

AlaPressa

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA PRESS ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016

Important Dates

Online Media Campus

*Classifieds 2017: Feast or
Famine?*

Friday, January 13
Presenter: Janet DeGeorge

*What Every Employer Should
Know About Union Organizing*

Thursday, January 19
Presenter: Michael Zinser

2017 APA Journalism Summit
Montgomery, AL
February 9-10, 2017

2017 APA Summer Convention
Orange Beach, AL
July 6-8, 2017

Ayers steps down as Anniston
Star publisher

Ruff and Weaver to receive APA
Lifetime Achievement Award

Auburn journalism students take an
impressive road trip

Hartselle names new publisher

Alabama Media Group donates
photo collection to Archives

Bolton named to NNA board



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Horace Moore, The Northwest Alabamian
Tim Prince, The Clanton Advertiser
Russell Quattlebaum, The Southeast Sun
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Ayers steps down as Anniston Star publisher

Davis moves to paper's top job as others take new titles with company

By Eddie Burkhalter, Anniston Star Staff Writer, Nov 7, 2016



H. Brandt Ayers

After leading The Anniston Star for 47 years, H. Brandt Ayers has stepped down as the newspaper's publisher. The move was among several changes announced recently in the leadership of Consolidated Publishing.

The title of publisher and editor goes to Bob Davis, formerly The Star's associate publisher and editor.

Ayers, 81, will remain as chairman of Consolidated Publishing, which also operates The Daily Home, The Cleburne News, The St. Clair Times, The Piedmont Journal and The Jacksonville News.

"For a couple of geezers like Phil and me, the journey to the digital planet is a journey too far," Ayers said in a statement, referring to Phil Sanguinetti, who remains president of Consolidated. "We are making way for a team of experienced and talented young executives to move up."

Ayers is the son of Anniston native Col. Harry Ayers, The Star's longtime publisher and architect of the 1912 merger of two Anniston dailies that formed The Star.

see **changes at Star** pg 3

Ruff and Weaver to receive APA Lifetime Achievement Award

APA President Michele Gerlach announced the 2017 recipients of the APA Lifetime Achievement Award. Honorees will be Jimmy Ruff, production director for the printing facility at The Clanton Advertiser, and Kendal Weaver, state news editor for the Alabama Associated Press.

Ruff began his newspaper career in the pressroom at The Selma Times-Journal. That was 40 years ago. He worked his way to foreman, and eventually started his own business of press work and repair.

He has rebuilt and installed presses throughout BNI and for other newspaper companies. While working with the installation of the press in Clanton, Ruff decided he liked the plan, and he liked Clanton,

so he stayed.

In Clanton, he now prints 17 newspapers each week.

Kendal Weaver began his newspaper career at the Birmingham Post-Herald after graduating from Birmingham-Southern College in 1966. He joined the Montgomery staff of the Associated Press in 1971. He became AP's Mobile correspondent in 1976, and returned to Montgomery three years later to cover politics and state government as AP's statehouse correspondent. In 2004, he became state news editor for AP in Alabama, a position he held until he retired in 2011.

The honorees will be recognized at the APA Journalism Summit on Feb. 9 at the Renaissance Hotel in Montgomery.

changes at Star

from pg 2



Bob Davis

Other changes include Josephine E. Ayers being named vice chairman of Consolidated Publishing's board of directors, Robert Jackson as the company's executive vice president and Dennis Dunn as vice president of operations.

Davis came to The Star in 2003 as editor of the newspaper's editorial pages, and in 2006 became editor of the newspaper. In 2012 he was named associate publisher. He had previously worked as an editor at the

Fort Worth (Texas) Star-Telegram.

A native of Aliceville, Davis is a past president of the Association of Opinion Journalists and serves on the boards of the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama and the Alabama Press Association.

Davis is the first person outside of the Ayers family to be named publisher of The Star. H. Brandt Ayers' mother, Edel Ayers, served as publisher after her husband's death in 1964.

"I have had an absolutely fantastic mentor," Davis said, speaking of Ayers. "He's been a great example of how a publisher should be involved in his community, passionate about how the newspaper reports on the comings and goings of its community."

Davis said he'll continue to rely on Ayers as he fills the new role.

