Arkansas Press Association (APA) historian Michael B. Dougan’s goal was to visit every newspaper office in the state. He almost made it.

“I was only partially successful in traveling to each office, but I did interview hundreds of people while writing the history of Arkansas newspapers,” he said. “I attended the summer APA meetings and worked really closely with Dennis Schick, then the executive director.”

Dougan’s interest in Arkansas newspapers began long before his work with APA. His master’s thesis at Emory University was about Little Rock newspapers during the Civil War. In the early ’70s he came to know journalist Ernie Deane and others through the Arkansas Historical Association. He frequently contributed guest editorials and feature articles for Arkansas newspapers.

Now a distinguished professor emeritus of history at Arkansas State University, Dougan is a native of Neosho, Missouri, where his family traces newspaper history back 200 years. One great-grandfather brought the first press to Oregon County, and his paternal grandfather was circulation manager for a newspaper in North Dakota. His family owned the building where the Neosho Times was published.

“One of my first interviews for the book was Wilson Powell of the Batesville Guard, and he gave me several other people to visit,” said Dougan. “Everyone I interviewed led to someone else who had a story to tell. Locating the right people was most important.”

APA history is filled with stories of generations of publishers, editors and reporters who took tough stances on the issues of the day and, often at the same time, soldiered on in seemingly mundane tasks. For every Tom Dearmore whose Baxter Bulletin decries the dangers of segregation legislation, there is Powell

Continued on Page 2

New ads to fight newsprint tariffs available for download

The News Media Alliance, in partnership with the Stop Tariffs on Printers and Publishers (STOPP) Coalition (of which the Arkansas Press Association has joined), has created several new ads for newspapers to run educating readers on the negative consequences of recent tariffs imposed on Canadian imports of uncoated groundwood paper.

These ads explain how tariffs on newsprint used by newspapers can lead to loss of jobs and ultimately, potential loss of local newspapers. The tariffs, set by the Department of Commerce, can run up to 32 percent combined. Newspapers are already feeling the pain of the added costs and disruptions of supply, according to the News Media Alliance.

“I urge you to utilize these ads when you can,” said Ashley Wimberley, APA executive director. “Only by educating the public on the dire consequences of these taxes can we work toward changing them.”

Full page black and white and color ads and quarter page black and white and color ads are available to download at this link: www.newsmediaalliance.org/research_tools/newsprint-tariff-ads/.
Michael Dougan
Continued from page 1

accompanying the county agricultural agent on his rounds to keep his hand on a pulse of the community.

Erwin Funk, who began his 64-year career in 1896 and served as president of both APA and NEA (now the National Newspaper

Association), left a diary that was particularly helpful to Dougan. “He was the consummate professional, taking advantage of every improvement in technology for his Rogers newspaper,” Dougan wrote. “No one ever reflected better the high ideals and practical business sense that are needed to make a success of a newspaper.”

Dougan’s book covers the APA from its beginnings on Oct. 15, 1873, when representatives from 17 newspapers formed the association while they were in town covering the State Fair, to the beginning of the new century, when APA joined several other states in adding web pages as a category in its news-editorial contest.

The book was about to be printed in the fall of 2001, but Dougan insisted on holding up publication to add information about how Arkansas newspapers covered the events of Sept. 11. “I didn’t have much time. I emailed, called and read everything I could. In fact, I changed from being a historian into a reporter for that last portion of the book.”

In the book’s 2002 introduction, Dougan wrote, “There is little doubt that in the years ahead the newspaper ‘as we know it today’ will undergo intensive changes. Yet two things will remain constant. People want news, and they have a strong need to express themselves about the meaning and application of that news. Newspapers, in whatever form they may take, will remain the core medium.”

Asked if he stands by the statement, he said it assumes that newspapers are owned, edited and published by people who believe in news and not just advertising. “For all the changes we’ve seen in the past 16 years, locally owned weeklies are surviving. They still report local news, still hire locally, still have country correspondents and still produce a product that readers find interesting.”

