

AlaPressa

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA PRESS ASSOCIATION

JANUARY 2023

Important Dates

AMA contests are open!

APA Winter Media Summit
Birmingham, AL
February 10-11

Online Media Campus

[Stop Running Scared. Digital is Not the Death of Print.](#)
February 16, 2023

[Reader Engagement: How To Grow Your Audience](#)
February 23, 2023

APA members can register [HERE](#) for any active or archived webinar (deadline is 3 days before webinar) at no charge using the code, **ALTraining**.

Lifetime Achievement and Emerging Journalists honored at the APA Media Summit

2023 APA Media Summit Feb. 10 in Birmingham

APA Media Awards Contest is open!

APA and ABA visit with Legislature during the Organizational Session

USPS announces 30-day grace period for eliminating sacks for periodicals

What's next for the JCPA?

Advertising's Bill of Rights

Reasons Some Papers Grow

Resolve to be accessible, stay relevant



Alabama Press Association

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Lifetime Achievement and Emerging Journalists honored at the APA Media

Veteran newspaper publisher David Proctor will be honored with APA's Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2023 APA Media Summit in Birmingham on Feb. 10, 2023.

Dan Busey and Breanna Minter will also be recognized with this year's APA Emerging Journalist awards.

David Proctor grew up watching his father, Lester Proctor, work long hours with a small staff to put out two Clay County newspapers. The Lineville Tribune and the Ashland Progress were later combined to form The Clay Times-Journal.

David began working at age nine, doing jobs such as sweeping floors, answering phones, folding papers, and helping with the mail bags.

He worked alongside his father through his teen years and part-time while attending college. He also learned how to run the Heidelberg press. He has worked in all aspects of the newspaper, developing sales outside of the county, which has proven to be a contributing factor to the success of the newspaper.

David and his high school sweetheart, Connie Curlee, have been married for 44 years, and have two children.

In addition to his work at the newspaper, David has served on the Lineville City Council for 40 years, a deacon at the Lineville Baptist Church, a member of the Clay County Rescue Squad and a member of the Lineville Fire Department.

This year, we are also recognizing two

emerging journalists; Dan Busey from the TimesDaily in Florence and Breanna Minter from The Clay Times-Journal in Lineville.

Dan Busey is a North Carolina native who has been a staff photographer with the TimesDaily since 2020.

He earned an associate degree in photojournalism from Randolph Community College in Asheboro, North Carolina. Before coming to Florence, he worked for The Dispatch in Lexington, NC, and The Decatur Daily.

In nominating Dan, Editor Gary Maitland said, "Every so often we as editors get the opportunity to work with a young journalist whose work ethic and passion for the business helps renew our faith in the industry."

Breanna Minter started working at The Clay Times-Journal when she was 16 years old. Like most small-town newspaper staff members, she does most jobs from building ads, taking pictures, attending community events, and writing stories.

After a year at the newspaper, she was promoted to assistant managing editor. She covers meetings, wrecks, fires and is now even doing live halftime reports and interviewing coaches on the sidelines for Friday night football.

In addition to her work at the newspaper, Breanna is also a member of the Pine Grove Volunteer Fire Department and is the secretary for the Clay County Fire Association.

APA looks forward to honoring these two individuals representing both ends of the career spectrum.



David Proctor



Dan Busey



Breanna Minter

2023 Media Summit Feb. 10 in Birmingham

Registration is now open for the 2023 APA Media Summit on Feb. 10 at the Birmingham Marriott. Plan to come and bring members of your staff for this unique training opportunity.

This year we have invited all journalism department chairs and associate professors throughout Alabama, along with their students, to participate in a discussion about journalism education in our state. This is a great opportunity to interact with the journalism programs

throughout the state and share your thoughts and ideas for your newsrooms.

Other programs will feature a program from Jacksonville State University regarding professional identity and mental well-being of journalists facing perilous times.

