

AlaPressa

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA PRESS ASSOCIATION

JANUARY 2020

Important Dates

APA Media Awards
All Contests Open!

Deadlines:
Editorial:

Monday, March 2, 2020

Advertising:

Monday, March 9, 2020

Magazine:

Monday, March 16, 2020

2020 Winter Conference
Birmingham Marriott

Thursday-Friday,
February 6-7, 2020

Hotel Deadline: Jan. 27

Reg. Deadline: Jan. 31

2020 Summer Conference
Perdido Beach Resort

Thursday-Saturday,
June 25-27, 2020

Programs for everyone at the APA
Media Summit

Stewart and Beck to be honored at
APA Media Summit

New features from the APA Legal
Hotline for 2020

Cullman Tribune helps local animal
shelter

National Newspaper Association joins
request for openness at U.S. Supreme
Court

NFOIC reveals pilot project results
looking at 2019 state transparency
bills nationwide

National Newspaper Association
applauds progress on Fallen
Journalists Memorial



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Something for everyone at the APA Media Summit - Register TODAY!

Join us Feb. 6 & 7 in Birmingham for the 2020 APA Media Summit. There will be programs for editorial, advertising and magazine staff members, and also journalism students from across the state.

Program topics will include:

- Thursday**
- Steps to Finding NEW Advertisers and Increasing Sales with Diane Ciotta
- Friday**
- Quick and Easy Videos with Dan Meissner (*University of Alabama*)
- Active Shooter Preparedness Training
- Design Following Content (magazine)

- with Kristen Morales (*Paper Forest*)
- Monetizing Editorial Content with Bro Krift (*Montgomery Advertiser*)
- Social Media/Podcast with James Phillips (*Daily Mountain Eagle*)
- Ask the Attorney with Evans Bailey (*Rushton Stakely*)
- Creative Writing with Rick Bragg
- Let's Talk Public Records Panel led by Kelly Scott (*Alabama Media Group*)
- Prepress and Production (magazine) with Kristen Morales (*Paper Forest*)

For a complete agenda, event registration and hotel information go to: <https://www.alabamapress.org/2020MediaSummit/>.

Stewart and Beck to be honored at APA Media Summit

Veteran newspaper man and journalism professor Steve Stewart, and Editor Taylor Beck will be honored at the 2020 Media Summit luncheon on Feb. 7, 2020 in Birmingham.

Stewart will receive APA's Lifetime Achievement Award. Beck will receive the Emerging Journalist Award.

Steve Stewart recently retired after a 37-year career in newspapers, followed by a 10-year stint teaching journalism at Troy University.

Stewart grew up in a newspaper family. His father purchased The Monroe Journal in 1947, and after earning a journalism degree from the University of Georgia and two years with the Atlanta Constitution, Steve returned to Monroeville where he worked with his father as a reporter, editor and publisher.

When his father died in 1996, the family sold the paper to Bo Bolton, and Steve accepted a job with The Decatur Daily. While there, he earned a Master's degree in journalism, and in 2009, began teaching at Troy University.

Stewart served as APA president in 1987, and also served as president of the APA Journalism Foundation and the Alabama Newspaper Advertising Service.

He and his wife Patrice have two children: Matt and Emily.

The Emerging Journalist Award will be presented to Taylor Beck, managing editor of The Sand Mountain Reporter in Albertville. He is also the editor of newspaper's Land + Lake magazine. The APA board established the award to recognize journalists, 30 years

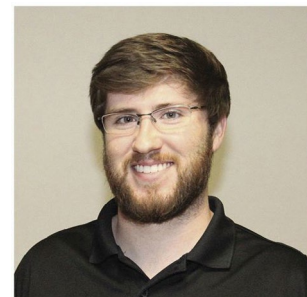
or younger, with less than five years of experience in the field.

Beck is a native of Boaz, and a 2016 graduate of the University of Alabama with a degree in journalism. He began his journalism career at WBRC Fox 6 News in Birmingham as a digital content producer. He joined The Sand Mountain Reporter in 2017.

Beck has won numerous awards in the APA Media Awards, including 2018 Best Spot News Story in Division C.



