state projects to select and digitize historically significant titles that are aggregated and maintained permanently by the Library of Congress (LC).

These titles are available for use by the general public at no cost through the LC’s Chronicling America website (http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/). Through this website, users may search the digitized newspapers, as well as consult a national newspaper directory of bibliographic and holdings information to identify newspaper titles available in all types of formats.

The NEH aims to have every state and US territory represented in Chronicling America. One organization within each state or territory will receive an award to collaborate with relevant state partners in this effort. Since the NDNP was first established in 2005, forty-six states have joined as contributors. Arkansas and Georgia received awards from the NEH in September 2017.
The 2017 version of the annual ArkLaMiss Circulation and Marketing conference is now in the books, and by any standard this one was another excellent meeting.

Held once again at the Ameristar Casino Hotel in Vicksburg, Miss., there were almost 50 registered to attend. While that number was down slightly from previous years, although certainly not the lowest ever, the energy was high with the group.

From the opening newspaper managers’ roundtable, facilitated by APA President Byron Tate, it was apparent those attending the conference were engaged and prepared to soak up the latest in hot ideas and processes for getting even better at what they do for their newspapers.

Most of the conferences in which I participate, including some of those we manage, are attended by publishers, general managers, editors, and ad managers. In other words, the top management of the newspaper.

The ArkLaMiss, however, attracts those in circulation, marketing, and production. These are the folks in the trenches so to speak at their respective newspapers. That’s not to suggest that publishers, general manager et al don’t do that much, because they obviously do. However, if they are to be successful they need people like that at the ArkLaMiss to share the vision and to fulfill the mission of the newspaper.

Layne Bruce, my counterpart at the Mississippi Press Association, aptly describes the ArkLaMiss conference as “the little conference that could.” That is so true as many of those attending have been very loyal to attend and to participate while at the event. Some return year after year. Why? Because they get a lot out of the conference, especially in the interaction with others doing the same job as them at newspapers in the tri-state area.

There are those from the three participating states that have been to every one of the conferences I’ve attended. The ArkLaMiss has a core of people who wouldn’t miss the opportunity to learn, to interact with others doing the same job at other newspapers, and to expand their network. They get all of that and more.

We don’t do a lot of conferences for these types of newspaper people, and they don’t have a lot of them to attend. When they come to the ArkLaMiss they soak up information like a sponge. From the opening managers’ roundtable to the closing “hot ideas” session, the energy is high and the information flows. It never fails. This was the 14th consecutive ArkLaMiss I have attended and it is always the same story.

I think that’s why I enjoy participating in this conference each year and why we are so meticulous in making the arrangements for the programming to make it all worth the while of those attending.

We had seven APA members attending the ArkLaMiss, not including Terri Cobb or myself representing the APA staff. We’ve had as many as 14 attend from Arkansas, so this number, too, was down from previous years although it was about on average with most years.

I hope we are able to continue the ArkLaMiss, and likely we will so long as there are sufficient numbers to stage the conference. I also hope we’ll get more representation from APA newspapers.

It was great seeing and spending time with Zach Ahrens at the ArkLaMiss conference. Zach is president and publisher of the Topeka Capital-Journal, and was formerly the publisher of the Log Cabin Democrat in Conway.

I had invited Zach to present at the 2016 APA SuperConvention when it was held in Bentonville. We had talked of him doing this sort of thing when he was still in Conway, so after he moved to Topeka, I asked him to return to the convention for a presentation.

After watching his presentation in Bentonville, all I could think about was how appropriate it would be for the ArkLaMiss conference, so I invited him immediately to fill this role for us. He readily accepted and held to that promise despite this being a very hectic time for him in Topeka.

Zach’s presentation at the ArkLaMiss contained some of the elements from his 2016 APA presentation, but with a lot added. He easily filled the three-hour time slot, and one got the impression he could go on even farther if time permitted.

In the days leading up to the ArkLaMiss conference in Vicksburg, I was attending the annual Southeast Regional Newspaper Association Managers (SERNAM) meeting in New Orleans. The conference was headquartered in a French Quarter hotel, in easy walking distance to some of the finest restaurants New Orleans has to offer.

A total of 11 associations were represented at the conference, including those from South Dakota and Alberta, Canada. Okay, those last two aren’t in the Southeast. However, the SERNAM event has a reputation of being an excellent one for anyone to attend, and of course other newspaper association executives are always invited and welcome. And several from outside the Southeast part of the country have attended over the years.

The SERNAM member states take turns hosting the annual event. This year it just happened to be Louisiana’s turn. Next year we’ll be in Virginia, and the year following that we’ll be back in Arkansas.

APA last hosted the SERNAM event in 2006. Part of that meeting was an afternoon spent at the Clinton Presidential Center. As luck would have it, President Clinton was there. That came as a surprise to some of those attending the SERNAM conference, but I pointed out to them that it is his library and it isn’t all that rare to catch sight of him in it.

Another stop on that SERNAM agenda was at the Democrat-Gazette offices where Frank Fellone gave the group some perspectives on the newspaper “war” that had been waged in Little Rock. Frank is good at telling this story since he was on the front line of the war so to speak.

I owe Frank even more now since he filled in for me recently in a speech I was supposed to make at the Jacksonville Rotary Club. It turns out I had a late conflict that prevented me from fulfilling that obligation, but Frank was quick to accept the invitation and apparently had a great time doing it.

The Jacksonville Daily News was an early stop on Frank’s newspaper career. Some of the newsmakers from back in the day were present at the Rotary Club meeting making it a reunion of sorts.

Have a great week.
Job openings? Stuff for sale, send to APA

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

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

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

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.

Mark Your Calendar!

November 23 - 24: Thanksgiving Holiday - APA Office Closed

Let's Get Social!

Follow Us on Facebook @ArkansasPressAssociation

Ad expense deduction remains...So far: NNA

An important national debate on reform of the federal tax code was initiated by the U.S. House of Representatives leadership. It appears that the first versions of the bill recognize the critical importance of encouraging economic growth through advertising, according to National Newspaper Association President Susan Rowell, publisher of the Lancaster News, Lancaster, SC. But she warns that the debate has just begun and taxes on advertising are still possible.

“NNA will look at the overall impact of this 429 page bill to determine the consequences for community newspapers,” Rowell said. “We want policy that protects journalism and encourages growth in our local communities, particularly America’s small towns. Vigilance over the importance of advertising as a tool to spur growth is absolutely essential as our Senators and Representatives feel the pressure of many taxpayers over the portents of new tax liabilities. Our mission is to preserve, protect and promote community newspapers, and we pledge our support for both House and Senate as leadership continues its work.

But the bill is only a first, but key step. A lowering of corporate taxes generally is causing the House leadership to promote many changes that create tax increases in other ways. To avoid an impact on the federal deficit, the House and Senate bill sponsors will continue to seek ways to implement new taxes.

The bill, HR 1, contains a general framework for sweeping changes in federal taxes. Among them are a continued ability for small businesses to deduct interest on business loans and a doubling of the exemption for estate taxes. Both of these are important to small newspapers.

Do You Publish a Magazine?

APA needs your info! Please email details, name of the magazine, frequency, circulation, and how it is distributed, along with a rate card, to rebecca@arkansaspress.org.
Jean Coleman hired me in 1976 even though I had neither a journalism degree nor experience in writing for a newspaper.

Although I wanted to be a reporter, she hired me for the only job she had open at the small Florida newspaper she edited: night and weekend photographer. (Of course, I had no photography or darkroom experience, either, but years after she hired me, Jean told me that in the unscheduled interview – I simply walked into her newsroom and asked to talk to her – she spotted in me some spark presaging future success. I had been worried that what she would spot was my ill-fitting suit.)

Jean had a very direct approach, including powerful eyes that locked on mine as she quizzed me. Why, she asked, was a person so unqualified seeking a reporting job?

Playing my only ace, I said, “I love to write.”

I took photos for only a year, but I proved my writing obsession by squeezing a story into my workday whenever possible. When a reporter left and Jean said, “Jim, I have an opening …,” I accepted the job before she finished offering it.

She did that despite the fact that my early writing attempts were erratic, even amateurish. (I recall misspelling “sheriff” – I used two r’s, only one f – and having her say aloud in the newsroom that a person with my education (degree in English) should spell better.)

A strong and demanding editor, she also excelled at the more sensitive skills of teaching and encouraging. She liked what she called my “voice” – I wasn’t aware I had one – so instead of forcing me into some straitjacket of orthodox newspaperspeak, she gave me the latitude to experiment.

