

# *AlaPressa*

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA PRESS ASSOCIATION

*MAY 2016*

## Important Dates

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### Online Media Campus

*How to Market and Sell  
in Brutally Competitive  
Environments*

Presenter: Jeff Beals  
Friday, June 3

*Interactive Storytelling Tools:  
Enhance your readers'  
experience*

Presenter: Steve Buttry,  
Louisiana State University  
Thursday, June 9

*Watchdog Reporting for all  
Newsrooms*

Presenter: Chris Coates,  
The News Journal  
Thursday, June 23

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Hotel Deadline - 2016  
Summer Convention  
Sandestin Hilton  
May 26, 2016

2016 APA Summer Convention  
June 16-18, 2016  
Sandestin, FL

2016 Summer Convention coming soon

Baker named publisher at  
Tallapoosa Publishers, Inc.

Griesbach awarded J. B. Stevenson  
Scholarship for 2016

Newspapers' role in the local  
political landscape

Ethics Commission deserves applause  
for transparency



Alabama Press Association  
Alabama Newspaper Advertising  
Service Inc.  
3324 Independence Drive  
Suite 200  
Birmingham, AL 35209  
(205) 871-7737  
(205) 871-7740 (fax)  
[www.alabamapress.org](http://www.alabamapress.org)

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## 2016 Summer Convention coming soon

Have you made your reservations to attend the APA Summer Convention, June 16-18, in Sandestin? Here's what you need to do.

- Reserve your room at the Hilton Sandestin by Thursday, May 26. The room block is limited, so please reserve your room now. Don't wait until the last minute.

- Register with APA before Wednesday, June 8.

- Schedule a one-on-one session with design consultant Ed Henniger on Friday afternoon (June 17) between 2-5 p.m. A reservation form is enclosed.

- Look at the lineup of speakers and program topics:

- Multi-platform journalism
- Design tips to enhance public notices

- Print sales and prospecting
- D-Day survivor Morley L. Piper

The winners of the 2016 Better Newspaper Contest will be celebrated Saturday evening with a reception and banquet, with the major category winners announced following dinner. A new program format will allow for more winners to be recognized.

For information and to register, please visit <http://summer.alabamapress.org/> or call Chris McDaniel at the APA office, (205) 871-7737 or (800) 264-7043.

## Baker named publisher at Tallapoosa Publishers, Inc.

Kenneth Boone announced recently that Steve Baker has been named publisher, president and CEO of Tallapoosa Publishers, Inc. Boone will continue to serve as owner and chairman of the company.

Tallapoosa Publishers operates five newspapers: The Alexander City Outlook, The Dadeville Record, The Wetumpka Herald, The Tallassee Tribune, and the Eclectic Observer. They also have three monthly magazines: Lake, Lake Martin Living, and Elmore County Living; and six websites.

Baker served most recently as publisher of The York (Neb.) News-Times. He was formerly publisher of the Pierre, S.D., Capital Journal, and is a past president of the South

Dakota Newspaper Association.

Baker and his wife, Kim, a licensed practical nurse, have a son Kelly and daughter-in-law, Danielle, and two grandchildren.



Steve Baker

## Griesbach awarded J. B. Stevenson Scholarship for 2016

The Alabama Press Association Journalism Foundation awarded the 2016 J.B. Stevenson Scholarship to Rebecca Griesbach this February. Griesbach, a senior from Northridge High School in Tuscaloosa, is the news editor at The Northridge Reporter, the school's newspaper, where she has also served as the social media editor since 1994.

She is also a guest blogger/columnist for The Tuscaloosa News' Voice for the Youth, a feature about social and political issues that pertains to teens.

The scholarship is named in honor of the late J.B. Stevenson and is awarded to the top high school senior journalism student in Alabama.

The son of John Stevenson, publisher and editor of The Randolph Leader in Roanoke, Ala., J.B. Stevenson made a lasting impression on the journalism community in Alabama while in middle and high school.

Griesbach was also named the Journalist of the Year by the Alabama Scholastic Press Association.



Rebecca Griesbach



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## Back Forty Beer Co.- Gadsden

**B**ack Forty Beer harkens back to a simpler time before the Prohibition Era, when it wasn't uncommon to find a brewery on every corner. Back then, you'd know the people who made your beer. Located in downtown Gadsden, Alabama, the brewery stands out much like its beer for its simple, elegant design. Plants hang from an open, wooden plywood porch, and the company's mantra, Back Forty Beer Co., stands lettered in gold over plated black.

The company was started in 2008 on the dreams of Jason Wilson, whose craft beer hobby soon turned into an obsession that then turned into a business. The genesis of the company can be traced back to a visit to his brother Brad Wilson for a ski trip in Colorado. Brad had been immersed in the craft beer culture there.

"Jason just took to it like a fish to water," said Brad, marketing director for the company.

While on the trip, Jason met with the brewmaster of one of the local pubs. After a tour of the place, Jason left with his eyes twinkling and a new interest, a giddied excitement about the possibilities of craft beer and what it could mean for Alabama.

"This is amazing. Why don't we have anything like this in Alabama?" Jason asked his brother.

After returning to his corporate job in Atlanta, Jason visited the breweries in every city he traveled to. Soon he had visited over 45 breweries in a month. Jason asked Brad, who by that time was working in Auburn, to help him start the company. Raising a small amount of money and reaching out to Brewmaster Jamie Ray for his expertise, they released their first brand, the Naked Pig Pale Ale, in June 2009. In 2010, their second offering, Truck Stop Honey, was awarded a Silver Medal at the Great American Beer Festival.