"I am honored by the trust that's been placed in me by him," Davis said.

Jackson was previously vice president of sales and operations. He will remain publisher of The Daily Home and the St. Clair Times as he takes on the new role of executive vice president. Jackson began his career with Consolidated Publishing in 2003 as assistant vice president of operations and publisher of The Piedmont Journal.

"The support of the Ayers and the

Sanguinetti families, and the Consolidated board of directors, is both humbling and much appreciated," Jackson said by phone Monday. "We have a great leadership team in place and I look forward to working with everybody in this going forward."

Dunn has 37 years of experience in the newspaper business. He worked for 18 years at the Columbus (Ga.) Ledger-Enquirer before coming to The Star as circulation director in 1997.

Josephine Ayers has been a Consolidated Publishing board member for three years and was editor-in-chief of the company's magazine, Longleaf Style, for nine years.



Josephine E. Ayers



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Auburn journalism students take an impressive road trip

Check out this video of the “Community Journalism Road Trip” produced by Professor Nan Farley’s class at Auburn University, <http://fairlln.wixsite.com/jrnl4970>. The project was funded by the APA Journalism Foundation.

The words of a former chair of the Auburn University journalism program and a great admirer of community journalism, Jerry Brown, introduces the site to visitors with this: “For my perspective as a former editor of weeklies, a community without a newspaper is like a church without a pulpit or altar. Something is missing – a familiar voice, a sense of home, a continuity. The character of a place is defined and confirmed by its newspaper, and these country cousins in the great family of the democratic press are just as essential to our way of life as their more citified, though I concede - equally important - media relatives.”

“Stepping away from constantly beeping cell phones sending out

news – both fake and real – to take a community journalism road trip during the fall 2016 was at first just another assignment for students in JRNL 4970,” Fairley wrote. “But as the adventure continued, the students in my class discovered the truth of Jerry Brown’s sentiments.”

During visits to Alexander City, Columbiana, Greensboro, Rainsville, Roanoke, Tuskegee and the larger towns of Auburn-Opelika, Tuscaloosa and Birmingham, students heard advice from veteran journalists, learned about morgues and printing presses, and saw why



and how community journalism matters now more than ever. “These young journalists then worked hard to produce this site to share the stories they discovered and the lessons they learned.”

Hartselle names new publisher



Randy Cox

Randy Cox has been named publisher of Hartselle Enquirer, Morgan Countian, Hartselle Living and related digital products. Cox

will also serve as publisher of The Madison Record, Madison County Record, Madison Living and related digital products.

Cox, a native of Anniston, comes to Hartselle from Valdosta, Ga., where he served as vice president of marketing and internet services of the South Georgia Marketing Group, which was a group of daily and weekly newspapers.

While with Thomson Newspapers in South Georgia, Cox won the President’s Award for Marketing Excellence three times out of 289 U.S. based publications. He has also been deeply involved in the communities of which he has been a part. Cox has served on the board of the United Way, was Chairman of the Cordele Crisp County Chamber of Commerce, served as chairman of the Technology Resources Commit-

tee at the Valdosta Area Chamber for five years and served 17 years in the Rotary Club of Valdosta.

Cox’s father, Paul Cox, was a life-long newspaper man who got his start at The Anniston Star and then worked in Miami, Fla. and Columbus, Ga., before being named associate publisher and then publisher at the Opelika-Auburn News where he retired.

Cox and his wife Suzanne moved to the Hartselle area in November and have been getting familiar with the area. “My wife and I are excited about our move and look forward to being a part of these communities. In a short amount of time, we have discovered that this part of the state has available many wonderful cultural and entertainment venues.”

Alabama Media Group donates photo collection to Archives

The Alabama Department of Archives and History and Alabama Media Group announced today that Alabama Media Group is donating its massive collection of photographic negatives to the Archives, where the images will be preserved, digitized, and made available to the public. Containing an estimated three million images, the collection is the largest gift of historical content received by the Archives since its founding in 1901.

The negatives were produced by scores of photographers who worked at the Birmingham News, Mobile's Press-Register, and The Huntsville Times. They document occasions ranging from presidential elections to city council meetings and from civil rights

"We have only begun surveying the materials, but we can already tell that this will be an unparalleled resource for students, educators, and researchers studying twentieth-century Alabama."