Jean was a blend of hard-news traditionalist and take-risks adventurer. She winced at some of my more radical lead sentences – what young reporter doesn’t think he or she is redefining journalism? – but let me roam the city for offbeat material.

After covering a puppet show for children, I said I was embarrassed because I loved it. Jean replied, “I want you to love this job, I want you to discover yourself.”

Her enthusiasm and resoluteness filled the room. All of us were young – I actually was the oldest – and we wanted to please Jean. “Be polite with sources,” she said, “but ask tough questions.”

If I messed up, she succinctly corrected me and trusted I wouldn’t repeat the mistake. When I wrote a good story – even just a good sentence – she praised me in the same economical way she criticized, that is, in just a few words, implying I should get back to work and not kick back and bask in a past success.

A big step in developing my confidence came when she trusted me with a difficult story: An anniversary was coming up of the building of a much-debated bridge. What started as a single story grew – and my subsequent editors will recognize this pattern – into a three-part series, all typed on a typewriter, with carbon copies I stuffed into a manila folder. I loved the effort, all the heated, divergent interviews, the diving into filing cabinets for archival documents and news clips. Jean’s editing was a textbook on news writing.

But the long stories (or series) weren’t my only joys. Jean taught me to love equally the well-crafted brief or non-bylined story that didn’t deserve Page 1 but brightened an otherwise nondescript inside page. Her love of good sentences (see above) motivated me to earn her praise for a creative Paragraph 5 that marked a little story as being my personal property.

I regret that I lost track of Jean after she left the newspaper. I never satisfactorily thanked her for her faith in me, her cultivating of my creativity and her deft, determined teaching of the poorly dressed guy with no newspaper experience who brashly interrupted her workday in 1976.

She didn’t teach me everything I know about writing – after working for so many excellent editors, I would be foolish to credit only her – but her distinctive voice, which I still hear as if she were alongside me for all of my 40 years in newsrooms, kept me pointed in the right direction, even when I faced difficult people and difficult problems.

Before writing this column, I searched for her – thanks, Google – and found this sad news: She died in 2015, at age 87, after a life rich with achievements.

Her obituary was full of information, but although it was crisply written – she mostly would have approved – it lacked what I think she would have appreciated: a few good sentences that displayed both her individuality and that of the writer.

THE FINAL WORD: Don’t use the narrowly scientific word “epicenter” when what you mean is the center or focal point. An “epicenter” is the point on the Earth’s surface directly above the underground spot at which an earthquake occurred.

“Epicenter” as a synonym for “center” is pretentious and wrong.

(Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.)
Don’t forget: Upload those public notices

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APA STAFF LUNCH – Thanksgiving lunch came a week or so early for the APA staff who takes a break from a busy schedule for a little holiday repast. Pictured are, from left, Courtney Skinner, Sarah Mills, Tracy McGraw, Eva Bakalekos, Terri Cobb, Bridget Clay, Ashley “AJ” Wallace and Neil McConnell.

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. 3-5 in Washington, D.C., site for the annual Newspaper Association Managers (NAM) legislative conference.

Press association executive directors and government affairs specialists representing newspapers from across the country attend the conference.

“The agenda for the conference is always heavily loaded with relevant legislative issues of the day for the newspaper industry,” Larimer said. “This year is no exception.”

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.
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 54th 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 54 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 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.

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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 54 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.

These holiday conversations once included a discussion of which bowl would invite the Arkansas Razorbacks. Boy. Those were the days, right?

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 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 cost 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 of 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 Larimer’s Potpourri

(Disclosure: If this column sounds familiar it’s because parts of it are recycled and updated from previous Thanksgiving Day columns.)

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Arkansas Publisher Weekly

November 23, 2017
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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 of 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 plans fall retreat at Red Apple Inn

The APA/APS Board of Directors will convene their annual fall retreat Thursday and Friday, December 7-8, at the Red Apple Inn near Heber Springs.

A packed agenda faces the Board at this retreat, the traditional end-of-the-year fiscal wrap-up. The APA’s fiscal year ends November 30.

APA President Byron Tate will be making appointments to a couple of important committees. The 2018 SuperConvention committee will be named at this retreat, as well as the nominating committee to fill two vacancies on the APA/APS Board.

The convention will be held June 27-30 at the Inn of the Ozarks in Eureka Springs, traditionally one of the most popular cities and venues for the APA convention. The convention committee will meet shortly after the first of the year to develop a rough draft of the convention program.

“Feedback from members attending previous conventions in Eureka Springs has proven very positive, both for the city and for the convention venue at the Inn of the Ozarks,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “We are looking forward to another stellar outing in one of Arkansas’ most interesting destinations.”

If you have programming suggestions, topics you’d like to see addressed, or speakers you’d like to hear, pass them along to the APA office for the committee’s consideration.

The nominating committee usually meets in March to select nominees to fill APA Board vacancies. This year, they’ll need two nominees to fill slots left by the resignation of Jay Edwards, who left the newspaper industry, and to replace Nat Lea, who leaves the board after serving a year as immediate past president.

Per the APA bylaws, Lea will serve as nominating committee chairman in his capacity as immediate past president. Two other APA Board members will serve on the committee, along with two at-large APA members in good standing.

If you have interest in serving on either of these committees, please let the APA office know. Also, if you would like to be considered for nomination to the APA Board or if you’d like more information on the board commitment, contact Tom Larimer, APA executive director.

“The APA has for years benefitted from excellent leadership on the Board of Directors,” Larimer said. “In these challenging times it is imperative that we find those with the creativity and innovation to posture the APA to not only survive but to thrive in the months and years ahead.”

Among other agenda items, the APA Board will approve an operating budget for the next fiscal year, determine ad network rebates, and review existing and potential programs facilitated by the APA.

Arkansas Press Association

Publisher Weekly

New Additions? Let Us Know!

We want to know about your new hires, retirees and promotions!

Send your staffing changes to info@arkansaspress.org to be updated online and included in our weekly bulletin and monthly newsletter.
It will come as news to no one in particular that the state’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) has come under attack by those intent on shielding from public view the business of government. One needs no more evidence than the actions and antics experienced at the 2017 general session of the Arkansas legislature where the FOIA took a beating in the same year it observed its 50th anniversary of enactment.

When an official of government suggests to you that the FOIA needs amending, what they’re really saying is that some portions of the public’s business is really none of your business. How your tax money is expended, who benefits and how they got the business, also, none of your business.

More than once during the legislative session did we, and by “we” I mean those of us representing the newspaper industry at the legislature, were left scratching our heads over the genesis for the motives for suggesting such sweeping changes to the FOIA. There was a clear animosity toward the FOIA by several members of the legislature. That animosity was manifest most evidently in reaction to our testimony against a legislative proposal that would, in our view, damage or undermine the FOIA.

At times it wasn’t pretty or decorous. There was clearly an undertow of resentment toward the FOIA by more than just a few in the legislature. And more than once the law that has served the people of Arkansas for well over 50 years now came under attack.

I thought about it a lot at the time, and since, too, of course, as to just why so many in the legislature would prefer secrecy in government rather than openness. Who really thinks government secrecy is a good way to conduct the public’s business? Who in their right mind would want a return to the time when most of the public’s business was conducted in private, the decisions made by a small group of people who often had no compunction about profiting from the public’s business or seeing to it that their buddies or their brothers-in-law or fill in the blank could benefit from it.

And the people would never know.

The FOIA didn’t fix all the ills in Arkansas government, but it went a long way toward requiring by law that the public’s business be conducted in public. It let the sun shine in on government putting it on clear display for the citizens of Arkansas.

Now there are those who think that wasn’t such a great idea.

One of the good things to come out of the 2017 legislative session was the creation of an FOIA Task Force, a group that will be charged with reviewing proposed legislation that would amend the FOIA or to touch it in any way. This group has the opportunity to head off bad legislation, or to at least alert others to just how bad a proposal to amend the FOIA might be.

The group has met and organized, and Ellen Kreth, publisher of the Madison County Record in Huntsville and a member of the APA Board of Directors, has been named chairman of the nine-person Task Force. The group will have other meetings, but the heavy lifting will begin per the law in November before the next legislative session in early 2019.

I’m really excited about having this group in place. Our experience in the 2017 legislative sessions was that we had to spend considerable time and energy to fighting bills that should never have been introduced in the first place. They became so much legislative “clutter,” taking up space on the various committee agendas with no real chance of gaining any traction.

Another positive outcome from the FOIA Task Force could well be the raising of awareness of the law and what it means to the people of Arkansas. Perhaps in that better understanding of the law, more could be convinced that any such attempts to undermine it may not be such a great idea.