"We got to work doing what it took to get it done. We didn't have any idea what we were doing," Brad said. "We all had been immersed in craft beer culture, but we didn't know anything about running a business. We kind of faked it 'til we made it."

The company settled into a 27,000-square-foot warehouse built in the 1940s and branched out; they now have 22 employees and seven types of beer. As marketing director, Brad handles a variety of jobs for the company,

from bottling beer and wrapping pallets to speaking at a government affairs committee in Washington D.C.

One of his proudest moments at the company was when they were invited to dinner at the prestigious James Beard house in New York.

"Just to be standing in the middle of Midtown Manhattan, being invited to one of the most exclusive tables in the country, and brewing a beer specifically for the menu our good buddies had created -- that was a pretty humbling experience," he said.

Back Forty, which takes its name from an old agricultural term referencing the 40 acres of land farthest from a barn, is rooted in Southern sensibility, taking pride in the region's culture. Rivaling the prestige and quality of their Northern kin, Brad said the philosophy of the company is showing that Southern beer is meant to be taken seriously.

"The best thing people can understand is Back 40 is carrying the torch and carrying the word that Southern beer is real and it's meant to be taken seriously," he said. "We've known about good things to eat and drink our whole life. That's who we are as Southerners."

As one of Alabama's oldest breweries, Brad said the company tries to educate consumers about the quality of craft beers. They try to brew simple approachable beers, modern interpretations of classic beer styles.

"We take a classic beer style that we know Joe Everyman will like, and then we put a modern Alabama spin on it. We just want to be approachable. A lot of the breweries are doing these big double Belgium Sour Ales... or oatmeal this. That's not going to introduce Joe Everyman to beer in Alabama, and that's what we're trying to do."

Looking at beer companies' billion dollar ad campaigns, Brad said his company tries to change what people think beer is.

"It's the world's oldest supply chain, and it got hijacked by Super Bowl ads and billion dollar ad campaigns that told you beer is this yellow fizzy drink that people drink around football parties," Brad said. "It [modern beer] wasn't suppose to taste like anything. It was just suppose to be this cold, cold alcohol delivery system that shocked your tastebuds so you couldn't taste it. That's not what a craft beer is. Craft beer is a culinary item."



## Briefs

The **Eufaula Tribune** is giving away a 32-inch television each month for 10 months. The 10 drawings are for Tribune subscribers as well as anyone who submits their name, address and phone number. The April winner was Edward Newton who had been a subscriber since moving to Eufaula in 1966.

The **Alabama Scholastic Press Association** at The University of Alabama invites middle and high school students (grades 6-12) to attend its summer journalism camp, The Long Weekend, on campus June 10-12, 2016. Students can attend with or without their media staffs and advisers.

The cost for the weekend is \$150, which includes room and board, tuition and all meals. Students can register online here. The deadline for registration

is June 3.

ASPA Director Meredith Cummings said the University of Alabama journalism department is proud to carry on summer programs, a vital part of ASPA, which is celebrating its 79th anniversary in 2016.

The camp is designed to teach creative and efficient ways to communicate through scholastic newspapers, news-magazines, yearbooks, literary magazines, broadcast programs and digital media. It allows students to enjoy a taste of college life and invigorate their interest in scholastic media.

The Long Weekend will feature day and evening classes to help participants gain the tools to produce prize-winning results next school year. When festivities and classes wrap up with a showcase by campers, students will

have a great start on the upcoming year and will leave with a solid plan for their school newspaper, yearbook, broadcast program, website or literary magazine. If they attend the camp without a staff, they will leave with skills they need to do great journalism in any medium.

For more information on this event, regularly check [aspa.ua.edu](http://aspa.ua.edu) or contact ASPA Director Meredith Cummings at 205-348-ASPA or [aspa@ua.edu](mailto:aspa@ua.edu).

The **Greenville Advocate** was recently awarded the Spirit of Greenville Award by the Rotary Club of Greenville.

The paper, the first business to ever receive the award, is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. The paper was founded by Gen. J. B., Stanley shortly after the end of the Civil War.

## People

**Jim Broyles** is the new ad director at the Montgomery Advertiser. Broyles is an Arkansas native, and comes to Montgomery from the News Star in Monroe, La. He has also worked at The Coloradan in Fort Collins, Colo., a sister Gannett publication.

**Don Fletcher** has joined the staff of the Atmore News as staff writer. Fletcher has more than 25 years of experience, having worked previously at Sumter Free Press, the Prattville Progress and Autauga Free Press.

**Misty Alexander** recently joined the staff of The Moulton Advertiser as an account executive.

Alexander is a native of Hartselle, and is currently working on a degree in business management from Wallace State Community College.

**Shirley Chandler** has joined the staff at The South Alabamian in Jackson. She worked previously selling advertising for local radio stations.

**William Carroll** has been named managing editor for Tallapoosa Publishers newspapers that cover Elmore County – The Wetumpka Herald, The Tallassee Tribune and the Eclectic Observer.

Carroll comes to Alabama from The Daily Times Leader in West Point Miss., where he served as managing editor.



PANTS, THEY WENT THAT WAY—Or Steele McGrew, immediate past president of APA and publisher of the Limestone Democrat and Alabama Courier, Athens, seems to be telling Mrs. Libba George, Demopolis. We don't blame you Libba, Ellen didn't believe him either.

