

# AlaPressa

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA PRESS ASSOCIATION  
SEPTEMBER 2017

## Important Dates

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### Online Media Campus

*Headlines That Pop!*  
Presenter: Tim Schmitt and Jean  
Hodges  
Thursday, September 21

*How to Sell the Value of Digital  
Without Overselling your Client*  
Presenter: Craig Crile  
Friday, September 29

*Register Now*  
[www.onlinemediacampus.com](http://www.onlinemediacampus.com)

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AlabamaPublicNotices.com  
Have you signed up?

Training sessions  
Friday, September 15  
Tuesday, September 19  
Monday, September 25  
Wednesday, September 27  
Thursday, September 28

*Please contact the APA office if  
you have not yet signed up for a  
training session.*

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APA Media Summit  
Friday, February 16, 2018  
Birmingham Marriott

Boone newspapers in Texas hit with  
flooding from Hurricane Harvey

Southern Star honored by Ozark  
City Council

Cherokee County Herald sold

Cox named publisher in Scottsboro

Valley Times-News sold

Martin retires from  
The Montgomery Independent

Start planning now for National  
Newspaper Week: Oct. 1 - 7

Greer named president of AEJMC



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Eddie Dodd, The Abbeville Herald  
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*Port Arthur News building*

## Boone newspapers in Texas hit with flooding from Hurricane Harvey

The Port Arthur News and The Orange Leader, both part of the Boone Newspaper group, were flooded when Hurricane Harvey came ashore a second time in Texas, forcing them to evacuate their office and work remotely.

As the storm approached, The Port Arthur News, a six-day daily, warned readers their distribution might be affected by the approaching storm. The newspaper office was flooded with two feet of water, and no staff member was spared damage to their personal property.

With the help of other Boone newspapers, the newspaper put out a six-page edition and an e-edition during the days that followed. The papers were distributed free to locations where residents congregated and to the shelters. In less than a week, the papers were back on their regular publication schedule.

Selma Times-Journal Editor Jus-

tin Averette traveled to the area to assist. Thomas Graning, son of Troy Messenger Publisher Stacy Graning, was also among those who went to help. Michele Gerlach, publisher and editor of the Andalusia Star-News, has also traveled there to assist the Texas Boone papers as their local staffs try to recover after the wake of Harvey.

Graning, a student at Ole Miss, put his photojournalism talents to work capturing the devastation with pictures. You can see two of his photo galleries here of flooding and recovery efforts: <http://www.panews.com/2017/09/01/photo-gallery-views-of-flood-in-surrounding-region/> and <http://www.panews.com/2017/09/02/photo-gallery-waiting-for-relief/>.

A GoFundMe page has been set up to help the employees of the two newspapers. Carolyn and Jim Boone

see **Harvey impacts newspapers** pg 3

## Southern Star honored by Ozark City Council

The Ozark City Council recently recognized The Southern Star and Publisher/Editor Joe Adams with a proclamation and certificate of appreciation for 60 years of service to the community.

Mayor Bob Bunning presented the proclamation to "Newspaper Joe" as he is known, at a recent meeting

of the council. "Newspaper Joe is a fourth generation editor of the publication, and the 84-year-old is the state's oldest serving editor," the proclamation reads. Mayor Bunning also presented Adams with a key to the city of Ozark.

see **Southern Star** pg 3

## Cherokee County Herald sold

David Crawford, owner of The Post in Centre, has purchased the Cherokee County Herald, also in Centre, from the Marietta, Ga.,-based Times Journal, Inc. This returns the Herald to local ownership for the first time since 1988.

The Herald began publication in 1938. The Post, a free circulation newspaper, was started in 1985. The combined circulation of the two newspapers will exceed 17,000.

The staff at The Herald will remain in place: Terry Dean, news

editor; Shannon Fagan, sports editor; Vicki Robinson, account specialist; and Michelle Tucker classified and legal clerk, will all remain in their respective positions.

Scott Wright, managing editor of The Post, will assist with page layout and promotions for the next several months. Crawford says he anticipates that each publication will continue to operate exclusive of the other following the transition of ownership.



Cherokee County Herald

## Harvey impacts newspapers

from pg 2

have authorized a \$35,000 donation from the Boone Foundation to

kick off the fundraising. The funds will be used to benefit staff members of these newspapers to aid them in re-establishing their homes and family needs following Hurricane Harvey and the inundation of these two cities by flood waters driven by historic rainfall and to benefit the communities these newspapers serve.

Here is the link to the GoFundMe page: <https://www.gofundme.com/portarthurnews-orangeleader-staff>

Funds raised will be administered by Port Arthur News Publisher Rich Macke, The Orange Leader Publisher Bobby Tingle, and Boone Newspapers CEO Todd Carpenter. First steps will be to help with immediate and basic needs of employees, then to aid in recovery and restoration of housekeeping when the time comes for each employee to take that step.

## Southern Star

from pg 2

With the last edition of August, Adams marked his 60th complete year as editor of The Southern Star, his family newspaper. The first edition of the paper was published in 1867 from the town of Newton, the newspaper's original home. The newspaper moved to Ozark shortly after the county seat was moved there.