The FOIA really boils down to this: The public knowing what they’re government is doing and how their tax dollars are being spent, or the public having no idea what their government is doing or how their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent.

Secrecy versus openness in government. Transparency in government versus government behind closed doors.

It really is that simple, but there are those and unfortunately more than a few in the legislature, who think the tenets of the state’s FOIA are antiquated; that government can best govern if the public has no idea what it’s doing.

Between now and when the FOIA Task Force will meet in November of 2018, and between now and the elections that also fall between now and the next legislative session, there are things that can be done to improve the situation.

For one thing, never miss a chance on encountering one of your legislators or candidates of legislative office, to quiz them on their attitude on the Freedom of Information Act. Get them on the record supporting open government and opposing government secrecy. They really need to know where you are on the topic, and they need to know that if they align themselves with efforts to undermine the FOIA, you’ll be getting in touch with them.

Members of the general public have no idea for the most part what they stand to lose if the FOIA is undermined. It’s a case of not knowing what you’ve got till it’s gone, and once it’s gone it’s likely never to come back.

That’s why it is important for us as newspapers to remind our readers at every opportunity of just how important the FOIA is to them. It is imperative that we maintain a high profile as supporters of the FOIA at every opportunity.

It is important to be alert to violations of the FOIA that may be taking place in your coverage area, and if indeed there are violations, to report them aggressively so that your readers and the public know that their rights are being trampled. Chances are otherwise, they would never know.

This is a big part of what we do as newspapers. We hold government accountable by exposing them to the light of day. That’s exactly what the FOIA does, too, and why it is so important that we are diligent in preserving the law.

It really is important.

Have a great week.

—

Tom Larimer’s Potpourri

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

November 30, 2017
Most APA newspapers using state archives

Most APA member newspapers have for years been sending a copy of their publication to the Arkansas State Archives to create a more or less permanent record outside the “morgues” kept by the newspaper.

That’s most…not all. There are about 10 APA newspapers that do not participate in the free archiving of their newspapers. Are you one of them?

All it costs you to participate is one copy of your newspaper and the postage to get it to the State Archives in Little Rock. On arrival, the newspapers are prepped and photographed one page at a time. The pages are proofed for legibility before a microfilm file is created and stored for posterity.

The microfilm is available for viewing at the State Archives, which provides the viewing machines for use by the public. You can find out more about the State Archives at www.archives.arkansas.gov.

APA member newspapers are encouraged to double check to see if your newspaper is being sent to the State Archives. More information can be provided at 501-682-6900, the number for the State Archives in Little Rock.

“Most newspapers retain copies of all their editions either in a bound volume or some sort of cataloging system,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director.

“The State Archives provides yet another archive of newspapers at no charge to the newspaper. I encourage everyone to take advantage of this service provided by the state.”

Doing ‘More With Less’ webinar topic

Online Media Campus is offering a Webinar Thursday, December 7, that addresses “Doing More With Less in Your Newsroom.” APA members may sign up for these Webinars at a reduced rate, as APA is one of the OMC’s partners.

As our industry continues to contract, our inclination is to try to do everything we always did with fewer resources. If you find yourself and everyone else in your newsroom stretched and frayed, you need a newsroom reset.

Jean Hodges of GateHouse Media, talks about how to set priorities to match your audience, explore planning techniques to work smarter and use analytics to inform your decisions.

Hodges is the senior director of content for GateHouse Newsroom. She develops strategy and works with newsroom leaders on digital transformation, from newsroom structure to using analytics to inform news decisions.

For more information and to register visit www.onlinemediacampus.com/events/newsroom.

The sign-up deadline is Monday.
Guest Column: 
After Baseball, Newspapers Next to Awaken Enthusiasm

By Jim Stasiowski

Maybe I was just in the right mood for a metaphor, or maybe the girl on the swing was just a girl on a swing.

But she bolstered my faith in the resurgence of newspapers.

On a chilly Saturday morning, as my wife, Sharon, and I walked past a park, we saw a 12-year-old whirling on the kind of swing set we remembered from our childhoods.

Later, as we passed in the opposite direction, the girl still was flying.

“Notice,” I said to Sharon, “no cell phone, no texting, no ear buds. She’s just swinging.”

When we were her age, the Cold War was raging, so all we had to worry about was nuclear holocaust; she is facing something much more perilous: social media.

Watching her, I thought: Maybe 1950s’ passions – swings and Elvis and TV dinners and newspapers – are making comebacks.

(Oops. Sorry, Elvis.)

It was a Saturday in the school year, so the girl had the day to herself. She could have stayed inside, warm and connected electronically to her friends, even her president.

Instead, she sought the yesteryear thrill of the swing.

It’s a metaphor for newspapers’ future.

First, a young person disdains social media in favor of real life.

Second, reading isn’t easy. Unlike zombieing in front of TV or YouTube, reading requires the mental labor of processing words arrayed in sentences, paragraphs and stories. Similarly, swinging requires arm strength, leg push, weight shift, balance and, that morning, a sweater. The internet requires one finger’s movement.

Third, the girl’s swinging illustrates the line from the “Casablanca” song: “The fundamental things apply, as time goes by.”

Take macaroni and cheese, long derided as the nutritional equivalent of cigarettes. Today even the most protective parents and renowned chefs are serving it, hoping arteries won’t notice.

Or records. Despite modern listening methods, music on vinyl, declared dead decades ago, is reviving. Magazines and newspapers say so.

And baseball. Prehistorically crowned “the national pastime,” baseball, we constantly hear, is archaic: too slow, too static, too Nixonian.

But we just had a second consecutive compelling World Series, as the Dodgers and Astros awakened the nation’s enthusiasm.

Newspapers are next.

Today a “newspaper” is not necessarily printed on paper. Although I personally despise reading the news on electronic screens, I’m 70, so my three-dailies-tossed-onto-the-driveway addiction will end someday (not soon, I hope).

But in some form – electronics, Morse code, skywriting – aggressive, credible news reporting will not die with me. In the age of President Trump, it should thrive.

Already a Trump Bump is fueling circulation growth of large newspapers covering national politics.

Local papers?

They’re next. Trump’s electoral success will encourage local candidates to adopt his tactics. Not all will be Republicans; anyone with a political itch may conclude that boisterous name-calling and abstract vows to “Make (whatever) great again” can win.

(Although Virginia voters rejected Republican gubernatorial candidate Ed Gillespie, who acted like Trump, that won’t stop others from trying.)

More than ever, voters need sober coverage that cuts bombast down to size.

Why didn’t the coverage of candidate Trump thwart him?

At least in part because journalists didn’t know how to handle him. First they made fun of him, laughed at him. Later, they labeled him a sure loser. Recognize that millions of Americans are resentful because they’ve been laughed at, dismissed as losers, and you grasp why some identified with Trump.

But here’s one Trump loss: His excoriation of serious news organizations is fueling their revival. Voters are hungry for the very journalistic traits that would starve social media: care, substance, integrity, responsibility.

And no laughing.

Thoughtful local election coverage will attract thoughtful voters. When they come for the candidate stories, we woo them with the nonpolitical: creative features, analytical government stories, investigative projects.

We expose local Harvey Weinsteins, the bullies and abusers.

But there’s more to my faith in newspapers than that.

Journalists see themselves as gritty realists and the rest of the population as delusional dreamers.

That’s so wrong. All of us, all Americans, are an illogical amalgam of trusting no one, yet trusting in a brighter future.

And that’s why readers are poised to come back to us.

You see, along with being skeptics, journalists are optimists. We are convinced our every story about social ills will cure them; convinced our every story about corruption will eradicate it; convinced our every story about decaying roads, bridges and utilities will repair them.

Even without immediate results, we persist, convinced our next stories, more powerful than those proceeding, will make all the difference. Such displays of optimism and activism appeal to Americans, who know they want more but don’t always know what.

We fulfill the role of pointing them toward the what.

We owe such diligent coverage to all potential readers, and especially to one inspiring girl on a swing.

THE FINAL WORD: I once asked a crusty copy editor to help me come up with a fitting metaphor. “Metaphors?” he growled, “I don’t believe in them.”

(Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436)
Uploading notices best defense against losing them

In almost every general session of the Arkansas Legislature someone proposes a bill, sometimes multiple bills, that would remove public notices from newspapers and allow them to be posted on a government website. To date it hasn’t been done for some very good reasons, but the threat is still there and it is very real.

The best defense for newspapers is that public notices are already posted online and at no cost to the government. That defense, however, only works if the public notices published in newspapers are uploaded to the APA website.

“The majority of our member newspapers do this regularly,” said Tom Larimer, APA executive director. “Others, however, are either not consistent in their postings or forget about it altogether.”