Archives Director Steve Murray

demonstrations to high school football games. The earliest images are from the 1920s, but the bulk of the collection dates from the 1940s through the end of the twentieth century. Most were likely never published and have been seen only by the photographer and perhaps an editor.

"The breadth and depth of the

collection are astonishing," said Archives director Steve Murray. "We have only begun surveying the materials, but we can already tell that this will be an unparalleled resource for students, educators, and researchers studying



ing twentieth-century Alabama. And thanks to the generosity of Alabama Media Group, it now belongs to the people of our state."

Tom Bates, president of Alabama Media Group, said the company's decision to donate the collection was an easy one. "Having worked in recent years to digitize and publish these images in small batches on AL.com, we came to realize that a treasure of this magnitude deserves proper preservation and broad distribution. After touring and visiting with the staff of the State Archives, we concluded this is the right place."

The donation comes at a time when the Archives is committing additional resources to the digitization of its collections to prepare for Alabama's bicentennial in 2019. "Alabama Media Group has presented Alabama an extraordinary and early gift for its 200th birthday," Murray said.

Work to scan and place the images online will commence in the coming months and likely last for years, according to Murray. An initial phase will involve capturing the handwritten or typed information on the envelopes containing the negatives.

"Each envelope represents a photojournalism assignment. Building a database of the information recorded

about the assignment by the photographers is the first step toward creating a useful research tool," Murray said. "After we have good momentum on that effort, we will also begin scanning the images themselves, gradually building a fully searchable library of the Alabama Media Group materials."

Once ready, the scanned images will appear in a special Alabama Media Group Collection on the Archives' site at www.digital.archives.alabama.gov, which currently contains more than 195,000 digital items. For additional information about the announcement, visit alabamamediagroup.com/archives.

Upcoming Webinars

50 Ideas In 50 Minutes
Thursday, January 12

Presenters

Tim Schmitt, Gatehouse Media &
Zack Kucharski, Cedar Rapids Gazette

**Classifieds 2017:
Feast or Famine?**
Friday, January 13

Presenter

Janet DeGeorge, Classified
Executive Training & Consulting

**What Every Employer
Should Know About
Union Organization**
Thursday, January 19

*Presenter Michael Zinser,
The Zinser Law Firm, P.C.*

Register at
onlinemediacampus.com

*High-quality, low-cost web conferences
that help media professionals develop
new job skills without leaving their offices.*

Bolton named to NNA board



Kermit P. "Bo" Bolton

Kermit P. "Bo" Bolton has been appointed to the National Newspaper Association board of directors.

Bolton, owner and publisher of The Monroe Journal in Monroeville, will represent Region 3, which includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina and Puerto Rico. He is a past president of the Alabama Press Association and currently serves on the Hall of Honor, Advertising and Member Services Committees.

Bolton has a commercial print operation that prints 16 other newspapers in southeast Mississippi, southwest Alabama and the Florida Panhandle. He also has a print shop that prints everything from high-gloss magazines to envelopes.



Highlighting public notice as part of news coverage

A newspaper in Kentucky, the Georgetown News-Graphic, is putting public notices in the spotlight each week. Not only are they easy to read, they come with a headline.

"We encourage APA members to consider how they present public notices in their printed products and online," APA Executive Director Felicia

Mason said. "This is a great example of a newspaper making it easy for readers to read public notices."

Readers must be able to find public notices. Efficient indexing, quick access web links and reporting on news embedded in important notices are among the tools publishers can offer to their readers.

SAVE THE DATE

The APA Journalism Summit will be held Feb. 9-10 at the Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa. Mark your calendars.

Thursday evening will once again feature the Alabama Products Showcase and the 2017 Lifetime Achievement recipients will be recognized at the banquet.

Friday will include programs on the latest postal regulations, journalism ethics, the concerns of fake news, and a panel of recent journalism graduates on the landscape they have discovered.

The luncheon speaker will be Associated Press reporter Bill Barrow. Barrow, who covered Alabama politics for the Press-Register in Mobile before joining the Times-Picayune in New Orleans, is now AP's south regional political reporter based in Atlanta.