Dougan subscribes to two dailies and a weekly – the Jonesboro Sun, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette and Ozark County Times in Missouri. He writes guest editorials and speaks to civic clubs and historical groups about different facets of Arkansas history. In fact, Dougan is still open to invitations to speak to groups about the history of newspapers in their area.

“In writing the history, you read the newspapers and follow the columns of Arkansas journalists. You become part and parcel of their industry, sharing their pain and their success. You internalize it, the whole framework of caring and writing,” he said.

For a copy of Dougan’s book “Community Diaries: Arkansas Newspapering, 1819-2002,” contact the APA office (501-374-1500) where the books are available at a discounted price of $20 each.
Political ads require disclaimers

The political ad season is coming. Remember to observe both state and federal requirements for ads when candidates are running for office in Arkansas – as well as for advocacy campaigns.

Federal rules say all ads must contain a disclaimer within a printed box set apart from the contents of the communication. The notice must state that the communication was paid for by the candidate or authorized committee.

The print of the disclaimer must be of sufficient size to be “clearly readable” by the recipient of the communication, and the print must have a reasonable degree of color contrast between the background and the printed statement. Black text in 12-point font on a white background is one way to satisfy this requirement for printed material measuring no more than 24 inches x 36 inches. Rates charged by newspapers and magazines for campaign advertising must be comparable to those charged for non-campaign advertisements.

The Arkansas requirement is simply that the advertisement must include the words “Paid Political Advertisement” or “Paid Political Ad.” Both the persons placing and the persons publishing the ads are responsible for including the disclaimer.

All federal ads running within the state must meet both federal and state requirements.

Newspaper Academy April webinars focus on design

The Newspaper Academy has two training webinars scheduled in April, both covering bettering design work. These online classes are a great way to train employees at a low cost by some of the industry’s top experts.

Here are the remaining webinars scheduled for April:

**Ed Henninger – The Most Common Mistakes I See in Newspaper Design**

Cost: $39

Successful newspaper publishers go beyond the basics of editorial and design. Widely known as the leader in community newspaper design, Henninger shares his techniques and gives you an opportunity to learn from the best.

Scheduled for: 10-11 a.m. on April 12.

To register, visit this link: [http://newspaperacademy.com/webinar/webinar-ed-henninger-common-mistakes-see-newspaper-design/](http://newspaperacademy.com/webinar/webinar-ed-henninger-common-mistakes-see-newspaper-design/)

**Kevin Slimp – The Basics of InDesign for Newspapers … and Much More!**

Cost: $59

Nothing slows an editorial or design workflow like having to use an application without expert training. Whether you’re a relative newcomer to InDesign, or just feel like you never received the training you need to fully utilize the application, this special two-hour class is for you.

Kevin Slimp has been teaching Adobe InDesign as long as it’s been on the market. Working with the InDesign team while the application was being developed, Slimp trained a group of 98 newspaper designers in Phoenix, Arizona the week InDesign hit the shelves. In the 20 years since, he has come to be known as the guru of InDesign training, and newspaper users will find his training especially beneficial.

Just like the title says, in this session Slimp will teach the basics … and much more!

Scheduled for: 1-3 p.m. on April 25.


Mark Your Calendar

**September 27 -29, 2018**

National Newspaper Association (NNA) 132nd Annual Convention & Trade Show, Waterside Marriott in Norfolk, Virginia

APA Spring Board Meeting

Today, the Arkansas Press Association (APA) board of directors met for the annual spring meeting at the APA headquarters in Little Rock. The meeting started with a BBQ lunch with APA staff members.
Guest Editorial: 
Not All Attempts to Eliminate Newspaper Ads are Working
By Peter W. Wagner, Creative House Print Media Consultants

Newspapers and Shopper publications in Iowa and surrounding states are again carrying a major grocery chain insert that pulled out of all papers the end of December. I am purposely leaving out the name of the chain.

The return of the insert is good news for us for the foreseeable future. Good for our papers because the weekly insert revenue is important to our company's bottom line. Good for the grocery chain because local community families look to our local publications for the weekly food specials every week.