Steve Stewart
Lifetime Achievement Award



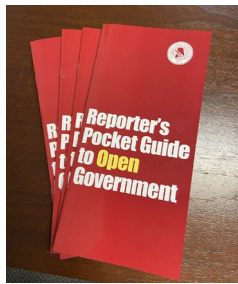
Taylor Beck
Emerging Journalist Award

New features from the APA Legal Hotline for 2020

Reporter's Pocket Guide to Open Government

Last month, APA sent member newspapers copies of "Reporter's Pocket Guide to Open Government." Do you need more?

The publication was prepared by APA General Counsel Dennis Bailey and covers topics reporters are



most likely to face while covering open meetings and dealing with open records issues. It answers questions such as "are emails, text messages or IMs considered records?" and "what are permissible executive sessions?" If you need more copies contact Felicia Mason, felicia@alabamapress.org or 205-871-7737.

NEW! Legal Hotline Web Series

Beginning this month, longtime APA General Counsel Dennis Bailey will produce short videos explaining a question he received on the hotline the previous month.

This month, the 5-minute video will discuss letters to the editor. To access the video link visit the [legal hotline page](#) on the apa website and log in using your member password.

APA Media contests are open for entries

As of January 13, the 2020 APA Media Awards for editorial, advertising, and magazine contests are open for entries. Click here for the entry portal and rules for each portion of the contest: <https://www.alabamapress.org/contests-awards/apa-media-awards/>

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All entries must be entered online by midnight on the deadline date. Entries required to be mailed, must be postmarked no later than the deadline date. Contact Jaclyn Langan at jaclyn@alabamapress.org with questions.



Send us your news!

If you have news (like awards, projects, promotions and new hires) please share with APA! Not only do we genuinely want to know about our members, we would love to share in AlaPressa, on Facebook and the APA website!

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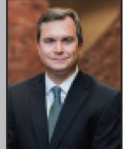
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Dennis Bailey

Dennis R. Bailey
General Counsel
Alabama Press Association
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A rule of the Supreme Court of Alabama requires the following:
No representation is made that the quality of legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.

Industry

National Newspaper Association joins request for openness at U.S. Supreme Court

By Tonda Rush, NNA

The National Newspaper Association has joined the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, National Public Radio and 50 other media organizations to urge the U.S. Supreme Court to put tighter limits on sealed court records.

In a letter to Chief Justice John Roberts this week, the organizations pointed out a dramatic increase in the Court's approving requests to seal documents before the Court, which rose from an average of 22 each year from 2011 to 2016 to 46 in 2018. Sealed records were rare in the 20th century and in the first part of the 21st century averaged only 10 per year, the media groups said.

"The (organizations) acknowledge that compelling, countervailing interests — supported by on-the-record findings — sometimes necessitate sealing. But a review of recent sealing motions filed with the Court suggests that the increase in sealing is not tied to any concomitant increase in cases in which sealing may be warranted. Rather, motions to seal filed by practitioners often provide no justification for the requested secrecy other than that portions of the case file were sealed below," the letter said. A particular concern about the sealing of records in capi-

tal cases had led to NPR and the Reporters Committee's intervention in individual cases in the past, urging the opening of records.

"There is a strong, laudable tradition of public access to the Court's proceedings and records," the groups said. "You have appropriately referred to the judicial branch as 'the most transparent branch in government.' Your predecessor, Chief Justice William Rehnquist, wrote that 'all of the business of the Supreme Court of the United States comes in the front door and leaves by the same door.' Adoption of a Supreme Court rule addressing sealing would be consistent with—and demonstrate to the public the Court's ongoing commitment to—these long-held ideals."

The letter proposes a new court rule that would require petitioners to identify a compelling interest to be furthered by the sealing, demonstrate that the request is narrow, and state the time period for the sealing, among other things. RCFP and NPR has previously requested a new rule, but the Court said that a general federal policy discouraging document sealing by federal courts was expected to deter a rise in such requests. It has not done so, the organizations assert.

National Newspaper Association

President Matthew Adelman, publisher of the Douglas (Wyoming) Budget, thanked the Reporters Committee for organizing the petition to the court and said ensuring openness at all levels of government should be the driving force for all media organizations.