Industry

The Drone Journalism Lab releases operations manual for free

By: Sean Stroh, Editor and Publisher, Dec. 9, 2016

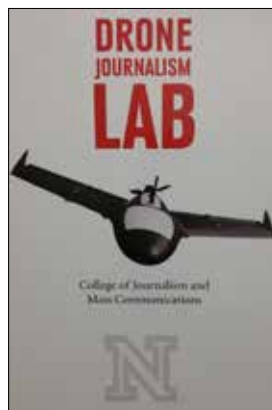
In response to the Federal Aviation Administration drone guidelines formally taking effect this past August, the Drone Journalism Lab decided to release its operations manual as an open source, Creative Commons-licensed document. The 23-page guidebook (found at dronejournalismmlab.org) covers everything from how to conduct a preflight briefing to the ethical issues journalists should consider before flying a drone.

Matt Waite instructs a pair of journalists on how to fly a drone at the first ever Drone Journalism Boot Camp this past August. The boot camp, sponsored by the Google News Lab, trained 62 journalists on new FAA requirements for drone pilots and how those rules impact newsrooms.

"The reaction to the manual has been great.

We've heard from a dozen different news organizations that are using it exactly as we had hoped — a starting place for their own internal policies and procedures," said Matt Waite, a professor of practice in the

College of Journalism and Mass Communications and the founder of the Drone Journalism Lab at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. "We only know about the ones who reach out to us which is the great and terrible thing about giving something away. People can do as they wish with it and there's no strings attached, so our ability to track it is limited."



Under Part 107 of the FAA Regulations, the operator of a drone is required to be at least 16 years old, proficient in English and pass a test "that includes knowledge of airspace, airspace operating requirements and the use of aeronautical charts" as well as other key points.

Waite's manual defines three key roles in each drone flight—the pilot, the observer and the journalist—with the pilot being the only federally required position. The role of the observer is to inform the pilot if something enters the area and is of concern, while the journalist is there to ensure everything needed for the story is being captured.

The legalization of drone journalism comes after a nearly five yearlong journey for Waite, who originally founded the Drone Journalism Lab in November 2011. Less than two years after its founding, he received a cease-and-desist order from the FAA.

The journalistic benefits of drones, especially for disaster coverage, was something Waite recognized almost immediately when he fell upon a com-

pany selling them at a digital mapping conference in San Diego in 2011. At the time, Waite had recently left the St. Petersburg Times (now the Tampa Bay Times) as a reporter covering hurricanes and other natural disasters.

"Having been a newspaper reporter on the ground at tornadoes that destroyed homes and lives for miles, or hurricanes that were hundreds of miles wide, it is really hard in the economy of words that you have in a story to tell it with any impact," Waite said. "A drone, rising just a hundred feet off the ground, will do so much more, so much faster, than a writer could ever do."

However, Waite cautioned journalists moving forward to avoid the temptation of seeing drones as merely a toy.

"Under Part 107 you are a federally licensed pilot and considered as such by the FAA, and you need to take your responsibility for the aircraft and everyone around it seriously. If newsrooms start pressuring employees to do unsafe things, you're going to see your first drone based wrongful termination lawsuits," Waite said. "The first journalist to hurt someone with a drone is going to be an international news story, and not the good kind. Don't be that person. Don't be that newsroom."

Briefs

The Cleburne News was awarded the Alabama Farmers Federation's Communication Award for their agriculture coverage during the group's annual

meeting recently in Montgomery. News Editor Laura Camper and Salesperson Misty Pointer accepted the award.

People

Cecil Folds has joined the staff at The Greenville Advocate. He is a native of Fort Deposit but has lived in Butler County for 73 years.

Folds has 35 years of photography experience,

having owned a photography business for 10 years. He is retired from International Paper, and will be working as a reporter and photographer for the newspaper.

ISWNE is looking for your best editorial

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 tearsheet 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 of 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.

Federal court puts new overtime rule on hold

On November 22, a federal judge in Texas provided a nationwide preliminary injunction preventing the Department of Labor (DOL) from implementing its new overtime rule. The rule would have raised the salary threshold used to determine employees who are eligible for overtime from \$23,600 annually to \$47,476 annually, and established a mechanism for automatically increasing the threshold every three years.