(Photo courtesy Elba Clipper)

*Blast from the past. Courtesy of the 1955 APA Publisher.*



## 2016 Celebration of Memories June 3, 2016

7:30 AM—5:00 PM

Kathryn Tucker Windham Museum at Alabama Southern



**RSVP**

by June 1st,  
please.



### KTW STORYTELLING 2016 BUS TOUR ROUTE

- Windham's Childhood and Storytelling Landmarks  
Thomasville, AL
- Gee's Bend Quilt Trail  
Boykin, AL
- Gaines Ridge Mansion  
GHOST STORY, LUNCH & TOUR  
Camden, AL
- Black Belt Treasures  
Camden, AL

### Looking Back at Gee's Bend: The Photographs of John Reese



Photo Credit: John Reese

In 1980 the Birmingham Public Library commissioned Alabama writer Kathryn Tucker Windham and photographer John Reese to interview and photograph residents of the Bend. In 1994 the library produced *Looking*

*Back at Gee's Bend* using photos selected by Reese. **(Exhibit)** *Looking Back at Gee's Bend* was created and is provided free-of-charge by the Birmingham Public Library Department of Archives & Manuscripts.



***Quilting with Flair: The Dorothy Shepard Collection***—a colorful collection of art quilts designed and quilted by Dorothy Shepard, artist of the "KTW Story Quilt" which currently hangs in the museum. Her collection will also include some traditional quilts, handcrafted dolls and other art forms. **(Presentation and Exhibit)**

**\$30 REGISTRATION INCLUDES BUS TOUR, LUNCH, & SOUVENIR. Register Today!** Call Ginger Bell at (334) 636-9642 to register by phone, or mail check to ASCC Attn. Ginger Bell-KTW, P.O. Box 2000, Thomasville, AL 36784. **Event Information:** Contact Deborah Rankins at (334) 637-3146 or email: [drankins@ascc.edu](mailto:drankins@ascc.edu).

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## Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center- Camden

Pottery, portraits, food and stories come alive at Camden's Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center, which houses some of the Black Belt's most treasured items and artworks.

Hidden behind the walls of what was once a car dealership, the 2,000-square-foot building is embellished with museum-quality artwork ranging from folk art paintings to landscapes and scenes from the Black Belt.

"When [customers] first drive up, they probably do not expect to see what's on the inside because the building is a converted auto dealership, and it looks like a typical 1980s car dealership outside," said art programs and marketing director Kristin Law. "It's been renovated a little bit, but we did just have a new sign commissioned outside by two of our artists. It's a wrought iron metal sign with a lot of mosaic art. It's a beautiful new piece of art that kind of welcomes people as they drive up."

Established in 2005, the center was started as a way to drive the economy of the Black Belt region.

"We started as an economic development engine to help provide an outlet for artists to display their work and sell their work to help them become better artists," Law said. "We also wanted to provide a positive image for the Black Belt by sharing our rich cultural heritage and the great stories about people who make this region special."

About 450 artists contribute to making the region special. When the center first opened,

about 75 artists were on board to help make Black Belt Cultural Arts Center's vision possible, Law said. With more room to grow, she said the center is opening its doors to more up-and-coming artists across Alabama.

"The center works with an assortment of artists from untrained to highly trained artists. We have a lot of literary artists and authors we work with [who are] from the Black Belt or have written about the Black Belt," she said.

Portrait artist Johnna Bush has been collaborating with Black Belt Treasures since its beginning. She gifted the center a commissioned portrait called "Celebrating Our Black Belt Treasures." The portrait portrays a number of Black Belt artists, including author, storyteller, journalist and photographer Kathryn Tucker Windham, who is pictured telling a story to two children.

Bush said the center has always been a great resource for her.

"I have sold a few things through them," she said. "They included me in the book recently published called 'Visions of the Black Belt,' which was great publicity for me. I think they have helped me and countless other artists who live in an area where recognition is hard to achieve."

The center's customers are as diverse as the artists. Visitors from all 50 states and 27 foreign countries have stopped by to spread wealth, knowledge and interests in the arts. Law said tourists from out of state always stand out in her mind because they are usually surprised by the

masterpieces found in Alabama.

"Our customers just validate on a regular basis why we are here. They come in and they have their own stories or something touches them. A painting or quilt may speak to them. They even tell their own stories. It just reminds you that art can be something different for everyone."

It's really just this thing around the world that crosses language barriers, and art just speaks to people. It really brings us all together."

The Center also offers art classes to both the experienced and inexperienced. The adult art classes allow participants to gain or hone their skills in printmaking, acrylic and oil paintings, basket making, jewelry design and much more.

"We have art classes for adults, from hobbyists or someone who wants to take a class for fun to skill building classes for the serious artists who want to improve their skills," she said.

Children as young as 3 can put their creativity to work as they learn about basic art skills and hand-eye coordination at the Petite Picasso's class held once a month. Law said the Center provides the community's children with a creative outlet.

"For some of these kids, this is the only art they get because this is the only art in this area. If they do have art, it might be once or twice a month where someone comes into school and teaches a class," Law said. "We're trying to really build on that."

The Center just reached an important milestone, and Law said she expects nothing but greatness in the coming years.



## Industry

# Newspapers' role in the local political landscape

Here are some key points from a survey commissioned recently by the Newspaper Association of America. The purpose of the survey is to better understand the importance of local newspapers and their associated websites in the political process.

The survey uncovers how consumers use their local community's media resources for political information and voting decisions. In addition, the survey explores whether local newspapers have a strong impact on "Opinion Leaders," and the degree to which Opinion Leaders' influence over family and friends helps to elevate newspaper communications. Finally, the study measured how various types of media compare with respect to consumer trust, depth of coverage and influence.