"All of our government bodies — even the courts — work at the consent of the people and on the public's funds," he said. "We have to be able to trust in the integrity of each of these, whether legislative, executive or judicial. The court's wisdom in the Richmond Newspapers case, which re-opened trials all over the U.S. after a period where attorneys were attempting to close them, still holds true today: 'People in an open society do not demand infallibility from their institutions, but it is difficult for them to accept what they are prohibited from observing.'"

"We urge the court to accept the media organizations' recommendation to crack down on an epidemic of secret court filings. The traditions of the First Amendment require greater discipline in this area," Adelman said.

Tonda Rush is the director of public policy and serves as general counsel to NNA. Email her at tonda@nna.org.

NFOIC reveals pilot project results looking at 2019 state transparency bills nationwide

The National Freedom of Information Coalition is pleased to announce the publication of its latest research, "Legislating Open Government: The Prevalence of Transparency-Related Language in 2019 State Legislative Bills." The report is a culmination of a months-long pilot project analyzing all bills introduced in 2019 sessions across the U.S. in conjunction with Quorum, a Washington D.C.-based software company.

More than three-fourths of NFOIC's state coalition members say that tracking their legislative sessions for bills that impact their state's open government laws is a critical need — and a challenging task. Since most state legislatures do not prominently identify introduced transparency-related bills, many coalitions must rely on labor-intensive methods to single out and track them. NFOIC sought a tech-

nology solution to automate and better identify and track these bills.

Of the 142,057 bills introduced in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico in 2019, transparency-related search terms NFOIC tracked returned 19,311 "unique" or individual bills. That translates into about 13.6 percent of all 2019 bills.

Transparency issues arise in all kinds of bills — everything from how public data is collected, organized, managed and disseminated by government, to the balance between personal privacy and the public's right to know, and how government interacts with the private sector.

Among the pilot project findings:

- Research showed the primary issue areas most prevalent with transparency-related language included Commerce, Law Enforcement, Economics and Public

Finance, Education, Government Operations and Health Care.

- While state Democratic legislators sponsored more transparency-related legislation in 2019, state Republican legislators were overall more effective at enacting transparency-related legislation.

- Finding accurate bill language is both an art and a science. In this pilot, we learned broad search terms often bring in too many results and further refinement of search terms is needed. Weeding out extraneous bills is necessary, and the lack of standardization of transparency search terms from state to state creates an additional challenge.

"While legislative tracking is just one component of ensuring an open and accessible government, NFOIC believes

NFOIC continued on page 5

NFOIC continued from page 4

this research shows there is an opportunity for comprehensive FOI legislative tracking nationwide that can in turn be used to educate and empower more people at the state and local levels,” said Daniel Bevarly, NFOIC’s executive director.

The pilot project is an extension of

NFOIC’s 2020 Vision strategy for improving government transparency at the state and local levels at a time when access to public records and institutions is becoming more challenging for the public.

If you know academics, journalists, government agencies or stakeholder groups who may be interested in online public records portal administration, please share this research with them. We’re here to assist in the effort for im-

proved records administration in cities and states across the U.S and look forward to hearing your feedback: dbevarly@nfoic.org.

Note: The Alabama Press Association, along with the Alabama Broadcasters and other interested parties, are working with Sen. Cam Ward and Rep. Chris Pringle on legislation to update Alabama’s open records law. A bill introduced last session has been revised and will be reintroduced in the upcoming session.

National Newspaper Association applauds progress on Fallen Journalists Memorial

National Newspaper Association President Matt Adelman, publisher of the Douglas (Wyoming) Budget, today recognized the work of the House Natural Resources Committee for approving the first stages of work for a Fallen Journalists Memorial.

The Committee completed its review of a bill authorizing the use of federal lands for the memorial. The legislation, HR 3465, will head to the House of Representatives floor for a vote at the call of Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

The memorial would be designed to call attention to journalists who lost their lives during or because of the pursuit of the news. It

will reach back into history to the sacrifices of World War II journalist Ernie Pyle and those who went before him and forward to more modern casualties.