Judge Mazzant, an Obama appointee, cited direct conflict with Congressional intent of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which clearly refers to workers' duties, not their salaries, in the exemption for the executive, administrative and professional employees. According to the court, since the rule is unlawful, the DOL also lacks authority under the FLSA to implement the automatic escalator.

The decision came just days before the December 1, 2016 implementation date as employers – large and small, public and private – were preparing for compliance. Further proceedings to convert the preliminary injunction to a permanent injunction have not yet been scheduled and may not be if the final ruling of the court proceeds through motions.

On Dec. 1, the Justice Department filed an appeal with the traditionally conservative Fifth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. The appeals process is likely to roll into the new administration, and a DOL that is expected to be more business-friendly.

Although it is possible that a final resolution of the case could occur before the new administration, it may be resolved in the beginning of the 115th Congress, through the Congressional Review Act (CRA). The CRA gives

Congress 60 legislative days to undo executive branch regulations through the passage of a joint resolution of disapproval. Since passage of a CRA would require the signature of the President – or two-thirds of Congress to override a veto – they are usually rendered ineffective unless the 60 day window allows for the CRA to rollover into a new administration with a President-Elect more favorable to signing the joint resolution of disapproval. Whether the overtime regulation is eligible for the CRA will depend on if Congress adjourns before the 60 legislative days are met.

From Kristina Zaumseil, News Media Alliance

Obits

Roger Alan Quinn, passed away on December 2, 2016. Roger and his family were celebrating Thanksgiving in Spartanburg, South Carolina, when he collapsed from cardiac arrest.

Quinn was born on March 12, 1951. As a young man, he worked in the community by serving in various service organizations. He was a Mason, achieving the 33rd Degree. He had a long, prestigious newspaper career of nearly 50 years.

He began his career at The Gadsden Times in 1966. He spent time in Maysville, Kentucky, and Hamilton, Alabama, before returning to The Gadsden Times. Quinn was serving as publisher of The Gadsden Times in 2009 when he left to become publisher of the Herald-Journal in Spartanburg. He left the Herald-Journal in 2012 to serve as regional publisher of the company's Central Region, covering 12 newspapers in Florida, Louisiana and California. Roger enjoyed his time in Panama City, Florida, and chose to retire and continue living in Panama City Beach.

Quinn is survived by his wife of 27 years, Sabara Blackwell Quinn, Panama City Beach, Florida; daughter, Anna Marie Quinn, Panama City Beach, Florida; brother, Gary (Patty) Quinn, Freeport, Illinois; sister, Nancy (Kevin) Runner, Southside, Alabama; niece, Sally Quinn; nephews, Doug (Brandy) Quinn; Cory (Heidi) Quinn; Eric Runner. Sheral Blackwell Serafini and John Serafini were loved as family. He is preceded in death by his parents, Vernon and Ivaleen Quinn, and father-in-law, Otis Richard Blackwell.

John Donald "Jack" Simms passed away on Tuesday, No-

vember 8, at Oak Park Nursing Home in Auburn. Jack was born November 22, 1926, in Corvallis, OR, to Bennett Thomas Simms and Lillian LaLonde Simms.

Jack moved to Auburn when he was 11. After graduating from Lee County High School, Jack attended one quarter at Alabama Polytechnic Institute before joining the US Marine Corps to proudly fight in WWII. He was only 17 when he became a member of F Company, 2-F-23, which put him on Iwo Jima with his lifelong friend, Roy Stewart, from Amite, LA, where they fought side-by-side in the worst battle in Marine Corps history. After WWII, Jack went back to school at API, married his sweetheart, Lassie Jo Rounds, was editor of The Plainsman, and graduated in 1949 with a Bachelor's Degree in English-Journalism. He received a Master's Degree at LSU in Journalism and began a career with The Associate Press in 1951 in Atlanta as an editor and reporter. He was promoted to correspondent of the Tampa office.

He worked in Louisville as Bureau Chief of Kentucky, in Boston as Bureau Chief of five New England States and in New York as Deputy General Sports Editor. Jack moved back "home" to Auburn in 1974 as the founding head professor of the Auburn Journalism Department. He served in that role for 18 years. He continued to work with the Associated Press for the Summer Olympic Games in Montreal (1976), Moscow (1980), Los Angeles (1984) and Seoul (1988). One of his most prized accomplishments was co-authoring with his colleague and friend, Mickey Logue, their book, Auburn: A Pictorial History of the Loveliest Village. In 2010, Jack went on an honor flight to Wash-

ington, DC, with WWII vets. That same year, he received one of his greatest honors, the Distinguished Veteran Award, given by the City of Auburn.