*THE SOUTHERN STAR CITED – Mayor Bob Bunting presented a proclamation to Joseph H. Adams, editor-publisher, recognizing the 150th year of publication for the Southern Star and the 60th anniversary as editor for Adams. Joining in the presentation are grandsons Adams Dawkins, Lofton Dawkins, son John Phillip Adams, daughter Sara Elizabeth Dawkins, and son-in-law Charles Dawkins.*





## Cox named publisher in Scottsboro



Brandon Cox

Former Southern Newspapers Inc. (SNI) Publisher Brandon Cox has been named publisher of The Daily Sentinel in Scottsboro, SNI President Dolph Tillotson

announced recently.

"We're very happy Brandon has decided to rejoin Southern," Tillotson said. "I think he'll bring a lot of skill and energy to the position in Scottsboro. Brandon has specific experience in running a production hub and great sales organization skills that apply well here."

Cox fills the role handled most recently by interim General Manager and Advertising Director Ken Bonner.

"I'm thrilled to be returning to Southern Newspapers, and to community journalism," said Cox. "Over the last 10 years, newspapers have become a part of who I am. I believe deeply in the mission of community journalism, and cannot wait to return to the Southeast and serve Jackson County and surrounding areas."

Cox worked previously with SNI from 2014 to 2016 as publisher of the Bay City Tribune in Bay City, Texas. In the last year, he has worked as a member of the Corporate Communications and External Affairs team at STP Nuclear Operating Co., which operates a two-unit nuclear power plant southwest

of Houston.

Before moving to Texas, Cox was advertising director of The Courier-Times in New Castle, Indiana. Cox began his newspaper career as a graphic artist at the Messenger-Inquirer in Owensboro, Kentucky.

He has extensive graphic design skills, and has also owned and operated his own design company.

A native of Owensboro, Cox has a degree in graphic design from Kentucky Wesleyan College.

Cox and his wife, Kayla, have two small children: daughter Alyssa, and son Marshall. He enjoys hunting, fishing, cycling, playing guitar and spending time outdoors with his family.

## Valley Times-News sold

Boone Newspapers, Inc. (BNI) has reached an agreement to purchase The Valley Times-News in Lanett. The transaction is scheduled to close on Oct. 1, 2017.

The newspaper is owned by Nell Walls, and covers Valley and Lanett in Alabama and West Point in Georgia.

BNI manages newspapers in similar sized communities in Alabama, Georgia,

Kentucky, Louisiana, Tennessee, Texas, Michigan, Mississippi, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia. "We are honored to succeed Nell Walls, and appreciate the strong foundations she and her late husband Tom Walls put down for these newspapers," Jim Boone, chairman of BNI, said. "My family and I will see that our obligations are fulfilled to these communities and the

Walls family."

Current Publisher Cy Wood is retiring at the end of September. Wood began his career at The Valley Times-News in 1971. He worked at newspapers in Louisiana and Georgia before returning to Lanett. He served as APA president in 2009.

## Martin retires from The Montgomery Independent

Owner and longtime publisher of The Montgomery Independent, Robert A. Martin, has retired. Over the last several years he has gradually passed the duties of running the newspaper to his oldest son, Jeff Martin. Effective Aug. 1, Bob decided to complete the handover.

Martin began his newspaper career with The Florence Times, now known as The TimesDaily, while attending Florence State University, now the University of North Alabama (UNA).

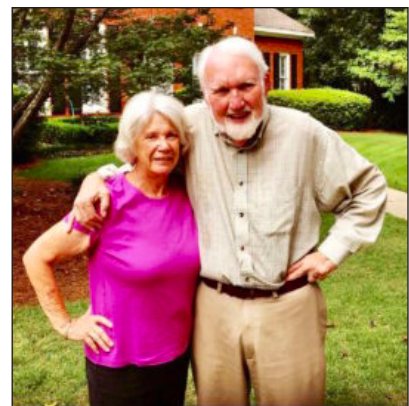
As a college student, Martin began in the mailroom, worked in circulation and started covering high school football games. He became a sports reporter and eventually sports editor. He continued to advance at The Times, ultimately becoming its executive editor.

In 1972, Martin, with family in tow, followed newly elected Chief Justice Howell Heflin to Montgomery where

he began a 25-year career with the Administrative Office of the Courts working under Chief Justices Heflin, C.C. "Bo" Torbert, Sonny Hornsby and Perry Hooper Sr. His wife, Nancy, spent much of her career at Saint James School where she taught first grade.

He is also a graduate of Jones School of Law and spent many years as a coach and president of Dixie Youth baseball, an activity the entire Martin household participated in growing up.

Throughout his career in both the newspaper business and as director of the courts, Martin became friends with and met many important figures, not the least of which was President John Kennedy. He also wrote many interesting stories about famous people in Alabama and the South. One of those was Buford Pusser, the sheriff depicted in the famous movie "Walking Tall." Pus-



Bob Martin with wife Nancy

er was the sheriff of McNairy County, Tennessee, not far from Florence.

"He was truly one of the most fascinating persons I ever met, and he meant business," Martin said.

see **Martin retires** pg 5

## Martin retires

from pg 4

While at the AOC, Bob played a vital role in passing the Judicial Article, which unified and standardized the public's interaction with Alabama courts. Having the same form in Huntsville courts and Mobile courts may seem like a no-brainer today, but for many years it wasn't that organized.

"It was while he was working for Chief Justice Heflin when I first met Bob," said longtime Circuit Judge and former state Sen. Jerry Fielding. "He had worked on what became a constitutional amendment to create the unified judicial system, which as far as I am concerned has been an outstanding example of a judicial system. Any kind of judiciary is going to have its shortcomings, but the system our state created is second to none in the United States, and Bob played a big part in that. Bob has been a friend of mine and a servant to the people of Alabama. Now that he has decided to retire, I think he deserves the rest."