APA can assist newspapers in getting notices uploaded to the site, www.publicnotices.com/ar. Members can either call the APA office or email for assistance to info@arkansaspress.org.

“The important thing, the really important thing, is to get the public notices published in every newspaper in the state uploaded to the site,” Larimer continued. “It is a powerful argument against moving public notices to the internet when we can say that public notices are already on the internet and at no cost to the government.”

Newsprint tariff threatens small newspapers

More than 1,100 newspapers in small and medium-sized communities across the United States have signed a letter calling on Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross to heavily scrutinize the anti-dumping and countervailing duty petitions filed in September by Longview, WA-based paper mill, North Pacific Paper Company (NORPAC).

NORPAC’s petition asks for steep import duties in excess of 50 percent on imports of uncoated groundwood paper from Canada. Such duties, if implemented, could result in steep increases in the cost of newsprint, which would cause widespread harm to local newspapers.

NORPAC petitions are based on incorrect assessments of a changing market and appear to be driven by the short-term investment strategies of the mill’s hedge fund owners, One Rock Capital Partners.

“This attempt by a Wall Street hedge fund to utilize the trade laws for a short-term return is inconsistent with the views of the broader U.S. paper industry, and is being pursued without any consideration for the significant negative impacts on news publishers serving readers in thousands of small U.S. cities and towns,” stated News Media Alliance President & CEO, David Chavern.

Over the last ten years, there has been a 30 percent decline in print newspaper subscriptions, resulting in a reduction in the demand for newsprint from paper manufacturers.

The Department of Commerce will make a determination on January 8, 2018 regarding the NORPAC petition requesting countervailing duties.

The determination on the petition for anti-dumping duties is scheduled for January 16. If the Department of Commerce makes an affirmative preliminary determination in either the countervailing duty or anti-dumping petition, Commerce will instruct U.S. Customs and Border Protection to begin collecting estimated duties on uncoated groundwood paper, at a preliminary rate established by the Commerce Department. Thus, even before there is a final determination in this case, duties will have an immediate impact on importers of newsprint.

“Facing increased newsprint costs, the operations of many small-town papers will be threatened,” stated Chavern. “This would only exacerbate the challenges already facing print newspapers and accelerate the decline of the newsprint industry – hurting all newsprint manufacturers and ultimately, hurting residents of local communities that rely on their local, community newspaper to stay informed.”
Every year about this time, actually starting a few days ago, we get calls from member newspapers with questions about publishing the delinquent tax notices. Most of them deal with the rate to charge for the publications, but not all of them.

The same statute that requires that delinquent tax lists be published in a newspaper of record also sets the rate. The rate for real estate tax delinquent notices is set at $1.50 per track, and the sheriff or collector is required to publish this list one time “in a legal newspaper of the county and in each district where there are two districts.”

What does that last sentence mean? I interpret it to mean that in those counties with two county seats, the notice should be published in both districts. I don’t think that’s been the practice, but it is in the law.

The county tax collector must deliver to the newspaper the delinquent real estate list by December 1 each year. The newspaper must publish this list within seven days and in no smaller than 7-point type.

For the delinquent personal property list, it’s the county clerk that places this list with the local newspaper of record. The statute sets the price at $1.25 per listing and requires that the list run twice in successive weeks, and that the notices also be run in no smaller than 7-point type.

In the case of the personal property list, the statute indicates that the county tax collector will file the list with the county clerk no later than December 1. The clerk then delivers it to the newspaper, and has seven days to do so. I’m not sure why the extra stop, but perhaps there is an explanation that escapes me. The newspaper has seven days after receiving the list from the county clerk to publish it in the newspaper.

Where can you verify questions you may have regarding this and other statutorily required public notices for publication? That’s easy. Just go to the Arkansas Press Association web site at www.arkansaspress.org. Pull down the “Publications” tab and at the bottom of the list you’ll find the Public Notice Digest. To be able to search the digest, you must download a copy of it to your computer. You cannot search the Digest just by opening it on the APA web site.

Once you’ve downloaded the Digest to your computer, you can keyword search the almost 450-page document by using the search function that can be accessed by hitting Command F. At least that’s what works on my Apple laptop. Yours may vary depending on which version of the software you are using.

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I spent the first part of this week attending the annual Newspaper Association Managers Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. This is always an informative conference as it addresses the myriad legislative challenges faced by the newspaper industry.

There are times we begin to believe that we are alone in fending off attempts to undermine the Freedom of Information Act or to defend the publication of public notices in newspapers on not solely online. The reality is these are challenges we face along with every other state press association.

Then there are the challenges of net neutrality, open records, and privacy lawsuits that occupy a lot of the discussion. Sitting through these sessions it slowly occurs to me that what keeps me awake at night is also of major concern to many others across the country. I suppose it’s true that misery really does loves company, as it is here where we find so many others facing the same scenarios. The real benefit is the sharing of how these challenges are addressed in other locales, either successfully or unsuccessfully. It is all very helpful as we prepare to deal with legislative challenges in the future.

Chances are really good that challenges being dealt with in other states, like California, Florida, Pennsylvania or others will eventually make their way to the Arkansas legislature. Having a thorough understanding of the threat, why it’s particularly bad or in really rare cases why it may even be particularly good, is essential and available during the discussions at this conference.

The newspaper industry is blessed with some very savvy people running their press associations. That experience and intelligence is on display every year at this conference and I feel better prepared to do what it is I’m supposed to be doing by attending this meeting.

The fact that it is set in Washington, D.C. is a plus, too. Despite all the present turmoil in our government, it is still always a treat to visit the nation’s Capitol. And it provides an excellent backdrop for these pertinent discussions on mainly government-based issues.

It’s well worth the time.

Have a great week.

Tom
Uploading notices best defense against losing them

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There are times we begin to believe that we are alone in fending off attempts to undermine the Freedom of Information Act or to defend the publication of public notices in newspapers on not solely online. The reality is these are challenges we face along with every other state press association.

Then there are the challenges of net neutrality, open records, and privacy lawsuits that occupy a lot of the discussion. Sitting through these sessions it slowly occurs to me that what keeps me awake at night is also of major concern to many others across the country. I suppose it’s true that misery really does loves company, as it is here where we find so many others facing the same scenarios. The real benefit is the sharing of how these challenges are addressed in other locales, either successfully or unsuccessfully. It is all very helpful as we prepare to deal with legislative challenges in the future.

Chances are really good that challenges being dealt with in other states, like California, Florida, Pennsylvania or others will eventually make their way to the Arkansas legislature. Having a thorough understanding of the threat, why it’s particularly bad or in really rare cases why it may even be particularly good, is essential and available during the discussions at this conference.

The newspaper industry is blessed with some very savvy people running their press associations. That experience and intelligence is on display every year at this conference and I feel better prepared to do what it is I’m supposed to be doing by attending this meeting.

The fact that it is set in Washington, D.C. is a plus, too. Despite all the present turmoil in our government, it is still always a treat to visit the nation’s Capitol. And it provides an excellent backdrop for these pertinent discussions on mainly government-based issues.

It’s well worth the time.

Have a great week.

Tom
White elected APA President at board retreat

The APA Board of Directors convened at their annual fall retreat at the Red Apple Inn near Heber Springs, elected Tom White, publisher of The Advance Monticellonian in Monticello as the 2018 president of the APA Board.

John Bland, publisher of The Times Dispatch in Walnut Ridge was elected vice president, while Rusty Turner, editor of the Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette was elected second vice president.

The new officers will assume these positions on the board at the conclusion of the 2018 APA convention scheduled for June 27-30 in Eureka Springs.

Current APA President Byron Tate, publisher of The Sheridan Headlight, will continue to serve in that capacity until after presiding at the 2018 convention. He will then spend a year as immediate past president of the board.

Other board members include Ellen Kreth, The Madison County Record, Huntsville; Sue Silliman, The Camden News; Clark Smith, The Mena Star, Lori Freeze, The Stone County Record in Mountain View, and Eliza Gaines of WEHCO Media, Inc.

Present immediate past president, Nat Lea, will chair the nominating committee to select two nominees to fill vacancies on the APA Board. The nominating committee will likely meet in March. One of the vacancies was created by the resignation from the board by Jay Edwards, who left the newspaper industry, and the other by the spot being vacated by Lea at the end of his board tenure.

Deadline nears for E&P ‘10 Best’ nominations

The March issues of Editor & Publisher magazine will profile what they label “10 newspapers That Do It Right.” Nominations are now open for newspapers to be considered for inclusion in this group. The deadline for entries is January 15, 2018.