Jack loved his family, the Auburn family, his journalism co-workers and students, his Auburn Marine Corps League, his many breakfast club friends, Cotillion and Fasching Club members, his AP colleagues, his 2-F-23 family, Auburn football, game days and dressing in matching attire with "son" Tom Love, and he loved life. Three days before his death, Jack sat in his wheelchair on Pat Dye Field at Auburn University during halftime, being honored as a WWII Marine. He was choked up while waving to the crowd so proud to be in Auburn, so proud to have been a Marine, and so proud to have loved and been loved by so many people.

Jack is survived by his wife of 68 years, Lassie Jo Rounds of Auburn; daughter, Jane Simms Love, and "son"-in-law, Thomas Alan Love, granddaughter, April Jo Love, and Jack's great-grandson who was named after him, Jack Thomas Booth, all from Birmingham, AL; and son, John Matthews Simms, of Troy, AL. He is predeceased by his brother, B. T. Simms, Jr., and wife Mittie Jones Simms; sisters Elizabeth LaLonde Simms, and Marjorie Simms McLean.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to Jack's journalism scholarship. Make your check payable to "Auburn University Foundation" and put "Jack Simms Endowed Scholarship in Journalism" on the memo line of your check. Mail to Auburn Fund, Attn: Gift Processing, 317 S. College St., Auburn, AL 36849.

Don't underestimate the value of business reporting

An exchange in an editors' hotline probed a familiar topic: When is a business announcement considered news, and when



By
Jim Pumarlo

is it an ad? The item in question was a new employee at an auction and realty company.

Editors weighed in with a range of answers, all of them predictable.

"Don't do it. If you give advertising away, they won't pay for it." "Don't mix ad and editorial. News should not be traded for money."

"We came up with a feature we will run up to twice a month called Biz Buzz. It carries short news items on local business if they have something worthy of a mention."

"I don't think it has to be either-or; reasonable compromise can become a win-win."

Count me among those in the camp of the last comment. Expanded and aggressive pursuit of business reporting delivers long-term dividends in the generation of interesting editorial content and revenue.

I bring a special perspective to this conversation – 27 years in community newspapers, 21 as the chief gatekeeper in filtering what news got published. A steady flow of business items crossed my desk.

Today I am director of communications for a major business advocacy organization. During my tenure, I also served as chair of the local Chamber of Commerce Board. That in itself would raise questions among many in the newspaper industry and is a

topic for another column.

Don't misinterpret. Don't expect to read a column promoting that newspapers should bow to every request for business coverage – especially those stories with a positive spin.

But one editor's comments in the hotline exchange particularly caught my attention: "If the business info doesn't fit into the guidelines, they have to run an ad. While our paper depends on advertisers, our readers are just not that interested in reading about business."

Whoa. In all due respect, I encourage all newspapers to broaden their perspective on what is business news – to make it a regular part of your newsroom discussions as an everyday beat.

I also advise you to go slowly on developing business coverage, especially if your newspaper doesn't do much business reporting now. It can be challenging, especially with the barrage of demands on limited resources. You cannot simply turn on the spigot.

A discussion of business news inevitably prompts many editors to focus on routine Main Street occurrences. A clothing store celebrates its grand opening. A restaurant opens, offering a distinctive cuisine. A flower shop celebrates its 25th anniversary. A new plant manager comes on board at a local manufacturer.

It's best to have policies for these and other everyday business news. But these stories should be just a starting point when it comes to brainstorming coverage about employers and employees. Business news is much broader than those items which typically qualify for chamber of commerce newsletters. Coverage should be incorporated in the everyday menu of news.

Think for a moment the number of hours that individuals spend "on the job" – not only the hours behind the desk but the extended hours on the job. Think also about the role of businesses – large and small – in the everyday fabric of your communities.

Does your coverage reflect the broad impact of businesses – the people and their jobs – in your communities? Here are a few story ideas.