Summary of Key Findings:

- Newspapers provide powerful reach of registered voters.
- Newspaper reach is augmented significantly by their websites and apps.
- Newspaper political advertising

is an efficient advertising buy with its strongest reach concentrated among those most likely to vote.

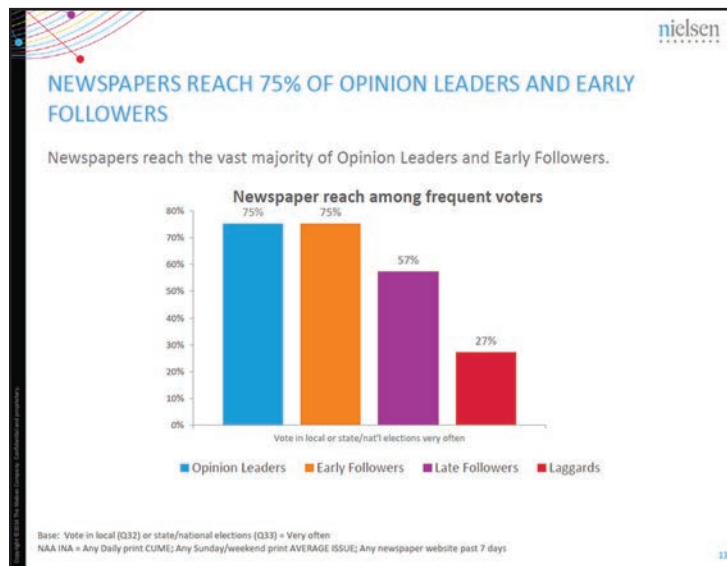
Newspapers are particularly strong at reaching:

- Opinion Leaders
- Voters who are especially interested in news and events of their lo-

cal community.

- Liberal AND Conservative voters.
- Those who make up their minds three or more weeks before the election.

(from NAA)





## Think carefully before posting the ‘final word’

A mayor takes issue with an editorial that criticized a city council action, calling your facts into question.irate parents challenge your decision – your right – to report their son didn’t dress for the basketball game because he was suspended for violating school policy. A pastor is critical of an ad you accepted for publication, saying it was in poor taste.

Hardly a week passes that a newspaper’s policies and practices aren’t called into question. Many complaints are fielded in private conversation.

In other instances, though, readers want to share their opinions with a wider audience with a letter to the editor – which often spurs additional conversation both pro and con on the newspaper’s decision. The exchange soon dwindles, and the newspaper likely wins high marks for allowing readers to toss brickbats as well as bouquets.

There are cases when editors feel compelled to add a P.S. to a letter. I urge you to think twice – even three times – before doing so. Postscripts may give you a “feel good” sensation in the short term, but they can have long-term consequences in relationships with your readers, and rarely for the better.

Don’t get me wrong. Some letters warrant a response. I’m a firm believer in having a dialogue with readers. That includes writing columns to explain news decisions, especially when an issue is raised in your newspaper. But there are some important considerations.

First and foremost, don’t blind side the writer. It’s always best to have a conversation with the author. Explain your decision-making and your wish to explain your reasoning to the broader audience. Gauge the reaction; the conversation may dissuade you from writing anything. If you pro-

ceed with a column, the author deserves a heads-up. You may well view the column as an explanation; the writer will likely view it



By Jim  
Pumarlo

as a rebuttal. That’s all the more reason to connect.

The process is fairly straightforward when dealing with the person who feels mistreated by a newspaper decision and pens a letter. It becomes more complicated with a “third party” complaint. Consider the woman who criticized a newspaper headline: “Drug defendant dies at 19; cause unclear.” She wrote, in part, “What you did was not responsible journalism. It was callous sensationalism.”

In this case, the more important consideration in any editor’s response is the family of the youth that will be drawn into additional limelight through no fault of their own. The letter itself will likely generate more attention; you’re in a difficult position to stop additional exchange. A column also may prolong the debate, and you do have a choice in that regard. A conversation with the family, at minimum, gives you an opportunity to explain your decision in private.

Those conversations can be difficult. Individuals may refuse to talk and hang up abruptly. But the calls also might pay you dividends in the long run. I speak from experience. I made many a call to individuals when our news decisions were called in question. Some remained a private conversation; some resulted in a column. In all instances, the readers – our customers – gained a better understanding of the hows

and whys behind our decisions, even if they did not agree.

If you write a column, don’t be afraid to say that, upon reflection after the crush of deadlines, you may have handled the circumstances differently – if that is the case. Showing that you are human, too, strengthens your credibility.

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*The more important consideration in any editor’s response is the family of the youth that will be drawn into additional limelight through no fault of their own.*

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Requisite to writing any column is having a conversation with the author and/or affected individuals. In contrast, many editors tack a P.S. on letters without ever connecting with the author. From the writer’s perspective, editor’s notes are just an example of the newspaper having the “last word” and diminishing the impact of the letter. Do so, and it’s a good bet the authors will be hesitant to submit another letter. They will be unafraid to express that sentiment to friends, too. In the end, you lose with the author and your readers.

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*Jim Pumarlo writes, speaks and provides training on community newsroom success strategies. He is author of “Journalism Primer: A Guide to Community News Coverage,” “Votes and Quotes: A Guide to Outstanding Election Coverage” and “Bad News and Good Judgment: A Guide to Reporting on Sensitive Issues in Small-Town Newspapers.” He can be reached at [www.pumarlo.com](http://www.pumarlo.com) and welcomes comments and questions at [jim@pumarlo.com](mailto:jim@pumarlo.com).*



kevin@kevinslimp.com

# Pressing Issues

*What are the three most common questions I'm asked on-site?*



Kevin Slimp  
The News Guru

When asked why I receive so many requests for help from newspapers, I simply mark it down to longevity. I've been around the business long enough for most publishers, and others, to know me.