Martin said he cherishes the time he spent with the state and is especially proud of his long, ongoing efforts to improve the justice system in Alabama. "My time with the Courts was very rewarding and exciting, but my first love was always 'newspapering,'" Martin said using one of his favorite phrases.

After spending 25 years working for the State of Alabama, Bob felt a call to

continue his first career, the news business. Martin purchased The Montgomery Independent in March of 1997, and soon after retired from the State of Alabama to dedicate all of his time to the publication.

His primary goal as editor and publisher of The Montgomery Independent was to remain dedicated to covering community affairs, especially those events that received little or no attention from other media outlets. Martin's weekly editorial was syndicated in other newspapers throughout the state and was a regular guest on Alabama Public Television's For the Record and Capitol Journal.

One area of excellence for the newspaper under Martin's leadership was state government reporting and opinion. Martin worked diligently to provide a variety of commentary related to state issues, which became a hallmark of the newspaper along with its reporting of local society events and the coverage of high school sports.

In 2003, he founded another newspaper, The Millbrook Independent, along with Art Parker, who was also serving as the sports editor of The Montgomery Independent. That publication enjoyed more than a dozen years of success until the company sold it in 2015 and Parker returned to the Montgomery newspaper. Today Parker serves as editor and handles the day-to-day operations of The Montgomery Independent.

Bob served as president of the Alabama Press Association (APA) Journalism Foundation in 2008. Felicia Mason, executive director of the APA, remembers Martin's service to the foundation. "Bob has provided sound leadership

to APA through his service on the APA Board and as president of the APA Journalism Foundation. His interest in journalism education helped countless students through the grants, internships and scholarships offered through the Foundation. He was a staunch advocate for programs supporting high school journalism and for the Newspapers In Education programs, which provided newspapers to classrooms throughout the state."

Martin's son Jeff will assume the position of publisher of the newspaper, and Parker will serve as editor. "I guess it is only fitting, seeing how I have followed in my father's footsteps, both as a lobbyist and writer, throughout my professional career," said the younger Martin, adding, "Dad's footprints made quite an impression, and I'll do my best to fill them as he is deserving of some much needed relaxation."

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*"My time with the Courts was very rewarding and exciting, but my first love was always 'newspapering,'"*

- Bob Martin



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## Start planning now for National Newspaper Week: Oct. 1 - 7

This year we mark the 77th anniversary of National Newspaper Week (NNW), Oct. 1-7. The annual observance celebrates and emphasizes the impact of newspapers to communities large and small all over.

NNW is sponsored by Newspaper Association Managers, Inc., the organization of North American press associations representing news media on a state and provincial, regional and national basis. Materials for the 2017 NNW will be available in mid-September for download at [www.NationalNewspaperWeek.com](http://www.NationalNewspaperWeek.com). Materials from 2016 now appears and will be archived once the 2017 material is posted. Reminders will go out in coming weeks, but please mark your calendars now and make plans.



This year's theme is "Real Newspapers ... Real News!" The aim is to applaud and underscore newspaper media's role as the leading provider of news in print, online or via mobile devices. The NNW content kit will contain editorials, editorial cartoons, promotional house

ads and more; all are available for download at no charge to daily and non-daily newspapers across North America.

National Newspaper Week participants are encouraged to download materials and devote as many column inches as possible to reinforce the importance of newspapers to your communities. Publishers and editors of course may take advantage of the industry-wide

promotion by editorializing for their own readers about their newspapers' unique community relevance. This can be about your government watchdog role, coverage of community events, publication of timely public notices, etc.

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## Greer named president of AEJMC

Dr. Jennifer Greer, associate provost for administration at the University of Alabama, has been elected president of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

While faculty from the College of Communication and Information Sciences has always had an active role in AEJMC, Greer is the first UA professor to hold the AEJMC presidency. Greer, who has a faculty appointment in the department of journalism and creative media, was sworn in as president at the AEJMC Annual



Dr. Jennifer Greer

Conference in Chicago on Aug. 11.

Greer has been a member of AEJMC since 1993 and has served in many leadership roles for the group, including chair of the group's Standing Committee on Teaching, chair of the Finance Committee, head of the Mass Communication and Society Division, and as a member of the AEJMC Board of Directors.

In her term as president, Greer wants to focus the association's efforts on maintaining relevance in today's changing higher education environment and ensuring strong participation in the association's divisions and interest groups. Leadership in those subdivisions of AEJMC is where future leaders will emerge not only for the association but also for journalism and mass communication educators in the nation's colleges and universities.

Greer earned bachelor's degrees in journalism and political science from the University of Missouri, a master's degree in political science from the University of Kansas and a doctorate in mass communication from the University of Florida. Before moving into teaching, she worked as a newspaper reporter and editor. In her time at the University of Alabama, she has served as interim dean for the College of Communication and Information Sciences and chair of the department of journalism.

## Who says print is dead?

Sean Kelly, a student at Sparta Academy in Evergreen, stopped off at the Spirit Travel Center to pick up the Aug. 16 copy of The Evergreen Courier. He's on the front page!