When is the last time you compared and contrasted local employment with statewide statistics – and then looked for a feature story representing specific trends?

The federal Affordable Care Act is coming under increasing scrutiny. How are local businesses grappling with federal and state health care reform, and what is the impact on employees?

Are companies having trouble finding qualified workers, and what steps are they taking? Many communities are exploring a variety of public-private partnerships to address the shortage.

It's becoming commonplace for companies to expand into international markets to strengthen their bottom lines. What is happening in your back yard?

There's no time like the present to brainstorm ideas, and broaden the discussion beyond your newsroom. Invite representatives from the advertising staff and other departments; your newspaper family is typically representative of the community. Select a cross-section of community individuals for a brown-bag lunch.

see Pumarlo pg 11

'Tis the Season!



Network News
by
Amy Metzler

No, I'm not talking about the holidays – I'm talking about planning for 2017! It's the perfect time to bundle regional Network ads into your client's packages to expand their reach and expand your wallet.

Any client signing a contract that has regional appeal is a prospect, because you already have a good idea of the events they are planning for and their overall budget. Say you're working with your local Chamber, and they're putting together a contract to advertise their events – why not give them 38+ newspapers to add into their marketing plans?

This is the perfect time of year to introduce new ideas to your current clients, and to have a new pitch to go back to old prospects with. There is always going to be a new competitor in your client's ear, but the Network gives you an opportunity to provide your client with new ideas that keep their budget with you.

Always remember if you have a question about how you can sell into the networks, or even if you just want to ask if I think someone would be a good statewide or regional prospect, you can reach out to me any time. I'm available at 205-871-7737 or by email at amy@alabamapress.org. These networks are in place to make newspaper placement as easy as possible for our advertisers, and you can offer them a huge value by letting them know that you can place their ads statewide or regionally.

Pumarlo


from pg 10

Expand your business coverage, and the business community will take notice. Merchants will see your newspaper as a vehicle to spread their word about products and services in news and advertising.

News and advertising staffs should have regular conversations on business coverage so everyone is in sync on the definition of news and advertising. There also must be a common understanding that substantive reporting of business includes writing about the good as well as the bad. Editors and publishers

will win highest marks from readers and advertisers alike if reporting is fair and consistent. In the end, credible business coverage is a win-win situation. The stories provide solid news content while being a springboard for increasing advertising revenue.


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 and welcomes comments and questions at jim@pumarlo.com.



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.

There are no shortcuts when it comes to success in sales

We're always looking for a shortcut, an easier and faster way of doing things. We can blame it on technology, laziness, or in my case – lack of patience.

On my way in to the office the other morning, I listened as a caller to one of the local talk shows expressed a concern about technology's impact on his job. Seems he feels he will soon be without one. And, no, he doesn't work for a newspaper. He's a truck driver.

There are nearly 5 million truck drivers in the U.S. And apparently, there's a movement to expand the self-driving car technology to the trucking industry. Last week, self-driving truck start-up Otto teamed with Anheuser-Busch to successfully deliver a semi-tractor full of beer from Fort Collins, through Denver and on to southern Colorado. It was a 120-mile trip, and the human driver left his seat to watch most of the action from his sleeper berth in the back. Don't know about you, but the prospect of seeing an eighteen-wheeler passing me with no one in the front seat is a little unnerving.

Even Christmas is not unaffected by the shortcuts. For \$29.88 you can get your very own "Star Shower laser light show" (as seen on TV!), available at your local Walmart. The product's description reads "thousands of dazzling stars illuminate your landscape and home in seconds. No more rickety, unsafe ladders to deal with and no more broken bulbs from tangled strands of lights."

Shortcuts. Do you find your sales team using them? Well of course. Email is the first shortcut that comes into play. There

are 2.4 million emails sent every second. Every second. So think about that for a minute (or the time in which 144 million emails will be sent.) It's easy to see



Ad Vice

by
Brad English

how an email sent to a client will be quickly deleted, forgotten, or both. I remember back in the day, dropping a sales kit in the mail and waiting for a call back was only slightly more effective as today's practice of sending an introductory email and expecting an immediate response. Email can be a useful tool, I just wonder if our sales reps overuse email at the expense of good old-fashioned face-to-face meetings. Nothing, and I do mean nothing, is more effective than sitting across from a prospect to gauge his verbal and non-verbal reaction to a sales pitch.