On Tuesday of last week, I received requests to visit five newspapers in four states. For some, the most pressing need is training. A few seek advice concerning the overall structure of their operations. Still others are hoping I can find the solution to problems which have plagued their newspapers for too long.

Years ago, I might worry before boarding on a plane to make a consulting visit. Concerned there might be bigger problems than I could solve, it was always a relief to eventually get on the flight back home.

Those days are past. I don't stress or worry about upcoming trips. One reason is there's simply no time for worry while visiting two or three papers each week. A more likely explanation is there's not much I haven't seen after 20 years of consulting, so issues that might be huge in the eyes of a client often have simple solutions when seen through the eyes of experience.

Here are some of the most common questions I'm asked while on-site at newspapers:

## **Question 1: Is there a better way to produce my newspaper?**

The topic of production comes up a lot during my visits. This particular question is one of the most difficult, because there's almost always someone who doesn't like my answer.

Ponder this: How often do you visit some type of business and think, "There's got to be a better way?" If you're like most, the answer would be, "That happens a lot."

That's what makes this a difficult question. It's not that I don't know the answer. Usually, within just a few minutes I've noticed several potential improvements to the workflow. It's natural for people to resist change. So I tread this question gently, hoping to gain the trust of most everyone on staff before sharing my thoughts.

For instance, most people enjoy designing pages. The truth, however, is it's



In Cambridge, Minnesota, the staff wanted to learn how to get the best results on the page. That led to inviting them to visit the printing plant to learn how a press works and why dot gain, color settings and resolution are so important.

important to have good designers working on pages and good writers writing stories. Sure, photographers sometimes like having total control of their photos, but there's often someone on staff who is particularly skilled at color editing, leaving the photographer more time for what they do best, shooting photos.

As an adviser, I use experience to guide me in knowing when to advise changes, and when to realize, for the time being, things might work better as they are.

## **Question 2: Why are we having so many problems with ads clogging up the system or printing incorrectly?**

I don't like bringing up issues with PDF files. Sometimes it seems like I've spent my life dealing with them. But the truth is I haven't visited a paper in a long time that didn't have issues with PDF files.

Most don't realize their trouble is coming from PDF files. A pressman might ask, "Why do files coming from advertising cause errors when going through the RIP (raster image processor)?"

A publisher might ask, "Why are we losing so much money because ads aren't printing right in our paper?"

A page designer might ask, "Why are quotation marks turning to strange symbols?" or "Why are boxes appearing on the page where letters should be?"

As much as the good folks at Adobe want you to believe otherwise, the answer is almost always found in the method used to create the PDF files.

One of the most common messages I receive after visiting a client is, "We've already covered your cost in savings from ads printing correctly."

It's not rocket science. Ensuring those

PDF files are error-free before sending them to the RIP will make everyone sleep better.

## **Question 3: Will we increase profits and produce better papers by centralizing production?**

When approached with the idea of moving the productions of multiple newspapers to a central office, I've found it wise to do more listening than talking.

Most clients are already hoping I will say, "Yes, that's a good idea," before I arrive.

I figure, however, they're paying me and want objective answers, rather than having me placate their egos - improving my chances of being invited back.

Sometimes the answer is "yes." If they own three papers in one county with a total circulation of 1,600, it probably doesn't take three full-time design staffs to lay out the pages.

However, often the answer is "not so fast."

Research indicates often the best way to produce long-term growth is improving the quality of the products. Moving to a central production facility often has more to do with reaching short-term cost reduction goals than achieving long-term growth.

As often as not, when faced with this question, I will have serious discussions with a publisher, CEO or other manager, resulting in a decision to use current resources to improve the quality and profits of their newspapers, rather than cutting to grow, which rarely works in the long run.

I could write a column titled, "The 100 most often asked questions during on-site visits," but the editor of this publication might not be pleased with such a topic. So, for now, let's stick with these three.



## Ethics Commission deserves applause for transparency

*From The Tuscaloosa News, April 28, 2016*

To say there are some ethical issues in Alabama government is an understatement of extreme proportions.

To say we get the government we deserve is an oversimplification.

In this day and age, trying to keep up with the information coming at us in so many various forms is akin to trying to drink out of a firehose. Wading through it all to get the information we need, to filter out the truth and what's important, is a challenge. Unfortunately, this ever-increasing volume of information is one of the biggest obstacles to ensuring transparent government. With all that noise, the public's business can too easily be conducted in private.

Furthermore, when violations of open meetings and public records laws are deliberate, the penalties are minimal. With little to fear, government employees and elected officials are more likely to hide and withhold important public information, especially when that information is less than positive.

That's why we'd like to thank Alabama Ethics Commission Executive Director Tom Albritton for opening the shades and allowing more sunshine into the room during public meetings.

In November, Albritton met with the Alabama Press Association's board of directors at Tuscaloosa's Embassy Suites. The discussion turned to the importance of open government, particularly in light of ongoing concerns about ethical lapses in Montgomery. It was quickly acknowledged that few people have the opportunity to visit the state's capital, navigate Goat Hill and sit through a day of meetings. And the truth is that in recent years, fewer journalists are around to do that job for the public. That led to the idea of making Ethics Commission meetings available online.