Publisher Robert Bozeman was running a little behind. Store clerk, Vivian, said people had been stopping by the store all afternoon looking for the paper. APA Executive Director Felicia Mason happened to stop by as Bozeman was arriving with the papers. "People were grabbing the papers before he could get in the door," Mason said. "Community newspapers are alive and well and providing community news that people can't get anywhere else."



Sean Kelly

## People

**Will Jacobs** is the new sports journalist at the Mountain Valley News in Rainsville. Jacobs is a graduate of Geraldine High School and is currently a student at Northeast Community College.

**Kasey DeCastr**a, community editor for The Moundville Times and Sumter County Record-Journal in Livingston, was recognized recently by the Alabama Association of Conservation Districts with the 2017 Outstanding Conservation Communication Award.

DeCastr created a page on the newspaper's website in 2012 to publish outdoors and conservation pages that were not published in the newspaper, expanding the coverage in Sumter County and the greater West Alabama area.

**Jake Aaron** has been promoted to advertising director at the Daily Mountain Eagle in Jasper. He has worked as a sales consultant at the paper for the past four years.

Aaron is a Jasper native and a 2006 graduate of Walker County High School. He has a bachelor's degree in business management and marketing from UAB.

## Upcoming Webinars

### Headlines that Pop!

Thursday, September 21

Presenters

Jean Hodges and Tim Schmitt,  
GateHouse Media

[www.onlinemediacampus.com](http://www.onlinemediacampus.com)

### Selling the Value of Digital

Friday, September 29

Presenter

Craig Crile,  
Group C Digital Marketing and Consulting  
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## Industry News

# Slow Mail Costs Money

By Matthew Paxton IV, publisher of *The News-Gazette*, Lexington, VA  
President of the National Newspaper Association

Most people get mail every day, Monday through Saturday. But what happens when the mail comes later than we expect?

We found out a few years ago, when the Postmaster General had to take away overnight First-Class and Periodicals mail from most of the nation. That caused a problem for a lot of consumers and businesses. Now, we may be facing a new slowdown if something isn't done by Congress very soon.

Who needs the mail, some people ask? We have the Internet now. But a lot happens in the mail, and a lot goes wrong when it is late. To begin with, mail is the backbone for about \$1.3 trillion in jobs, products and services. And then there is the personal impact.

People send in their credit card payments at the last minute when cash is tight. The payment reaches the credit card company late, and credit scores take a beating. That causes loans for cars and houses to get more expensive.

Many people count on the mail for medicines. A missed dosage can mean a trip to the hospital.

Small businesses count on the day's mail to bring in cash from customers. A few days' delay can mean a trip to the bank for a loan. Loans cost money, and put pressure on the business to raise prices.

Some things just can't be emailed. It is hard to send your grandkid's birthday cake overnight by the Internet. Some farm supply houses use the mail to deliver small animals quickly. They certainly can't zap them across broadband, or allow them to die in a post office waiting for a mail truck. And then there are legal documents that have to arrive by certified mail. Also, I have to mention late newspapers, where sales coupons are missed and public event announcements arrive after the event. Newspapers like this one that rely on the mail for delivery to readers took it on the chin the past few years, with disappointed readers canceling their subscriptions.

We are at another crunch point. The US Postal Service has a \$57 billion deficiency on its balance sheet, most of it caused by Congress. Fixing it may require the Postmaster General to close more post offices and mail sorting plants, eliminate mail-hauling truck routes and ground the airmail. The mail would be slowed down even further.

USPS last received a major overhaul by Congress in 2006. The next year, Steve Jobs appeared on a stage with a new gadget called an iPhone. Since then, Congress and the Postmaster General have been grappling with the tough problem of collecting enough postage for a system that must reach ever more mailing addresses in America, but with less mail—though still important mail—to pay for the service. So far, Congress has done nothing but tinker.

This is nothing new. Since the birth of the nation, Congress bogged down many times in finding resources for this essential economic backbone — one of the few government services actually in the Constitution! Usually a slow Congress results in slower mail.

The choices are tough, and Congress is never good at tough choices. Businesses that buy postage cannot afford big increases and will simply find alternatives if the rates are jacked up too much. Consumers cannot afford to pay more for slower mail. USPS wants to protect jobs for its workers.

Of course, USPS is not supported by tax dollars, but by postage. And no taxpayer money should be needed unless Congress lets the system deteriorate further. There is a better choice.

A bill was sent to House Ways and Means Committee last March by the House committee responsible for overseeing the US Postal Service. The bill, HR 756, is now sponsored by Republican Rep. Mark Meadows of North Carolina, and three Democrats: Reps. Elijah Cummings of Maryland; Gerald Connolly of Virginia; and Stephen Lynch of Massachusetts. All are experts on postal matters. That this

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*Some things just can't be emailed. It is hard to send your grandkid's birthday cake overnight by the Internet. Some farm supply houses use the mail to deliver small animals quickly. They certainly can't zap them across broadband, or allow them to die in a post office waiting for a mail truck.*

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group, who agree on little else, could come up with a solution says a lot about this bill.

The legislation would require about 77,000 retired postal workers who draw benefits from a federal benefits health fund to use Medicare instead. Medicare taxes were already paid for these workers. The Medicare fund owes these retirees their benefits anyway. It is just that this group has chosen a different benefit for themselves, which they were allowed to do. Now it is time for them to follow the practice of most private sector workers and draw their earned benefits from Medicare instead.