The list was never meant to be a “10 Best” list, but rather to spotlight select newspapers that have earned a notable achievement in at least one particular area, carried out a successful innovation, implemented cost savings procedures or developed programs that have generated revenues or increased circulation.

This year E&P is including ideas, strategies and tactics, which individuals have knocking around in their attics – whether or not they have been implemented or tested.

The objective of the story is to bring ideas together and share the best and the brightest in one comprehensive feature. All ideas are welcome.

For more information and to enter, go to http://www.editorandpublisher.com/10newspapers.
Tom Larimer’s
Potpourri

We begin this week’s saga with a correction and with more than a bit of sorrow at the passing of a stalwart Arkansas journalist.

In last week’s installment, I was relating the annual challenges with keeping straight what to charge for the delinquent tax notices required by state law to be published in a newspaper of record in the county. In that column I related that the personal property delinquent tax list be published twice with a rate of $1.25 per entry.

Actually, that list, since 2001, is only required to be published once. Act 985 of 2001 apparently made the change to the tax list publication requirement, and the change did not get entered everywhere it should have.

The legislative intent was clearly to increase the rate paid to newspapers for the publications and to reduce the publication to once instead of two publications in successive week. The problem was that the legislation that led to Act 985 of 2001 did not make the publication frequency clear.

When questions arose around this, I did some research and found the reference to the two-times publication for each list. Those references should have been removed, but they weren’t. Frustrated, I turned it over to John Tull, attorney at law and operator of the APA’s FOIA “Hot Line.”

My apologies for the misinformation, but I am happy to set the record straight. However, in my defense, I was quoting the Arkansas Public Notices Digest, which still reads, incorrectly it seems, that the notices should be published twice.

We have made note of the Digest error and will hopefully be getting it amended in the near future. For now however, only publish both the real estate delinquent tax list AND the personal property tax list one time.

Hopefully this will end this bit of confusion, at least until next December when it’s time to publish the delinquent tax lists again. When you only do something once a year it’s easy to get a little confused about all the pertinent details.

I have made a note to re-read this column over Thanksgiving next year so it will be fresh on my mind.

Now if that wasn’t sad enough, there was some truly same news coming out of Northwest Arkansas over the weekend in the passing of Roy Reed, an incredibly gifted journalist who lived a storied career in journalism. He died in Fayetteville Saturday at the age of 87.

Most journalists aspire to the sort of career path Reed followed. He worked for both the late Arkansas Gazette and The New York Times. He followed Dr. Martin Luther King through the tumultuous civil rights movement in the Deep South in the 1960s. As journalism beats go, that was one of the hottest at the time.

Reed witnessed the event that came to be known as “Bloody Sunday” as police beat several of the over 500 black marchers with clubs and whatever else they had on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala., sending several to the hospital. Many, including Reed, considered this event to be the turning point in the Civil Rights movement. It was an event that drove home for many the brutality being encountered by a segment of Americans protesting their plight.

No fake news here. That was about as real as it gets, and being there to cover it was, I’m sure, both incredible and terrifying.

I don’t recall the last time I saw Roy Reed, but it was as if every encounter with the man was the same. That’s likely because he was the same. He was soft-spoken, unassuming and low-key, traits that belie his stellar career in journalism. We spoke often a few years ago when the APA was going to present him with our “Distinguished Service Award,” which we did in 2008 at the APA convention held in Little Rock that year.

Ten years earlier, in 1998, the APA had earlier honored Reed with the “Journalism Educator of the Year” award. That was when he was teaching journalism at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, a job he held for 16 years before his retirement.

He was humbled when I called to tell him of the honor for which he had been selected and, after recovering from the initial shock, asked if he could participate in the APA’s golf outing. Of course he could, and he did.

There was a time when I wanted to be Roy Reed for a number of reasons. As a young person, I wanted to be that journalist like Roy Reed was. I wanted to cover something significant, like the civil rights movement or the war in Vietnam.

I didn’t get to do that, partly because of an acute lack of talent in the journalism department, and because, well, life takes some funny turns sometimes and things don’t work out the way we would have liked.

I didn’t cover Vietnam but I went there, interrupting whatever plans I may have had with four years of military service that forever changed my view of things.

But I digress . . .

I regret I didn’t get to spend more time with Roy Reed to visit about the path he chose and at which he excelled to the point of setting himself apart from so many others trying to do the very same things. How does that happen, actually?

Well, it happened in part because of Roy’s natural curiosity, his ability to approach and to deal with people in positions of power and authority, and to win their confidence with his low-key and unassuming approach.

Plus he was an excellent writer, that according to almost everyone who ever worked with him or edited his work.

So we bid farewell to Roy Reed, stellar journalist, author, journalism professor and so-so golfer.

And actually that’s another way I want to be Roy Reed. He was reportedly planning to play golf on the day he died.

It’s always sad to say goodbye to a friend or colleague, or just to hear of their passing. That’s especially true of Roy Reed, by all accounts an extraordinary man and a life well lived.

Rest in peace.

Have a great week.

Tom

Arkansas Publisher Weekly 2 December 14, 2017
Roy Reed, storied Arkansas journalist, dies at 87

Roy Reed, considered by most to be among the best journalists in the state and the nation, died last Saturday at the age of 87 in Fayetteville.

The Arkansas Press Association twice honored Reed. The first as “Journalism Educator of the Year” in 1998, and again in 2008 when he was presented the prestigious “Distinguished Service Award.”

A native of Hot Springs, Reed worked as a reporter for the Arkansas Gazette and The New York Times. He covered the civil rights movement in the 1960s, following Dr. Martin Luther King through those tumultuous days in the Deep South.

After earning two journalism degrees, a bachelors and a masters, at the University of Missouri, he attended Harvard University on a Nieman Fellowship and ended his career teaching journalism for 16 years at the University of Arkansas.

Along the way Reed authored books, including a biography of Gov. Orval Faubus and an autobiography, which he wrote in 2012.

Reed had presented at APA conventions on several occasions over the years, and was an occasional participant in the APA’s annual golf outing held in conjunction with the convention.

He was, in fact, reportedly planning to play golf on the day that he died.

More WEHCO papers moving print sites

Four more WEHCO Newspapers will move their print operations to the company’s Little Rock print facility, according to a Tuesday story in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.

The Texarkana Gazette, El Dorado News Times, Camden News and The Banner-News of Magnolia will effective early in 2018 print their newspapers in Little Rock. Texarkana will continue to print the Gazette until mid-January, while the other three presently printed in El Dorado will move sometime in the first quarter of the year.

The Sentinel-Record in Hot Springs, another WEHCO newspaper, moved its printing to Little Rock a few years ago.

The aging presses in Texarkana and El Dorado and the cost of maintenance or eventual replacement were cited as the reasons for the move, according to Terri Leifeste, president of the Palmer Newspaper Group, a WEHCO subsidiary.

According to the story, the move will also eliminate 17 employee positions.

Court says public notice did not violate law

A U.S. District Court in Michigan ruled last month that a foreclosure notice published by the Detroit Legal News did not violate the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). FCRA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of consumer credit information held by credit reporting agencies.

The case was filed earlier this year after plaintiffs Matthew and Stephanie Walker lost their home in a foreclosure proceeding. Their complaint alleged that Detroit Legal News violated their privacy rights under FCRA by publishing notice of an impending sheriff sale of the property. The notice included information about the sale and stated that the Walker’s mortgage was in default and the amount they owed was $56,825.94.

Legal News filed a motion to dismiss the Walker’s complaint, which the court granted on Nov. 2. According to Detroit Legal News Publishing President Brad Thompson, his company declined a settlement offer despite the risk inherent in proceeding to trial in federal court.

“The potentially negative national impact of this case on newspapers and on citizens’ right to know was enormous, so we decided to fight it as aggressively as possible,” said Thompson, who is also president of the Public Notice Resource Center. “Very thankfully, the judge saw the merit in our arguments and ruled to dismiss the case.”

The court ruled that Legal News is not a “consumer reporting agency” under FCRA because it serves as a mere conduit of information and doesn’t re-organize or filter the information it receives. The court also found the statutorily mandated foreclosure notice is not a “consumer report” as defined by FCRA even though service providers who subscribe to the paper use the foreclosure notices it publishes to market their services to those in default.

NNA free photo contest deadline draws near

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) is reminding its member newspapers across the country that the deadline for their first quarter Pub Aux photo contest for 2018 is rapidly approaching. In fact, it is December 15.

The contest is open to any photographer on any NNA member newspaper. There is no cost to enter. Photos must be from the calendar year going back from the date of the close of the contest. A photographer may submit one photo per contest per category – News, Features and Sports.