And speaking of mail, when's the last time you received a letter or note in the mail? In 1990, 268,000,000,000 letters were sent via the USPS. In 2014, that number had dropped to nearly half that - 141,000,000,000. So if you're having a tough time getting a response from an email, sending a good old-fashioned letter may be an option.

Remember the age-old question about the tree falling in the forest? If no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? I'd like to offer that an initial sales call with no follow-up isn't likely to cause much of a "commotion" - to use a word my dad was fond of saying. Only 2% of sales are made on the first call. Yet 80%

of first-time sales calls never receive a call back. Why is that? Maybe it's easy to stop after that first "no." Consider the following:

- 44% of salespeople give up after one "no"
- 22% give up after two "nos"
- 14% give up after three "nos"
- 12% give up after four "nos"

That tells you that 92% of sales people give up after four "nos." And yet we have heard time and time again that most prospects take at least five calls or touches before they are sold. That's why in most industries, eight percent of the sales reps account for eighty percent of the sales. Eight percent. That's a pretty exclusive club.

We took a drive through the neighborhood the other night, looking at the Christmas decorations. I counted seven of those Walmart specials – the "star shower laser light show." It's a decorator's shortcut. They don't look too terribly bad, but just knowing there were no lights to untangle or the rickety ladder on which to risk one's life makes it seem much cheaper than it's \$29.88 price tag.

There's no short-cut to success in sales. And while getting in front of a prospect isn't getting any easier, it's more important than ever. So this Christmas, let's hope Santa brings all of us a renewed sense of spirit and determination. May 2017 find many more of us in the group of eight percent.

Brad English is advertising manager for APA. He can be reached at 205.871.7737 or email him at brad@alabamapress.org

How to handle unspoken objections

Brandon is an advertising manager who wants his team to be prepared for all sales situations. "We spend a lot of time on sales strategy," he said, "because that helps us cut down on unexpected surprises. To use a baseball comparison, we want to be able to hit the curveball."

"As any sales person will tell you, the most common curveball is an objection," Brandon explained. "Most prospects have some kind of objection, even if they don't say it out loud. Unspoken objections can be real sales killers. You're sailing along thinking everything is going fine, then at the end of the conversation the prospect says, 'I'll think about it and let you know.' That creates a real predicament for a sales person."

"There's an old saying that silence is golden, but that's not true in selling," Brandon said. "Sometimes it's your job to verbalize what the prospect is thinking. If you don't, the objection that is lurking below the surface may never come to light. I disagree with the idea that you can't answer an objection you don't hear. An unspoken objection can sink your presentation just as fast as one that is shouted."

Brandon explained that the key is to be prepared to weave answers to objections into the presentation. The good news is that most objections are predictable. If a sales person has done his or her homework, there's no reason to be surprised to hear a question about price, readership statistics, ad position or production.

"Take price, for example," he said. "A prospect may be embarrassed to say, 'I don't think I can afford to advertise in your paper.' You can address that by bringing

up the objection yourself, then reassuring them that it's natural to be concerned about price. I encourage our team to say something like, 'Some advertisers wonder about the affordability of advertising in our paper.' Or 'People often ask how our rates



Ad-libs
By John Foust

compare to other media outlets.' Or 'You may be wondering how this could fit your ad budget.' Then they answer the objection just like they would if the prospect brought it up."

This is a variation of the old Feel-Felt-Found formula, which says, "I understand how you feel about price. Other advertisers have felt the same way. And they found benefits such as..." The difference here is that the sales person brings up the topic. But

as Brandon cautions, don't use the words "feel," "felt" or "found." That formula has been around so long – and those words have been misused by so many sales people – that they can make prospects think they are being manipulated.

"Some prospects actually seem relieved when a difficult objection is mentioned by the sales person," he said. "I've seen them nod their heads and say, 'Yeah, I was thinking about that.' In a sense, it clears the air and makes them more receptive in the rest of the conversation."

In other words, your prospects probably won't object when you mention their unspoken objections.

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

"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

The deadline for entries is Jan. 11, 2017.