The idea for a memorial grew from the anniversary of the deaths of five employees of the Capital Gazette in Annapolis, Maryland, who were gunned down by a disgruntled reader in 2018.

The memorial is intended to be funded privately. But for it to be placed in the District of Columbia and its environs, authorization by Congress is required. A companion bill in the Senate, S 1969, awaits action by the

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, chaired by Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska.

“This memorial is necessary and timely,” Adelman said. “We live in an era when the value of news gathering itself is somewhat under fire. Domestically, we knit the nation together. Abroad, American armed forces deployments require journalists to work alongside to tell the stories of our military missions. We need to remind ourselves and future generations that recording these first drafts of history sometimes requires journalists to give their all.”

Help Wanted

Instructor Position - University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa

The Department of Journalism and Creative Media at the University of Alabama seeks an instructor in the area of news media. The position begins August 16, 2020. The salary is nationally competitive. The successful candidate will teach courses in information gathering practices. Preference will be given to candidates who can teach courses in data and numeracy, data journalism, and data visualization. Other preferred teaching areas include multimedia, magazine editing, and photography. In the News Internship Coordinator role, the candidate will work with students preparing for their internships, staying informed about changing jobs and skills in a rapidly evolving news industry. More information about the Internship program can be found here: <https://jcm.ua.edu/internships/>

For more information or to apply, please see the following ad, <https://www.journalismjobs.com/1657539-news-media-instructor-and-internship-coordinator-the-university-of-alabama>

Journalist - Alexander City, AL

The Alexander City (AL) Outlook is a five-day a week daily located at Lake Martin, one of the biggest recreational lakes in the South. We’re looking for a creative, passionate and dynamic journalist to join our award-winning team. We need an experienced, versatile general assignment reporter to continue our impressive growth and statewide recognition as

one of the best newspapers in Alabama.

This job requires strong interviewing skills, attention to detail, critical thinking skills, a level of independence with a team-oriented mind and the ability to juggle numerous assignments, meet daily deadlines, cultivate sources and generate daily story ideas. The ideal candidate will have a proven record of quality reporting and unique writing skills, knowledge of AP style, social media, photography and video skills. Pagination skills are not required but are a plus. We offer our employees a team atmosphere that is dedicated to excellence and constant growth. We offer competitive pay and great benefits.

If you’re passionate about storytelling and have a desire to come up with new and innovative ways of telling those stories using a vast array of different skills, tools and platforms, we want to talk to you.

Interested candidates should send a resume, writing samples and a brief cover letter to Managing Editor santana.wood@alexcity-outlook.com.

Content Editor - Pell City, AL

CNHI is seeking a Content Editor to assist in the oversight of the print and online products of the weekly St. Clair News-Aegis. This position requires the highest level of professionalism in appearance, tone and service.

Job Duties & Responsibilities: -Adhere to journalistic ethics as established by CNHI, and assure reporting is done with balance and

objectivity. -Oversee the overall design of the newspaper. In this role, this individual must also possess and use strong editing skills to ensure the newspaper, niche publications and digital postings are at a high level. -Assist the newspaper in meeting its responsibility as a public watchdog. -Act quickly in times of breaking news and ongoing coverage of such events. -Communicate with audience members, answer questions and provide information. -Assist in the development of website and e-delivery systems. -Understand and contribute to The St Clair News social media sites and website, per the newspaper and CNHI guidelines. -Work with editors and staff to coordinate and assure full coverage of news, human interest and sports in the market, including special sections, community magazines and niche publications. -Oversee content flow, and deadlines. -Be able to perform any task within the Editorial department, including, but not limited to, reporting, photography, editing, and digital posting. -Work closely with upper management team, including directors of advertising, circulation, production and the business office. -Work in an efficient and productive manner with other management team members.

Required Qualifications: College degree preferred; experience or training in journalism or related fields required. Experience in overseeing a newsroom or as a section editor of a newspaper. Please send resume and cover letter to Amy Henderson, editor, Cullman Times at ahenderson@cullmantimes.com.