The local and metro papers alike were dropped by the chain in response to many unknowns and explosive changes in modern marketing. Believing all papers are deluded by huge circulation losses, the company's top management decided to use just direct mail, social media blast emails and increased television to promote shopping their stores. The emails would be sent to customers who had shared their email addresses as part of the chains gas discount program.

But the direct mail program, with its much higher postal costs, was usually directed just to homes within five miles of the store or patrons who were known for high volume purchases. That might work well in major markets, but not in rural areas where the next community in any direction was at least seven to 10 miles down the road.

Part of the food chain's reasoning was the company would save money by controlling duplication of delivery where one paper overlaps another. Part of it was the hope the change would reach more younger buyers. Much of it, as we said earlier, was the food corporation was hearing that "newspapers subscription numbers were falling across the nation" and major marketing changes were needed to maintain and grow their market share."

It's what I call the "Chicken Little, the sky is falling" fallacy promoted by social media platforms every day. The surge of electronic publications, continually posting updates to computers, tablets and mobile phones has changed the reading habits of the hip younger generation. But those posts are usually either reports of breaking national or international news or unverified individual observations or opinions.

Only the local newspaper still delivers the church softball league scores and the details regarding the heated discussion at the recent city council meeting. That is why recent newspaper industry surveys are reporting the thirty-year-olds and older demographic is growing for local, community newspapers.

Plus, not all papers are suffering major subscriber losses. The Detroit Free Press is a good example of a paper often cited as an example that newspapers are failing. That once powerful voice across Michigan has lost more than half of its paid subscribers over the last five years. The Free Press now only offers home delivery three days a week, the days when they have the most inserts. The other four days readers have to buy the newspaper at a nearby convenience store.

But remember, Detroit also lost more than half of its population when America's automotive industry collapsed. There are 900,000 less families in Detroit to subscribe to the Detroit newspaper.

Papers in smaller, rural communities have done much better. From a high point when our NWest Iowa REVIEW reached close to 6,600 homes, The NWest Iowa REVIEW has only lost about 400 subscribers. We credit that retention figure to our large weekly package of news and feature sections, strong regional sports coverage and Saturday morning delivery.

We have no bad feelings toward the food chain for testing new marketing ideas. Both of Iowa's major, locally founded grocery chains have been good advertisers in our papers for many years. Even while the chain discontinued the inserts, the local stores in our two largest communities have continued to purchase occasional print ads promoting image and occasional specials.

Until recently the food chain left almost all the marketing decisions to the local manager. He, they reasoned, was most aware of the local situation and able to get the most return on investment from every promotional dollar spent. The chain built its five-state leadership position through local decision-making policies.

But the retail landscape has changed the last few years. Wal-Mart, Target and other general merchandise discounters have all chosen to enter the grocery business with super stores featuring large grocery sections. Sam's Clubs and Costco are cutting deeply into the purchase of the basics and even meat, produce and bakery sales.

One area business person told me she never visits a grocery store anymore. Instead, she gets a box of ready-to-fix meals delivered to her door twice a week.

Finally, just about every kind of retail business is starting to sell at least some grocery items. Their explanation is families only buy gas, an item of clothing or greeting cards once a week but often need milk or bread daily. Selling at least the basic food items can greatly increase the customer count for any kind of store.

And don't overlook Amazon. That internet retailer is out to eat everybody's lunch. They want all the grocery business as well as every town's book, clothing, health goods and gift business, too. If Amazon has its way, there will be no main street serving any town anywhere.

But, for the moment at least one major chain has discovered that digital media and direct mail won't do it alone. There is still a need for newspaper advertising to succeed. Newspaper and Shopper readers want to continue their decades old tradition of spreading out the weekly printed page of specials out on the kitchen table to see what's good to buy that week.

So, we welcome back the weekly inserts with open arms. The revenue is important to us if we want to continue the size and depth of our printed products.

But more important, the return of the inserts proves the importance of print advertising, especially here in NWest Iowa where individual beliefs in higher education, the community library and reading the local paper remains high. We hope we can continue to be a worthy conduit between Iowa's two important food chains and our discerning readers for years to come.