Commercial mailers would have to accept a small postage increase to pay most of the new cost to Medicare. But the benefits to the federal budget and to USPS would be substantial. Overall, the federal deficit would be \$6 billion less if the bill passed.

see mail pg 9



# RJI Fellow expands work on mobile news app for smaller news organizations

by Christopher Guess

Push notifications from The New York Times, the Guardian, BuzzFeed and The Washington Post alert us every day to scandal, horror, scientific achievement and grief. However, this capability lies mainly in the realm of large news organizations.

Without a 24-hour news desk, smaller news outlets — especially weeklies and investigative centers — struggle to remind users to visit their websites.

If a 20,000-circulation city daily wants to break into the big ranks and build its own mobile app, the publisher can expect to spend at least \$50,000 per platform, and a minimum of six months of work, to bring one online. That's not small change for many small-market newspapers.

A few years ago, I was discussing this problem with a friend who runs a well-known Serbian investigative center. I figured there must be, somewhere, an open-source solution for this. When WordPress was created, it was from a similar idea — that there could be a free and open-source blogging platform that people could use instead of having to recreate the wheel every time they wanted to start a new site.

After looking around, there weren't any options for mobile apps, so I decided to build one.

I spent two years working in con-

junction with the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project developing the apps, field testing the software and deploying it to eight organizations supporting seven different languages.

Now, the Reynolds Journalism Institute is graciously supporting Push, my open-source mobile news app project. I want to make it accessible to everyone, including those small- and medium-sized news organizations that could never afford, or have the time, to hire proper app developers.

Push notifications, and the itch they scratch, are just the start. Mobile apps can offer much more than a traditional mobile-optimized website. They can cache stories offline for reading when on trains or in a house with poor service. You can conduct donation drives directly in the product, using Apple Pay and PayPal. The apps provide granular analytics as well, allowing for the opti-

mization of when, where and how to send notifications.

I've already begun research into building anti-circumvention tools directly and seamlessly into the apps. Even for users who have never heard of a VPN or TOR, my Push app deployment will automatically bridge the gap to the outside world, whether a repressive regime wants the reader to or not.

Over the next year I will continue my work of building a community of developers, publishers and readers around the project. With this cohort, we can establish best practices and practical best standards for newsrooms with audiences in the thousands.

*Christopher Guess is a 2017-2018 RJI Fellow and creator of Push, an open-source mobile app. [cguess@gmail.com](mailto:cguess@gmail.com)*

## Mail

from pg 8

And the US Postal Service would save about \$30 billion over 10 years. The rest of its red ink would have to be erased through new efficiencies, and many steps have already been taken to find those, without creating slower mail. All that needs to happen is for House Speaker Paul Ryan to put the bill up for a successful vote before it is too late.

If you are concerned about losing more mail service, particularly in rural America, the way to protect it is to contact your Representative and ask for a big push for HR 756 in September. [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) will take you to a message page for your Member of Congress.

## Editor talking to reporters

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## Into the Issues

By Al Cross

Last month I shared the story of a community newspaper editor who showed an effective way to respond to concerns of readers, often not politely expressed, that his newspaper was liberally biased. Brian Hunt of the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin is an experienced editor, but an intern at a Kentucky weekly newspaper took a very similar approach in a manner that was just as professional. Here's an adapted version of our report on The Rural Blog:

Josh Qualls was having difficulty finding a source to help him explain how the House health-insurance bill might affect seniors on Medicaid in Lincoln County, Kentucky, where he recently completed a summer internship with The Interior Journal in Stanford. So he went to the Boone Newspapers weekly's Facebook page.

"The very first response echoed some of the most disheartening, gut-wrenching rhetoric we've seen directed toward journalists in recent months. Its author offered a scathing indictment of the news media and ac-

cused us of being liberally biased," Qualls wrote in his intern report to the Kentucky Press Association, relying on memory because the poster had deleted the post. "She talked about how much 'Obamacare' didn't help her health-hindered family, so I saw a way to connect with her."

Qualls wrote, "We appreciate your feedback ... and we're sorry to learn about your health problems and your family's health-care situation. Our hearts go out to you." He said no one at the newspaper "was happy with the Affordable Care Act allowing premiums to increase at an alarming rate," but said journalists must "seek the truth and report it," as the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics says.

"The truth, based on what we know about the American Health Care Act so far, is that these proposals may have long-term effects that are even more damaging than Obamacare," Qualls posted. "The Congressional Budget Office reported last Wednesday that while premiums would likely

decrease for younger Americans, older Americans would likely see a substantial increase and lose many of their benefits."

Then he wrote this, which KPA highlighted in its report to members: "In this newsroom, we all have different political beliefs but respect each other. What we all have in common is that we're biased against the things that harm the community we serve, and by community we mean people like you." That is a thoughtful, engaging statement of which any editor could be proud.

Qualls reported to KPA, "The author quickly wrote back. She said that she never really thought about it that way and would consider what we wrote, that she appreciated our effort to connect with her and to explain what we were trying to accomplish." He and Editor Abigail Whitehouse, who had approved his message, "were ecstatic," yelling, "We got through to someone!"

see **Issues** pg

## This time, privacy outweighs right to know

By Jim Pumarlo

Public records are the foundation for reporting a range of stories important to your readers.

Police reports reveal a string of continuing break-ins in a neighborhood. Minutes from a school board committee reveal discussions and eventual recommendation to close an elementary school. Letters sent from a state agency to landowners identify potential locations for off-site location of spent fuel from a nearby nuclear power plant.