Submit a TIFF or JPEG file. Each entry must note the category, name of the photographer, newspaper name (including city and state), date of publication and cutline information. Deadline for the next contest is Friday, Dec. 15, 2017. The winners will appear in the January 2018 issue.

Winners will receive a certificate and either a coffee mug with their photo on it or a poster-size reprint of their photo. By entering, you agree that Pub Aux has the right to publish the photo. E-mail entries to Stan Schwartz at stan@nna.org.
Community newspapers have a major role in the action of local government, and it’s a responsibility we should always take seriously. First, it is our job to let the public know what local government is doing and how it will impact life in the community. Second, we are the frontline watchdogs on alert for any questionable activity.

A typical community has numerous boards, agencies and communities. The big three are the city council, county government and the school board. All those have sub-committees that perform various functions. In addition, most towns have a planning and zoning commission, some form of emergency management, as well as police and fire departments.

What those various local bodies do has as much or more influence on the daily lives of citizens than the actions in the U.S. Congress. A free press is the only way to let people know how well they function, or fail to function. We have to be ever vigilant so we don’t lose the right to cover them and report on their proceedings. Often, they would rather we didn’t show up for meetings or they will make an effort to hide their true intentions.

Dealing with local governments is now always negative. Most of the time, it is positive and welcome. Good elected officials want the public to know what they are doing. A community newspaper is the only way people can find out what is happening locally and what new businesses or the expansion of existing ones. Usually, constructing a new building or modifying an old one requires planning commission approval. We also sent someone to the register of deeds office at the courthouse once a week to gather all real estate transfers for the previous week. That’s another way to find out the sellers and buyers of businesses.

That information can be valuable for the paper’s advertising department. Even if a new business is not yet ready to begin advertising, an early contact to a paper’s sales representative can lead to sales once the business is established.

It’s also helpful if ad sales people show up at government meetings occasionally. In many cases, local elected officials tend to be business owners, and simply seeing a paper’s advertising department rep taking an interest in proceedings can pay off when a sales call is made.

Above all it is our job to protect the public’s right to know. The basic foundation of our nation is government by the people, and an informed people...
APA dues statements for 2018 in the mail

APA member newspapers should have by now received your dues statement for 2018. 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 full page for broadsheet editions. This is the same dues formula in use at the APA for many years.

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.

Annual APA Ad Contest deadline January 31

It’s time.
If you haven’t already started, it’s time to get started preparing entries in the 2018 Better Newspaper Advertising Contest. The deadline to have the entries into the APA office is Wednesday, January 31.

For the third year in succession, ad contest entries will again be submitted electronically. Full details and contest categories and rules will be mailed out soon and will be featured on the APA web site.

The ad contest awards will be presented this year at the APA advertising conference to be held March 15-16 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain.

Members of the Louisiana Press Association are scheduled to judge the APA contest entries this year.
December 22, 1969.

Forty-eight years ago tomorrow. 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 48 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 was not 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 door. Fire personnel are trained firemen. When there is a fire at sea, you can’t call the fire department. You fight it yourself.

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 head to foot. 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. At one point the man on the nozzle, two in front of me, was hit by something in the dark and fell away. The nozzle flew about wildly, pummeling the man in front of me who, thankfully, did not let go of the hose despite the pain and injuries.

As we struggled to get control of the nozzle, my hose team pulled too hard on the hose and pulled it from the hydrant, shutting it off and quieting the nozzle. In seconds we were re-connected and this time I was on the nozzle. You don’t really have to be a trained fire fighter to figure out your best bet is to direct the water toward the spot that’s producing the most heat discomfort. That’s what we did for what seemed like an eternity.

Eventually the smoke cleared and the heat subsided, and we were able to lay down our hose.

I walked out of the hangar, soaked through and through, 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 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 48 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
Month remains before APA contest deadline

APA members are reminded that only a month remains before the January 31 deadline for entries in the annual Better Newspaper Ad Contest.

As always the contest is divided into several categories, and also divided into weekly and daily newspaper divisions. The categories range from the best single ads to the best online ads. Special sections also have their own category, as do ads that incorporate the use of humor.

Members of the Louisiana Press Association are scheduled to judge the contest this year. The awards themselves will be presented at the APA’s annual advertising conference to be held March 15-16 at the Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain in Central Arkansas.

So start gathering up those ad entries and get them submitted to APA by the Wednesday, January 31 deadline.

If you have questions regarding the contest don’t hesitate to call the APA office for information. Entering is easy and the winning is fun.

E&P ‘10 Best’ nomination deadline January 15

The March issues of Editor & Publisher magazine will profile what they label “10 newspapers That Do It Right.” Nominations are now open for newspapers to be considered for inclusion in this group. The deadline for entries is January 15, 2018.

The list was never meant to be a “10 Best” list, but rather to spotlight elect newspapers that have earned a notable achievement in at least one particular area, carried out a successful innovation, implemented cost savings procedures or developed programs that have generated revenues or increased circulation.

This year E&P is including ideas, strategies and tactics, which individuals have been knocking around in their attics – whether or not they have been implemented or tested.

The objective of the story is to bring ideas together and share the best and the brightest in one comprehensive feature. All ideas are welcome.

For more information and to enter, go to http://www.editorandpublisher.com/10newspapers.
The Political Animals Club a couple of weeks back featured a panel discussion comprised of three stalwart Arkansas print journalists, John Brummett, Gwen Moritz and Rex Nelson.

These things are always enjoyable, well most of the time anyway, and this one was most entertaining. It is an understanding that the presenters at the Political Animals Club are “off the record” unless they agree that they are on the record with their comments. Nobody makes a big deal of it, and the press doesn’t cover the Club regularly anyway.

During this presentation, which came on the eve of the Alabama special senatorial election, Rex Nelson predicted Doug Jones to win by a slim margin. Turns out he was right when most everyone, including Brummett, had the election going to Roy Moore.

After the meeting I went up to greet each of the presenters. When I shook Brummett’s hand, he said, “the press is here.” And he was so right.

We are the press. Make no bones about it. Newspapers have been the “press” from the beginning of time.

The “media” has been taking in on the chin for the past while, with even the president chiming in to blame the “media” for anything that might have not gone as planned or for point out the error of the administration’s ways.

But notice the reference isn’t to the press. It’s to the “media.” There’s little doubt that when President Trump rants or tweets about the media, he’s likely including newspapers in his criticism. When you hear a reference regarding the “mainstream media” it is likely that the speaker is including newspapers in their criticism.

But are they really. Rusty Fraser and I had this conversation recently. Broadcast media couldn’t honestly refer to themselves as “the press” because they don’t own one. They prefer being lumped in with “the media” instead, and that’s fine with most of us in the real press because we’d just as soon be forever relegated to “the press” references. That’s because it’s what we are and what we do, and centuries of credibility come with it.

So when Brummett says, “the press is here,” he was stating a truth. It was a press panel with well-respected members of “the press” offering comments on the current state of things in the state and in the country. The press. Not the media.

I Facebook on occasion, although I do a lot more reading than I do posting. I can’t image anyone having that much interest in what I had for breakfast or where I’m going for lunch, but some do that often and there’s nothing wrong with it. I feel like a bit of a voyeur at times on Facebook because some who post to it include way more personal stuff than I could ever, and definitely more than I need to know.

Once in a while I will post when I’ve read yet another reference blaming the state of things on the “mainstream media.” My snarky retort to those references is usually, “That darned liberal media.”

It’s liberals, you see, that are at the real root of the problems in this country, that according to apparently the majority of those who I have “befriended” on Facebook. There are some who I firmly believe would be fine with the government offering a bounty on those darned liberals.

So if you are affiliated with “the media,” you are guilty by association and therefore a liberal and a serious threat to this country.

I make those snarky comments and those who really know me know it’s a joke. Some never quite get that, or they don’t want to even consider that someone might be challenging their criticism of “that darned liberal media.”

Most of those who know me know that I’m a moderately conservative liberal. If you’re going to have a label, why not incorporate the big three in choosing.

The one abiding truth in reference to newspaper people is that they often hold strong opinions on a variety of issues.

That’s true even of the newsroom types who have an even greater challenge in keeping their opinions out of their news reporting. They do one heck of a job of that, too, even though we are often criticized for this perceived action anyway. That usually comes from someone who would have preferred we not even write a story on a subject that in some way offends them or exposes them to public ridicule.

It’s only natural, I suppose, for those exposed to the bright light of public scrutiny by “the press” to lash out in an attempt to undermine the credibility of that same “press.”