A trial run of a live, online broad-

cast was held at the commission's April meeting. While there were some audio issues with the first go, the broadcast overall was deemed a success. There is an expectation that what was learned in the trial run will be applied and the broadcast will be improved for the June meeting.

In an ocean of information that is like stagnant seawater, Albritton's efforts are like a cool glass of sweet iced tea offered at a shipwreck.

"[Albritton] has a long history of commitment to open government," said Michele Gerlach, publisher of the Andalusia Star-News and current president of the state press association. "I appreciate his willingness to make (the commission's) meetings more accessible and

hope that other government agencies will follow his example."

At a time when leadership in Alabama government is so severely lacking, Albritton has set a great example.

We join Gerlach in calling for more agencies to follow suit. Open government is always better government. Taxpayers of this state have a right to know how the public's business is conducted. That could not be truer than when it comes to the work of the Ethics Commission.

As Patrick Henry said, "the liberties of a people were never, nor ever will be, secure, when the transactions of their rulers may be concealed from them."



*These house ads are a great way to remind your readers of the importance of public notice. You can locate them by logging on to Bamanet and opening the "Public Notice House ads" folder inside the ad department.*

### A CELL TOWER'S GOING UP NEXT DOOR OR HADN'T YOU HEARD?



Access to information is the public's most valuable tool when it comes to protecting your homes, your communities, and your government. Newspapers have the unique ability to reach a broad audience, regardless of the socioeconomic status, by providing public notices both in print and online.

The public notices appearing in your newspaper provide important information on issues such as rezoning for landfills, government contracts, and even traffic detours. It's your right to know how your tax dollars are spent and what could be coming to your neighborhood.

And when it comes to shining the light on government, public notices deliver.

## Put the gadgets down and knock on some doors

### *For real sales results, "old school" is sometimes best*

Former Washingtonian Editor Jack Limpert once wrote "Today, if typewriters could talk, the old Royal might be smiling and suggesting that we should continue to remind ourselves that we shouldn't be too quick to throw aside those things that have served us well for so long." The blog itself was focused on decisions by the Russian and German governments to begin using manual typewriters to produce sensitive documents rather than computers or other electronic methods that have been proven to be targets of hackers, or worse.

I couldn't help but think how these words could also apply to other things we deal with on a daily basis. Most importantly, good old-fashioned sales calls.

We've talked about how this new generation has been raised on an entirely different method of communicating. Namely texting, Facebook and Twitter. When I was the student sales manager at The Crimson White, I was constantly encouraged by my boss to get the sales reps off the phone and out on the streets. These days, it's tough to get reps to pick up the phone – choosing email and texting as preferred methods of communication.

I remember what one manager would tell his sales reps: "Anyone can send an email or a text. If texting and email is so successful, what do I need you for? I need someone knocking on doors."

Copier companies once used a 40/10/3 rule in training sales reps. The idea was that it took forty cold phone calls to set up ten face-to-face meetings. Of those ten meetings, three would lead to actual demonstrations (or formal presentations) before the decision maker. The goal would be to close one of the three presentations.

Other sales professionals have other formulas for success. Tom Reilly, author of "Value-Added Selling", writes, "I discovered a metric years ago that has served me well. I read an article



#### Ad Vice

by  
Brad English

by a top real estate salesperson that said that he routinely talked to three people every day about a new opportunity. This could be an existing customer and a new opportunity or a prospect and a new opportunity. For years, I kept my pipeline full by practicing the three-per-day rule. This meant I had to make more than three calls per day to discover three opportunities. I would not stop calling until I pumped three new opportunities into my pipeline."

I think the number one reason for call reluctance for any sales rep has to be a fear of failure. This can be brought on by lack of knowledge of the product, simply a fear of rejection or failure itself, or not believing in what you are selling.

Rory McIlroy won the 2014 British Open. His dad certainly believed in him. When Rory was 15, his father wagered his son would win the Open Championship before he turned 26. Rory turned 25 in 2014. Dad won \$171,000.

I recall my daughter's Junior Miss pageant. While she didn't win (still trying to figure that one out) she tried, and if she was afraid to fail, she certainly didn't show it. Jordan also was quick to temper my enthusiasm in the days leading up to the competition by reminding me that there really were other talented girls in the program. (Code for: don't ex-

pect too much, Daddy.)

She sat at the piano that Saturday night in front of hundreds of strangers and sang a beautiful rendition of "Oceans" by Hillsong United. I couldn't have been prouder. She later said she was glad she participated because she now knows she can perform in front of strangers.

Growing up, Michael Jordan was the one NBA player I actually followed. I loved the way he played the game. It seemed every time the Bulls took the court with the game on the line, you could expect MJ to come through with a last-second shot for the win. What Jordan fans forget is that he missed more than 9000 shots in his career and lost almost 300 games. And he missed plenty of game winning shots along the way. When talking about failure Jordan said, "I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

Now ad sales – or any other type of sales – isn't for everyone. Remember, Michael also tried his hand at minor league baseball and was an abysmal failure. But he tried. He also recognized baseball wasn't his game and went back to the game he loved. (He just didn't get the same jersey number.)

Never be afraid to try, or afraid to fail. Professional sales reps weren't created that way. Any one of them would be the first to admit there were plenty of bumps, bruises, and "nos" littering the path to success. But making the effort and believing in what, and who, you represent are the keys to succeeding.