All of these stories crossed my desk during my tenure as editor of the Red Wing (Minn.) Republican Eagle. As you might suspect, none of the news sources willingly volunteered the information. We relied on open meeting and data practices laws to get the information. Our newsroom credo: The more roadblocks thrown our way to gain access to public information, the more aggressive we became in our efforts.

At the same time, newsrooms should not report public records with reckless abandon. As with any right,



by  
Jim  
Pumarlo

newspapers have an accompanying responsibility.

Consider our front-page report of a 7-week-old boy who was revived after suffering cardiac arrest. The "heroes" included the foster parents along with the Red Wing police lieutenant and other emergency personnel who responded – all whom we identified.

One name was purposely absent from the story – the name of the child, who was under foster care. We also didn't publish the child's name in the ambulance runs printed on a separate page.

In this case, we decided the potential hurt to the natural parent outweighed the public's right to know the

identity of the infant. We made the decision after speaking with personnel at the county social services.

This was one of those rare cases where we withheld information.

Our reticence stemmed from the fear that one or more of the child's parents might be living in the area. Identifying the child, who was born with medical problems, would raise the obvious question among acquaintances of the family: Why was the boy not in his parents' home?

The county welfare director confirmed our suspicion. In nearly all cases, foster children are placed with families in the home county. That was true here as well; one of the youth's natural parents lived in our home county.

In the final analysis, we asked ourselves whether we still had a compelling story without identifying the child. As the welfare director said, "It was a great story. The crew did a terrific job."

see **privacy** pg 11

# What golf teaches us about advertising

By John Foust



## Ad-libs

By John Foust

I love golf, but I'm a terrible golfer. I'm the only golfer I know who has lost someone else's golf ball. On a best-ball round, I mistakenly hit the wrong ball – directly into a lake.

Regardless of skill level, golf holds plenty of lessons for the business of selling and creating advertising. Let's take a look:

1. Club selection matters. Each club has a specific purpose. Drive with a driver, hit long approach shots with a fairway wood, chip with a wedge, putt with a putter.

In advertising, there are tactics for different marketing situations. Image ads are designed to build brand identities and response ads are used to generate immediate results.

2. Pre-contact is important. A golf swing starts with lining up the shot, having the right stance and grip, then taking a proper backswing.

Any experienced sales person will tell you to prepare in advance for an appointment. Learn your prospect's marketing objectives,

study their previous ad campaigns, and research their competitors' advertising.

3. Follow-through is equally important. A swing doesn't end after contact. And neither does a sales conversation. When you return to the office, there are "thank you" emails, additional facts and figures to research, and campaign recommendations to develop.

4. Every hole has a goal. And every ad campaign has an objective. At the completion of a particular marketing effort, your client wants to generate x-results. Along the way, there are interim goals, such as weekly and monthly targets.

5. Every hole has hazards. Obstacles are part of the game. There are bunkers, creeks, and out-of-bounds areas. Some are visible from a distance, but others seem to appear out of nowhere.

In advertising, there are sales objections, high-maintenance clients, fickle target markets and challenging deadlines.

6. Play it where it lies. You will make some shots from level ground, where the ball sits nicely on top of the grass. But others you will have to hit from tall weeds or sand or behind a tree. Whatever the lie, concentrate on the goal and choose the right club.

7. Grain and dew affect put-

ting. The surface of the green can be compared to market conditions, which are beyond your control. Read and respond to those conditions correctly, and you're on the way to a successful campaign. Read them incorrectly, and the ball will veer off course.

8. Close doesn't count. A score can't be counted until the ball is in the hole. Likewise, a publication can't build its business on sales that are almost made.

9. Divots should be repaired. It's important to keep client relationships in order. If something goes wrong – in a conversation or in a campaign – take immediate steps to put things back on track.

10. A tournament can be won by one stroke. It's crucial to pay attention to details, because little things make a difference. A sales conversation can turn quickly on one perceptive question. A typographical error can make or break a marketing proposal. And one word can determine the success of a headline.

*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*

## Privacy

from pg 10

Editors and reporters should remain vigilant in monitoring public information and the needs of readers. As with this instance, decisions to publish should be based on the merits of each case.

Flexibility is the best posture. Editors should try to blend policies to best serve community needs. But public information should be sacred ground to newspapers. It should be

to readers as well.

If editors bow to readers' wishes – and they were able to eliminate publication of news at the ease of a phone call – imagine the vast incompleteness of reports. An entire newspaper's content would become suspect.

Readers often ask why newspapers stand firm on access to and publication of these records. It's much like the proverbial "if you give an inch, they'll take a mile." If the press agrees to one concession, all too often an individual or agency will try to stretch the rules. Soon laws are enacted with additional restrictions on what once was routinely public data.

Newspapers should stand firm on the premise that readers are best served by a full menu rather than a selective serving of public data. Your argument is strongest if you deliver prompt and accurate reports.

*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).*



# A good sales staff, starts with a sold sales staff

Depending on how long you've been in the newspaper business, and to some extent the size of your operation, you've no doubt had the opportunity to hear and attend countless workshops and read dozens of columns and articles on the makeup of a great salesperson.

So what's the one thing that all salespeople must do to be successful? Easy. Make the calls, right? Whether it's setting up an appointment, or making the call itself, some may say that's the number one thing a salesperson must be willing to do in order to succeed. Well, that's certainly important.