Newspapers have their challenges. That’s been documented ad nauseum for years now. One of those challenges has not been their overall credibility.

It’s just the way the compartmentalization of “the media” has evolved. If you want to only hear the conservative view, tune into Fox news. If you prefer a more liberal slant, tune into MSNBC or CNN. And many do tune into each of these as a reinforcement mechanism for their beliefs.

But if you want the truth, read a newspaper. Whether you read it in the legacy hard copy or in a digital format, read a newspaper if you’re looking for the unvarnished truth. You may not like the unvarnished truth you’re reading. You may not choose to believe it, but newspapers have survived on their credibility since the beginning of time.

Don’t get me wrong, we’re not an industry without sinners. However, those who chose a path that damaged their credibility don’t survive for any length of time. Those who do? Well, they live and sometimes they too die on their credibility.

Such as it has always been for “the press,” and likely so will it always be.

So yeah, Brummett, “the press” is here. And hopefully it’s here to stay.

Happy New Year to one and all!

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Tom Larimer's Potpourri
Guest Column: Reflections on a Career in Newspaper Journalism
By Jim Stasiowski

(editor’s note: what you’re reading here is the last column of Jim Stasiowski. Many will remember Staz for his appearances at APA conventions and seminars over the years. His last presentation for us was at the 2010 tri-state convention in Tunica, Miss. He retired a few years ago, but continued to write the column. Now he is retiring from writing the column. It’s longer than normal, but I think you’ll find it entertaining as Staz’s swan song.)

Today (meaning whatever day you’re reading this) marks the end of my career in newspapers.

I actually retired in 2016, leaving the job of city editor of the Rapid City Journal. I have continued this monthly column, but today’s (see above) is my last.

After 26 years of writing the column, and 40-plus years altogether in newspapers, I’m freeing myself of all obligations to the craft I have loved since childhood: writing.

I’ll still write; in fact, I obsessively work on what someday may become a full book on grammar and word usage for journalists. Or, I may never finish.

The following scenes from my career may be instructive. Or not:

The Doughboys Were No Boys: Early in 1976, in my first weeks at The Breeze, a 5,000-circulation, five-day daily in Cape Coral, Fla., I was to take a photo of the new officers of the World War I veterans club. (Yes, World War I.) The 12 men, all at least in their mid-70s, showed up in their military uniforms. All were of about the same height, so two six-man ranks of them standing wouldn’t work. I said, “OK, six of you have to kneel down in front.” For a second, all was silent. Then the club president, a man of modest size but booming voice, said: “I kneel before no man.”

A Painful Lesson: I wasn’t much of a photographer, but one time I got lucky. It was a motorcycle crash, and the seriously injured man was lying on the asphalt, being tended to by medics. I managed to get the man in the foreground and his bike tossed on its side to the right of him. Not until I developed the film did I notice, in the background, a group of elementary school pupils, waiting for their school bus, watching the drama unfold.

I wonder whether any of them ever bought a motorcycle.

Another Florida Land Swindle? I wrote stories questioning the wisdom of Lee County’s leasing, for $1 a year, some valuable land to a couple of slick out-of-towners promising to create a national collegiate sports hall of fame in an area of the state that in those days had no four-year college. After the deal fell through, the ringleader of the local effort to bring the hall of fame to the community called to tell me I alone was responsible for the death of his dream.

Testing, One: When a new editor arrived, he required prospective reporters to take a written test as part of the interview process. A newly hired reporter asked my colleague John Kane if he also had to take a test before being hired. John replied: “Yeah. There was one question: ‘Will you work for minimum wage?’”

My Favorite Two Words: After seven years at The Breeze, I wanted to move to a larger newspaper, so I spent months answering want-ads, sending my résumé along with painfully long, overly earnest cover letters. In return, I got only nibbles. Desperate, I answered the “reporter wanted” ad from The Columbian, a 50,000-circulation daily in Vancouver, Wash., by writing a two-word cover letter: “I write.” I got the job.

Fast Food on the Freeway: I’m a lifelong early riser, so I often was in The Columbian newsroom in the very early hours, before anyone else arrived. My favorite overnight story: A semi on Interstate 5 overturned, spilling all of its cargo: live chickens, which ended up racing in every direction on the roadway.

A Penmanship Slip: One election night, a reporter from The Oregonian, our much-larger rival paper, and I were scribbling in our notebooks while interviewing a winning candidate, an incumbent who easily had overcome a spirited long-shot challenge by a local woman. The winner said the woman had run “an honorable campaign.” The story in The Oregonian quoted the winner as saying the woman had run “a horrible campaign.”

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The “media” has been taking in on the chin for the past while, with even the president chiming in to blame the “media” for anything that might have not gone as planned or for point out the error of the administration’s ways.

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Newspapers have their challenges. That’s been documented ad nauseum for years now. One of those challenges has not been their overall credibility.

It’s just the way the compartmentalization of “the media” has evolved. If you want to only hear the conservative view, tune into Fox news. If you prefer a more liberal slant, tune into MSNBC or CNN. And many do tune into each of these as a reinforcement mechanism for their beliefs.

But if you want the truth, read a newspaper. Whether you read it in the legacy hard copy or in a digital format, read a newspaper if you’re looking for the unvarnished truth. You may not like the unvarnished truth you’re reading. You may not choose to believe it, but newspapers have survived on their credibility since the beginning of time.

Don’t get me wrong, we’re not an industry without sinners. However, those who chose a path that damaged their credibility don’t survive for any length of time. Those who do? Well, they live and sometimes they too die on their credibility.

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So yeah, Brummett, “the press” is here. And hopefully it’s here to stay.

Happy New Year to one and all!

Tom

Arkansas Publisher Weekly

December 28, 2017
Guest Column:
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By Jim Stasiowski

I wonder whether any of them ever bought a motorcycle.

ANOTHER FLORIDA LAND SWINDLE? I wrote stories questioning the wisdom of Lee County’s leasing, for $1 a year, some valuable land to a couple of slick out-of-towners promising to create a national collegiate sports hall of fame in an area of the state that in those days had no four-year college. After the deal fell through, the ringleader of the local effort to bring the hall of fame to the community called to tell me I alone was responsible for the death of his dream.

TESTING, ONE …: When a new editor arrived, he required prospective reporters to take a written test as part of the interview process. A newly hired reporter asked my colleague John Kane if he also had to take a test before being hired. John replied: “Yeah. There was one question: ‘Will you work for minimum wage?’”

MY FAVORITE TWO WORDS: After seven years at The Breeze, I wanted to move to a larger newspaper, so I spent months answering want-ads, sending my résumé along with painfully long, overly earnest cover letters. In return, I got only nibbles. Desperate, I answered the “reporter wanted” ad from The Columbian, a 50,000-circulation daily in Vancouver, Wash., by writing a two-word cover letter: “I write.” I got the job.

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Happy New Year to one and all!
Guest Column: Reflections on a Career in Newspaper Journalism
By Jim Stasiowski

(EDITOR’S NOTE: What you’re reading here is the last column of Jim Stasiowski. Many will remember Staz for his appearances at APA conventions and seminars over the years. His last presentation for us was at the 2010 tri-state convention in Tunica, Miss. He retired a few years ago, but continued to write the column. Now he is retiring from writing the column. It’s longer than normal, but I think you’ll find it entertaining as Staz’s swan song.)

Today (meaning whatever day you’re reading this) marks the end of my career in newspapers.

I actually retired in 2016, leaving the job of city editor of the Rapid City Journal. I have continued this monthly column, but today’s (see above) is my last.

After 26 years of writing the column, and 40-plus years altogether in newspapers, I’m freeing myself of all obligations to the craft I have loved since childhood: writing.

I’ll still write; in fact, I obsessively work on what someday may become a full book on grammar and word usage for journalists. Or, I may never finish.

The following scenes from my career may be instructive. Or not:

THE DOUGHBOYS WERE NO BOYS: Early in 1976, in my first weeks at The Breeze, a 5,000-circulation, five-day daily in Cape Coral, Fla., I was to take a photo of the new officers of the World War I veterans club. (Yes, World War I.) The 12 men, all at least in their mid-70s, showed up in their military uniforms. All were of about the same height, so two six-man ranks of them standing wouldn’t work. I said, “OK, six of you have to kneel down in front.” For a second, all was silent. Then the club president, a man of modest size but booming voice, said: “I kneel before no man.”

A PAINFUL LESSON: I wasn’t much of a photographer, but one time I got lucky. It was a motorcycle crash, and the seriously injured man was lying on the asphalt, being tended to by medics. I managed to get the man in the foreground and his bike tossed on its side to the right of him. Not until I developed the film did I notice, in the background, a group of elementary school pupils, waiting for their school bus, watching the drama unfold.