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*Brad English is advertising manager for APA. He can be reached at 205.871.7737 or email him at [brad@alabamapress.org](mailto:brad@alabamapress.org)*

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## An alternative to spec ads

Gus is an advertiser who has dealt with ad representatives from a variety of media firms. "One thing that a lot of them have in common is that they like to present new ad ideas in the beginning," he said. "It's nice that they make the effort to create spec ads, but most of those ideas are way off target. When I point out the reasons why certain ads are not right for me, they seem to lose enthusiasm.

"On the other hand" he said, "one person really stood out from the crowd. Instead of focusing on a spec idea, he put a couple of my recent ads on the table and built his presentation around that. It was a good way to learn about my business and my advertising objectives. He wasn't judgmental, and he didn't have a know-it-all attitude. Instead of trying to talk me into buying an idea, he simply helped me see some things that could be done differently. Needless to say, I placed a lot of advertising in his paper."

That is an interesting alternative, isn't it? Instead of presenting spec ads which haven't run yet, why not focus on ads which have already appeared? It can be an effective way to gain information. And as we all know, knowledge is power.

If you try this technique, here are some open-ended questions you can ask:

1. Who were you trying to reach in this ad? This can lead to a discussion about target audiences and buying styles. Does the ad focus on a specific audience, or does it try to appeal to everyone?

2. What was your main message? This question can help you understand the advertiser's products and services – and the relevant features and benefits. Does the objective match the

message?

3. What was the thought process in choosing this particular picture? Is it a stock photograph of a generic group of people? A cutaway diagram of a new product? A photo of the founder of the company? The answer can



### Ad-libs

By John  
Foust

where the advertiser turns for new ideas.

4. I notice this ad features a sale. What kind of results did you get? This opens the door to a discussion about expectations. Along the way, you can ask how they decided to feature that particular deal. Was it based on market research or a hunch?

5. What kinds of special offers have you made in other ads? Sometimes the best way to develop a new strategy is to ana-

lyze old strategies. For example, have they relied on sales? Do they use coupons? Are the offers seasonal or year round?

6. How long you have run this particular campaign? This can reveal the advertiser's willingness to explore change.

7. What kind of help did you have with this ad? This is a good way to hear about the advertiser's influencers. You may learn that a different decision maker should be included in future meetings.

Yes, sometimes current ads can create better conversations – and more sales – than spec ads.

*John Foust has conducted training programs for thousands of newspaper advertising professionals. Many ad departments are using his training videos to save time and get quick results from in-house training. E-mail for information: [john@johnfoust.com](mailto:john@johnfoust.com)*

"Fifty percent of people won't vote, and fifty percent don't read newspapers. I hope it's the same fifty percent."

Gore Vidal  
Writer, intellectual, newspaper enthusiast

#newspapersthrive

ALABAMA PRESS ASSOCIATION  
1871

## Help Wanted

### Sports Writer

The Southeast Sun, an award-winning weekly newspaper in South Alabama, is seeking a full time sports writer. Applicants must possess good writing, photography and time management skills. Layout experience a plus. Competitive salary and benefits. The Sun is a locally owned publication covering Enterprise/Fort Rucker/Daleville for over 35 years. Send cover letter and resume to: publisher@southeast.sun.com

### Staff Reporter

Hartselle Newspapers, Inc., a media company that publishes award-winning newspapers, magazines and websites in Alabama's Tennessee Valley, is seeking a staff reporter.

This position includes general assignment reporting, feature writing, some photography and some sports reporting. Quality of life here is as good as it gets and opportunity for advancement—with our company and others—is nearly limitless.

This full-time opportunity offers competitive salary and benefits. Compensation plan includes base weekly salary, health/dental insurance, 401(k), paid life and disability insurance, retirement plan, paid holidays and paid sick leave.

Our products include:

- The Hartselle Enquirer, a weekly newspaper with a daily online focus.
- The Morgan County, a weekly newspaper covering areas of Morgan County outside of Hartselle.
- Hartselle Living Magazine, monthly lifestyle magazine.

Qualifications:

- Solid writing, researching and interviewing skills
- Fluent in AP style and strict adherence to grammar rules
- Experience in InDesign
- Valid driver's license, car insurance and a vehicle
- Excellent time management and organizational skills
- Bachelor's degree in journalism or related field preferred
- Competency in photography and social media required

To apply: Email résumé and writing samples to Publisher Randy Garrison at randy.garrison@hartselleenquirer.com or call 256 286 0233.

### Marketing/Advertising Sales Representative

Tallapoosa Publishers, Inc. has an immediate opening for a full time Marketing/Advertising Sales Representative. Qualified applicants should be goal-oriented, team players, extremely organized and have a positive attitude.

Compensation plan includes base salary, commission and bonus incentives, health/dental insurance, 401(k), life and disability insurance, retirement plan, and paid holidays and sick leave.

Tallapoosa Publishers, Inc., is an award-winning media company based on Lake Martin in Alexander City, AL. The company publishes five community newspapers, three monthly lifestyle magazines, and a variety of websites and other web-based media.

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

Provide overall sales support to team: Prospecting, inputting ads and assisting in collecting ad copy, delivering proofs and tearsheets, ensuring high customer service.

Communicate rate packages and multi-media marketing plans to client and prospects.

Generate new leads by making cold calls, calling on inactive accounts and maintaining an awareness of new businesses opening in the area.

Develop and maintain base of accounts.

To apply, please EMAIL resume to marketing@alexcityoutlook.com. No phone calls, faxes or walk-ins, please. Qualified applicants will be contacted directly for interviews.