But I'm convinced what goes into making a good, if not great, salesperson is not unlike the trait someone at the top of any profession possesses. Teachers, lawyers, doctors. You name it. Some are better at their craft than others. So what separates the really good or great ones from the average? Believing in what they do. And I'm talking really believing.

We've all heard and read about the importance of knowing your product. But what about believing in your product and the solutions it can provide your customer? It's one thing to know the features and benefits of what you are selling, but if your sales rep doesn't believe in the product, why should the prospect?

Do they think it's priced fairly? Why or why not? What about delivering the audience? Newspapers are dying, right? Do they believe that? If you have someone on your team with any doubt, you can bet his/her prospect will have tons [of doubt].

Over the past few years, I've spent a good bit of time in Montgomery lobbying on behalf of our newspapers. And I've noticed the most successful lobbyists not only know both sides of the issue regarding a piece of legislation, but firmly believe in what they are "selling" to the legislators.

What if you walked into next week's sales meeting and told your reps you expected them to call on 10 new accounts this week? They would be offering full page ads – but with free color. Then you told them you expected at least 5 full pages, what would be the reaction? How many

would be excited? Not too many, I'm guessing.

Now what if you told them they could sell the full pages for \$25 a piece? Maybe a different reaction? Probably.



Ad Vice  
by  
Brad English

That may be somewhat of an oversimplification. But we spend so much time in sales meetings talking about selling the value of our product to our customers. I wonder how much time we spend selling its value to our own salespeople?

We hear all of the time about consumer confidence as a barometer of what to expect when it comes to projecting future economic conditions. But what about the confidence of our own salespeople?

I remember years ago a young kicker who played for Alabama named Leigh Tiffin. As a true freshman he came in for the injured starter to kick the game winning, 47-yard field goal against Vanderbilt in the first game of the 2006 season. (I know. Vanderbilt. But these were dark times for the Tide.) However, two weeks later against a very strong Arkansas team, he would miss three field goals in a 24–23 overtime loss, including the game-tying extra point.

In many ways, the product an athlete sells is his ability to succeed on the field of play. And Leigh's confidence was shot. He had lost faith in the product. Fortunately for him and those who follow the Tide, Bama made a coaching change the following year, and his confidence was restored. He went on to become Alabama's leading scorer.

It's all about believing in what you are selling and that the product truly benefits the customer. But your sales reps better be prepared for the tough questions. Rest assured your advertisers have heard the stories of newspapers cutting back on staff and frequency of publication. Our competition continues to point to reports

of declining circulation. Your folks better have hard and fast examples proving newspapers are here to stay. And most importantly, still remain an incredible value that continues to deliver for both the advertiser, and the community.

*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)*

## Issues

from pg 10

Though the reader soon deleted her post and the comments, Qualls said the episode showed the value of engaging with readers through social media: "People may think now that they have carte blanche to denigrate journalists, but Abigail taught me that we don't have to cower in fear of what they might say or do — we must respectfully stand our ground. It simply comes down to this: People hate what they don't understand, and some people unfortunately don't understand journalists."

Qualls is a May graduate of the University of Kentucky School of Journalism and Media, which includes the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues, which publishes The Rural Blog. As you might guess, we're pretty proud of him.

National criticism of the news media continues to filter down to community newspapers, and James Warren reported on it for The Poynter Institute. Our blog item on it is at <http://bit.ly/2vbpqGh>.

If you do or see stories that belong on The Rural Blog, email me at [al.cross@uky.edu](mailto:al.cross@uky.edu).

*Al Cross edited and managed rural weekly newspapers before spending 26 years at The (Louisville) Courier-Journal and serving as president of the Society of Professional Journalists. Since 2004 he has been director of the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues, based at the University of Kentucky. See [www.RuralJournalism.org](http://www.RuralJournalism.org).*

## Help Wanted

### Sports Editor

Want to be part of a fast-growing company in a rich sports environment? If so, The Paris News has the right position. A 8,000-six-day-a-week daily, The Paris News provides an outstanding community sports focus for the Red River Valley, covering high schools and colleges in Northeast Texas and Southeast Oklahoma. Only 90 minutes from the Metroplex, Paris is vibrant, growing community uniquely situated between Dallas, Texarkana and Oklahoma. The right candidate understands the importance of community journalism, the relationship between youth, prep, college and professional sports and have a keen ability to build strong relationships both inside and outside of the newspaper.

A knowledge of InDesign, photography, AP style and strong organizational skills are a key in enhancing leadership for the entire newsroom, a two-person department, and a host of freelance writers and photographers.

The full-time position includes benefits, including health insurance, vacation and sick leave. Hours naturally depend upon events to be covered. Send resume, references and work samples to J.D. Davidson, publisher, at [jdavidson@theparisnews.com](mailto:jdavidson@theparisnews.com).

### Managing Editor

The Paris News, an award-winning daily newspaper in beautiful Northeast Texas, is in the market for a managing editor to lead a young, talented and eager staff. The right candidate understands how to blend high journalism standards and community newspaper responsibilities, and provide leadership to the newsroom, the entire company and a growing community.

Our managing editor should possess a wide-range of skills, including personnel development, page design, magazine design, writing, reporting, editing. Aside from the award-winning daily newspaper, The Paris News publishes a variety of niche glossy magazine products, led by the extremely popular Paris Life.

The Paris News, part of Southern Newspapers, Inc., offers an exceptional benefits package, including health insurance, dental and vision; 401(k); vacation; and holidays.