People

Taylor Mitchell has joined the staff of The Daily Home as a reporter, covering Pell City, Riverside and Lincoln. He replaces David Atchison, who was recently named editor of sister paper, The St. Clair Times in Pell City.

Mitchell, a native of Lincoln, is a 2019 graduate of Jacksonville State University with a degree in communications.

Elaine Jackson recently retired from The Birmingham News/al.com after more than 30 years with the newspaper. In recent years, Elaine has handled national and regional clients in the advertising department, working closely with the APA staff.

Jeana Reed Durst has been hired as Content Director for JBMC Media, LLC.

Jeana brings a lot of excellent magazine experience as a writer and editor. The February issue of Birmingham Fun and Family Magazine will feature her writing and editorial direction.

JBMC Media, LLC, publishers of Birmingham Fun and Family magazine, is opening a new office in Bluff Park (suburb of Birmingham), just below Wild Roast Coffee.

Cullman Tribune helps local animal shelter

The Cullman Tribune Pet of the Week project, created in partnership with the Cullman County Animal Shelter to highlight available animals and promote pet adoptions, finished 2019 with wonderful news: 98 percent of the dogs featured through the year were adopted.

“We are so very grateful for The Cullman Tribune’s willingness to post one of our shelter babies every week to help get them adopted,” the shelter’s Andrea Hudson said. “People who see them in The Tribune and read about their person-



Six of 2019’s Pets of the Week (photo courtesy of Cullman County Animal Shelter)

ality fall in love, and the chances of that baby getting adopted increase greatly. It is always a good day at the shelter when we are able to place the right dog or cat in the right home with the perfect family.”

Overall, the shelter saw 530 animal adoptions during 2019, averaging 44 per month. Additionally, 201 stray pets were recovered and returned to their owners.

In December 2019 alone, 60 animals were adopted, versus 34 adoptions in December 2018.

Columns

Meet them where they are



Ad-libs
by John Foust

Tim manages an ad sales team. “When I started my career in the newspaper business, I quickly learned that advertisers can be worlds apart in their knowledge of marketing,” he said. “That’s why one of my favorite sales principles is the old slogan, ‘Meet them where they are.’”

“This means we have to recognize that our prospects have different levels of experience. Most of them don’t have our knowledge of the intricacies of newspapers. If we don’t talk to them on their level, they will tune us out. And most of them are too polite to tell us we’re doing a poor job of explaining things.”

Tim’s comments remind me of the time my wife and I helped her father select a car. He loved his 14-year-old car, but it was time for a replacement, because expensive things were beginning to go wrong with it. At the dealership,

we found a nice used car with only 12 thousand miles – a much newer version of his old model. Our salesperson was sincere and down-to-earth, but unfortunately, he was hung up on technology. He spent most of the test drive talking about the screen in the middle of the dashboard. He was a walking encyclopedia of Bluetooth and wi-fi and digital programming, but my father-in-law had no interest in those things. He just wanted to see how the car drove and learn the relevant differences between his old car and the new one. His patience with the barrage of comments like “look at this other cool feature” was a clear sign that he liked the car.

In spite of the salesperson’s single-minded focus, my wife’s dad decided it was the right car for him. When the transaction was over, he mentioned that the salesperson was nice, but extremely confusing. The next day, he accepted my offer of a simple tutorial. I sat in the car with him, placed my hand over the dashboard display and said, “The first thing we’re going to do is forget about all of this.” He said, “That’s a good start.” Then we reviewed and practiced

some basics until he was comfortable. When we finished, he said he was more confident and even more excited about the car.

Age and experience make a big difference. That car salesperson should have known that a person of my father-in-law’s age wouldn’t care about fancy technology. But he was so blinded by his own interest that he couldn’t see things from another person’s perspective.

“It’s all a matter of common sense,” Tim said. “If a prospect is a numbers person, we should talk in terms of numbers – even if we’re not numbers people ourselves. If someone is an idea person, we should focus on ad concepts. Of course, this means we have to be prepared to talk to about advertising from all angles.”

Meet your prospects where they are. Let that be your guideline and you’ll be on the right road.

John Foust conducts training programs for newspaper advertising professionals. E-mail for information: john@johnfoust.com