### Weekly Publisher Wanted

Weekly Publisher – Accepting publisher resumes for a small weekly newspaper in Tallulah, La., (just west of Vicksburg, Miss.) Great opportunity for an up-and-coming editor, or a newspaper couple that desire to run a small operation together (editorial and ad sales). The ideal candidate has solid editorial judgment and writing skills, page layout, and sales/business experience is certainly helpful. If you have the drive, but may be lacking a few tools in your skill set, we do train. The operation is PC-based, using Quark, Photoshop, and PDF workflow. This 2,000 paid circulation, three-person staffed small weekly operation is 20 miles west of Vicksburg, Miss., on I-20. If you do not wish to work hard, forget about it. Publisher compensation range \$40K – \$45K, 401(k), health benefits, etc. Send resume, references, and letter of interest to: Dan W. Strack, Emmerich Newspapers, at strack@emmerichnewspapers.com

### Advertising Sales Account Executive

Over The Mountain Journal has an immediate opening for an advertising sales account executive. Qualified applicants should be highly motivated, goal oriented, with a track record of success. Outside media sales is preferred but not required. We are an award winning 26-year-old suburban newspaper serving the communities of Mountain Brook, Homewood, Vestavia Hills, Hoover and North Shelby County. This position will be responsible for handling existing accounts as well as generating new business. We're looking for someone who shares our enthusiasm for helping local business get results through print and online advertising. Base salary with aggressive commission structure, insurance and retirement plan available. Email resume with cover letter and reference to: mwald@otmj.com

### Immediate Opening for a Multimedia Copy Editor

The Gadsden Times, a seven days a week publication in Gadsden, AL has an immediate opening for a Multimedia Copy Editor. This is an evening position, Tuesday through Saturday.

The Multimedia Copy Editor has strong web content management skills, a demonstrated commitment to web/digital-oriented delivery of news and

understanding of and experience with using social media to promote news and interact with readers. They are expected to pro-actively develop and complete an assignment without significant direction from editors.

They should:

- Demonstrate mastery of assigned editing tasks.
- Ability to coordinate print and web content with news staff and off-site designers.
- Demonstrate consistent, quality performance in effective editing, headline writing and website content management. Knows, understand uses all appropriate editing and writing tools, such as Associated Press and local styles.
- Ability to select and edit wire content, helping edit and display local content in print/online while contributing to the news report through traditional methods and multimedia platforms.
- Demonstrate mastery of spelling, grammar, syntax and word usage, including the ability to tighten copy when appropriate.
- Adapt easily and effectively to changing technologies – social media, content management systems, multimedia video/audio – uses them appropriately and effectively on the job.
- Work as the off-hours liaison to answer questions on content plans, copy flow and to ensure deadlines are met.
- Manage time effectively to ensure consistently high quality performance and to meet deadlines.
- Demonstrate consistently strong communication skills in working with other staffers in the newsroom and in other departments.
- Demonstrate a keen understanding of world, national, local and state news and uses that knowledge effectively to improve performance.
- Perform all other duties as assigned. Maintains a positive work atmosphere by acting and communicating in a manner so that you get along with customers, co-workers and manager.

Interested applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to Monica.Johnson@gadsdentimes.com or Human Resources, P.O. Box 188, Gadsden, AL 35902.

No phone calls please.

GateHouse Media and all subsidiaries are Equal Opportunity Employers and value diversity in our workplace.

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ers, and phones, working remotely and alongside of our Regional IT Manager to correct and update any IT issues via his/her directives. Five years job related field experience required. College degree or experience equivalent; EOE/M/F/D/V drug and background screening required. Apply at www.BH-MGINC.com

### General Assignment Reporter

Opelika-Auburn News, an award-winning small daily newspaper in eastern Alabama near Auburn University, has an immediate opening for a general reporter. The successful applicant must be a self-starter capable of writing clean, mature, intelligent copy, both for print and digital. Experience is strongly preferred. This position is ideal for someone who has starred at a weekly or smaller daily and wants to step up to something bigger. This person must be willing to work a flexible schedule, and must be able to produce at least seven stories a week. Four year degree in journalism preferred; Excellent benefits; EOE/M/F/D/V. Drug and background screening required. You may apply at www.bhmginc.com

### Editor

Tallapoosa Publishers is seeking a self-starting editor with a great nose for news and community relations to lead a weekly newspaper in Central Alabama. The successful applicant must be willing to relocate the area and be ready to wear many hats. This means that they will write, edit and manage a staff and team of contributors that will produce a high-quality hyper local publication in a competitive market. Strong editing in AP style is required and the successful candidate must be able to coach young reporters and raise the quality of the news product. We hope to make our publication one of the best in the state, but that will not come without hard work and determination. Are you a good fit? If you are, send a resume, samples of your work and a cover letter to TPI Editor Mitch Sneed at mitch.sneed@alexcityoutlook.com

### Packaging and Distribution Manager

The Opelika-Auburn News has an immediate opening for a Packaging and Distribution Manager. This position is responsible for managing the mailroom and dock area which includes but is not limited to scheduling inserts and verification of insert schedules, maintaining employee work schedules that coincide with production schedules while maintaining overtime within the budget. This position oversees the hiring and training new employees. The ideal candidate must be mechanically inclined; have the ability to troubleshoot and find solutions to problems; must meet deadlines while producing a quality product; have excellent communication skills and be able to communicate professionally with internal and external customers; and must adhere to all company safety regulations. Previous mailroom supervision is preferred. EOE/M/F/D/V. Background screens required. Apply at www.bhmginc.com