Those interested should send

contact Publisher J.D. Davidson at [jdavidson@theparisnews.com](mailto:jdavidson@theparisnews.com).

### Pressman

The 114-year-old Herald-Citizen in Cookeville, Tenn., seeks an experienced pressman. A 9,000-circulation newspaper, the afternoon newspaper publishes six days a week, Sunday thru Friday.

In addition to the daily newspaper, Cookeville Newspapers, Inc., serves as a commercial printer for several regional weekly newspapers, and college and high school publications.

Cookeville is the economic hub of the Upper Cumberland region and is home to Tennessee Tech University, a new 1.6-million-square-foot Academy Sport + Outdoor distribution center and plentiful outdoor recreation opportunities. Conveniently located along I-40, Cookeville is also a short drive from Nashville, Knoxville and Chattanooga.

Offering competitive wage, benefits and company matched 401(k).

Candidates may apply at 1300 Neal St., Cookeville, TN, or email resume and a cover letter to Publisher Jack McNeely at [jack.mcneely@herald-citizen.com](mailto:jack.mcneely@herald-citizen.com).

The Herald-Citizen is an equal opportunity employer.

### Managing Editor

The 114-year-old Herald-Citizen in Cookeville, Tenn., seeks an experienced editor for its top newsroom position. The managing editor is responsible for news and editorial content for the six-day, 9,000-circulation newspaper and sister print and digital platforms.

Candidates need a collaborative management background, critical thinking skills, editorial writing ability and competency in coaching reporters and editors in reporting, writing, photography and social media journalism. We prize accurate, local news and sports coverage in print and online. Must also lead by example as regular writing/reporting is also expected.

The managing editor directs a staff of eight full-time journalists and co-chairs the editorial board with publisher. This person is also a key member of the senior management team and has a strong voice in strategic initiatives launched by the newspaper.

In addition to the daily newspaper, the Herald-Citizen publishes a weekly shopper, a website at [www.herald-citizen.com](http://www.herald-citizen.com), a community lifestyle magazines, as well as the recently launched Cookeville 360 app.

Cookeville is the economic hub of the Upper Cumberland region and is home to Tennessee Tech University, a new 1.6-million-square-foot Academy Sport + Outdoor distribution center and plentiful outdoor recreation opportunities. Conveniently located along I-40, Cookeville is also a short drive from Nashville, Knoxville and Chattanooga.

Interested candidates should send their resume, work samples of noteworthy journalism accomplishments, salary requirements and a cover letter to Publisher Jack McNeely at [jack.mcneely@herald-citizen.com](mailto:jack.mcneely@herald-citizen.com).

The Herald-Citizen is an equal opportunity employer.

### Editorial Coordinator

Greenville Newspapers LLC seeks an energetic and self-motivated editorial coordinator to join its award-winning staff. The position offers a chance to practice exclusively local community journalism in Luverne, Alabama — in the form of news writing, sports writing, opinion writing, photography and design.

Candidates must be proficient in all areas of reporting, editing, photography and pagination. This position requires a love of community, strong writing skills and the ability to work independently. Applicants should have a college degree in journalism or a related field and must be proficient in InDesign and Photoshop. The full-time position offers competitive salary and benefits, and opportunities to advance within the company. Compensation plan includes bonus opportunities, health/dental insurance, 401(k), paid life and disability insurance, retirement plan, and paid holidays and sick leave.

Send resume, work samples and references to Greenville Newspapers LLC, managing editor Jonathan Bryant at [jonathan.bryant@greenvilleadvocate.com](mailto:jonathan.bryant@greenvilleadvocate.com).

### News/Sports Reporter

Montgomery Publishing, publishers of The Winona Times and The Conservative newspapers, has an opening for a news/sports reporter. The position would in-

clude coverage of general news of Montgomery and Carroll counties and sports for our five high school sports. In addition to strong writing skills in both general reporting and sports, the ideal candidate would be have also have a working knowledge of newspaper design as well as a strong background in social media.

The Winona Times has been publishing in Montgomery County since 1881 and has a circulation of 2,900. Its sister paper, The Conservative, has been publishing in Carroll County since 1865 and has a circulation of 1,300. These two award-winning newspapers are focused on reporting LOCAL and in-depth news and sports. The newspaper office is located in Winona, Mississippi, at the intersection of Interstate 55 and Highway 82 in the center of the state. It is 90 miles from Jackson and 100 miles from Memphis, Tenn.

Compensation ranges from \$20,000 – \$25,000 (based on experience), 401(k), and health benefits.

To submit a resume and clips, candidates may email Amanda Sexton Ferguson at [publisher@winonatimes.com](mailto:publisher@winonatimes.com).

### Press Operator

Immediate opening for experienced operator to run 12-unit DGM 430 single-wide web press. Applicants should have 3 to 5 years offset web press experience and a proven work history of dependability, self-initiative and mechanical skills. Requires ability to perform all make-ready tasks, press operation to maintain quality, routine maintenance, minor repairs, other pressroom responsibilities. Full-time shift includes scheduled nights, weekends and holidays. Located in desirable community 50 miles west of Atlanta, position offers competitive compensation, health insurance, paid vacation, sick time, matching contribution 401(k). Apply in person 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Or, send cover letter and resume to: [pressroom@times-georgian.com](mailto:pressroom@times-georgian.com). Or, mail to: Times-Georgian, 901 Hays Mill Rd., Carrollton, GA 30117.

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