I wonder whether any of them ever bought a motorcycle.

ANOTHER FLORIDA LAND SWINDLE? I wrote stories questioning the wisdom of Lee County’s leasing, for $1 a year, some valuable land to a couple of slick out-of-towners promising to create a national collegiate sports hall of fame in an area of the state that in those days had no four-year college. After the deal fell through, the ringleader of the local effort to bring the hall of fame to the community called to tell me I alone was responsible for the death of his dream.

TESTING, ONE …: When a new editor arrived, he required prospective reporters to take a written test as part of the interview process. A newly hired reporter asked my colleague John Kane if he also had to take a test before being hired. John replied: “Yeah. There was one question: ‘Will you work for minimum wage?’”

MY FAVORITE TWO WORDS: After seven years at The Breeze, I wanted to move to a larger newspaper, so I spent months answering want-ads, sending my résumé along with painfully long, overly earnest cover letters. In return, I got only nibbles. Desperate, I answered the “reporter wanted” ad from The Columbian, a 50,000-circulation daily in Vancouver, Wash., by writing a two-word cover letter: “I write.” I got the job.

FAST FOOD ON THE FREEWAY: I’m a lifelong early riser, so I often was in The Columbian newsroom in the very early hours, before anyone else arrived. My favorite overnight story: A semi on Interstate 5 overturned, spilling all of its cargo: live chickens, which ended up racing in every direction on the roadway.

A PENMANSHIP SLIP: One election night, a reporter from The Oregonian, our much-larger rival paper, and I were scribbling in our notebooks while interviewing a winning candidate, an incumbent who easily had overcome a spirited long-shot challenge by a local woman. The winner said the woman had run “an honorable campaign.” The story in The Oregonian quoted the woman as saying the woman had run “a horrible campaign.”

A PAINFUL JOKE: We organized a softball team and challenged local organizations to games. Tom Vogt, the newsroom wit, dubbed us “The Bad News Bears.” In a game against the local doctors, Tom suffered a fairly serious lower-leg injury. As Tom was lying on the ground, Archie Hamilton, a physician who also was the county coroner, came rushing over to see if he could help. Tom, despite his pain, looked up and said, “Archie, I don’t need you yet.”

_WAKE UP, MR. SPEAKER:_ The newly elected speaker of the Washington House of Representatives was from Vancouver. He had the authority to appoint a person to a high-paying administrative job in the House. By connecting the dots (in my head), I realized there was one very likely candidate, so I called the new speaker, even though it was before 6 a.m. He was a good-natured fellow, so he wasn’t angry that I called so early, but he was amazed that I had figured out his choice for the job.

_THE TEARS WERE MINE:_ I was assigned a story about a bachelor schoolteacher who had adopted a younger suffering from severe mental and physical problems. When I finished writing, I was sure it was a masterpiece, guaranteed award-winner. But after it ran, no one complimented me. Then an editor-friend, who usually praised my stuff, sent me a note listing all the problems with my story, showing me how I had overwritten to a maximum, straining to squeeze tears from readers. Furious, I went back to the story so I could prove my editor-friend wrong. Damn. He was right.

_I WISH I HAD WRITTEN “PEE”:_ I wrote a twice-weekly humor column for The Columbian. Here’s my best line: _The claim by tobacco companies that smoking cigarettes does not cause serious diseases is no more convincing than if the beer brewers of this nation tried to tell me their products don’t make me have to urinate._

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THE SADDEST FUNNY COLUMN:
One of the annual features of the column was a contest: Readers submitted their own columns, and the paper published the entry that came closest to my style of humor. In 1985, the joint winners were a married couple, Gerrit and Nellie Van Tol. But Nellie was killed in a traffic accident just before their column was to be published, so we held it. Days later I talked to Gerrit, and he said he was sure Nellie would want the column to run. In a note explaining the sad circumstance, I told readers that despite Nellie’s death, it was OK to laugh at her inspired humor.

ROUND ONE: In 1989 I left The Columbian to write a novel (never published) and to become a freelance writing coach. (The qualification for being a writing coach: Purchase 500 business cards and place the words “writing coach” under your name.) At one of the first newspapers that hired me to coach, my criticism of two of the reporters infuriated them to the point that they threatened to beat the hell out of me.

ROUND TWO: In 2007, I was hired as the writing coach for The Dolan Company, which published 20-some business, legal and government-affairs newspapers all over the country. When I was assigned to be interim editor of one of the papers, my editing of one reporter’s stories so enraged him that he took vacation, telling the publisher he had to get out of the newsroom before he beat the hell out of me.

MY COMEUPPANCE: I got cocky. At a Dolan legal weekly I was temporarily leading, I tried, through editing sleight-of-hand, to salvage a questionable story. What it really needed was patience – why not wait and run it next week? – and more thorough reporting. Instead, I was sure I had done miracle editing surgery, and I forced it into the paper. Many readers complained vigorously and justifiably. The publisher wrote a Page 1 apology in the next edition, saying the story did not meet the paper’s high standards. My embarrassment was a small price to pay for owning up to a mistake and standing up for journalistic integrity.

A HOLE IN HIS LOGIC: Several Dolan editors would have me edit their writing. When I edit remotely, I write notes inside each piece, and I try to do two things: (1) coach the writer and (2) make my notes fun to read. In one editorial, I noticed that the editor had urged a solution early, then contradicted that solution later in the same piece. Instead of directly pointing out the contradiction, I started my note by describing an experience I once had on the golf course: I was paired with a fellow I had never met. Early in the round, he barely spoke. There were just the two of us, and I didn’t want to go 18 holes without conversation, so I practically forced him to interact. In mumbles and sentence fragments, he said he was a former cop, retired on a disability because he had been shot in the head. The head wound meant that sometimes, in forming a thought, he would blurt out the opposite of what he meant. Thus, if he hit a good shot, he would say, “That’s sick”; a bad shot, “Perfect.” After writing probably 250 words of that anecdote, I added this to the editor: “You’re saying here the opposite of what you said above. Have you recently been shot in the head?”

HEAD FOR THE (BLACK) HILLS: In early 2014, The Dolan Company, beset by financial woes, eliminated my position, so at age 66, unwilling to retire, I spent four months looking for another newsroom job. Bart Pfankuch, then-editor of the Rapid City Journal, hired me to be city editor. I had a few other possibilities, but I chose to work for Bart because in the interview process, he said that he wanted the Journal to be known for its “teaching newsroom.”

OF ICE AND MEN: One day in early 2015, 100 cattle owned by a Pine Ridge Indian Reservation rancher walked onto the frozen surface of the White Clay Reservoir, plunged through the ice and drowned. A few days later, the rancher, Mike Carlow, and some volunteers braved the ice to pull out carcasses. Chris Huber, then-Journal photo editor, and I went to the reservoir to document the attempt. All morning, the men struggled against unbearable conditions, chopping through thick ice, wrapping strong chains around heifers’ heads or feet or anything, really, only to have them slip from the chains as they were being pulled to shore. The morning total: One heifer carcass extracted. The cold was so intense that the ink in my pen was frozen, useless. My hands were almost equally useless, but I managed to get in my notebook extremely sketchy pencil scratchings that I later turned into a 32-paragraph story: http://bit.ly/2AgELP7.

TO ACE THE CHASE: On Friday, April 15, 2016, the Journal had a brief, informal retirement ceremony for me. I told my colleagues that although a person leaving a job is expected to say, “Most of all, I’ll miss the people I worked with,” I was going against the grain. What I would miss most, I said, was the chase, which I define as the effort of making six, a dozen, even 20 phone calls (or other attempts at communication) to track down a single fact or quotation or other element that marks any story, no matter how big or small, as being mine alone. I know I’m not always the best writer in the newsroom, I told my colleagues, but I always can be the reporter who doesn’t give up, no matter the odds against me.

I used the example of a Rapid City power outage. The utility’s press release said the outage took place because a Mylar balloon had drifted onto power lines. I thought: The way to make this story mine was to get information about Mylar balloons. I made several calls and was rebuffed; finally, just as the owner of a party-supplies store was heading out for the day, he took my call and gave me Mylar-balloons background that I added to the story. Did readers care?

Probably not. But I cared. I cared that I had made better what could have been a standard press-release story. That satisfaction – not money, not awards, not praise – was what kept me working for 40 years.

THE FINAL THOUGHT: Metaphorically, in every community many Mylar balloons take flight every day. Chase’em.

(Writing coach Jim Stasiowski welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872 or write to 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.)