We will also welcome journalism students from across the state to visit with newspaper senior management, which has become one of the most popular parts of the Media Summit.

Summit continued on next page

Summit

continued from previous page

As noted above, the luncheon will feature the recognition of APA's Lifetime Achievement and Emerging Journalist awards recipients.

We have heard from many that finding quality employees is a priority. Come hear

a presentation by Tara Hutchison from the Alabama Department of Labor on best hiring practices and assistance finding employees.

We will close the day with a good ideas session. Come and share an idea or hear what is working for others. Cash prizes will be awarded for the best ideas.

If you are interested in coming on Thursday and spending the night, we

have rooms blocked at the hotel. The room rate is \$129. Click [HERE](#) to make online reservations.

Guests can also call the hotel directly at (205) 968-3775 and ask for group code: APAAPAK for King and APAAPAA for Double.

Please call the APA office at (205) 871-7737. if you have questions or need any additional information.

Are you ready to win in 2023?

Editorial Deadline: **March 6**

Advertising Deadline: **March 13**

Magazine Deadline: **March 20**

Visit www.newspapercontest.com to enter the Alabama contest portal, review rules and upload entries.



APA and ABA visit with Legislature during the Organizational Session

The Alabama Press Association and the Alabama Broadcasters Association executive directors Felicia Mason and Sharon Tinsley presented a program on Basic Media Relations to Legislators during the Organizational Session in Montgomery recently.

The program focused on encouraging Legislators to keep an open dialog with their local newspapers, television and radio stations. Developing the

relationships that foster trust can help media share information about state government issues that impact their local areas.

APA Governmental Affairs Director Brad English and ABA's lobbyist Ryan deGraffenried organized the event that included box lunches for attendees prior to the session.

APA President Dee Ann Campbell was also in attendance.



ABA's Sharon Tinsley (L) and APA's Felicia Mason (R) present to AL Legislators.

Industry

USPS announces 30-day grace period for eliminating sacks for periodicals

The National Newspaper Association is pleased to announce that USPS has agreed to an extension period for the elimination of sacks for Periodicals and Marketing Mail. The Postal Service announced on Jan. 6 that it concluded mailers needed more time to make the adjustment. Sacks will now be accepted through Feb. 21, 2023.

Mailers are reminded that exceptions will remain.

For Periodicals and Marketing Mail: sacks can be accepted when they are carrier route containers, 5-digit scheme containers or 5-digit carrier route containers.

For mail entered at Delivery Units,

no container is needed. Bundles can be entered directly.

To mitigate the impact on larger mailers, the 100-pound weight minimum for pallets destined for mixed ADC destinations will be eliminated so mailers can put bundles on pallets for these sparsely-distributed destinations.

What's next for the JCPA?

The Journalism Competition & Preservation Act, a bill aimed to allow newspaper publishers to collectively negotiate with the tech platforms for fair

compensation for use of their content, died on the vine of the last session of Congress.

Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) appeared recently on Meet the Press

to discuss what's next in efforts to hold companies such as Google and Facebook accountable.

You can watch the segment [HERE](#).

Obituary

Don Eddins



Don Eddins, co-owner and publisher of the Auburn Villager, who also ran a private law practice for many years, died on Jan. 10, 2023, at his home in Auburn at the age of 74.

Eddins co-founded the Villager in 2006 with his wife, Nikki, and Charles and Earnest Whatley. Don and Nikki Eddins took over sole ownership of the newspaper in 2019.

Eddins frequently wrote editorials in the Villager that focused on a variety of subjects, including his love for his family,

local issues and state politics.

“Don Eddins’ voice, leadership, friendship and big heart will be sorely missed at the Villager and in the Auburn community,” said Brian Woodham, editor of the Villager. “As a strong advocate of community journalism and as a longtime mentor to aspiring journalists, Don touched so many lives in a positive way.”

Eddins also frequently wrote about the Alabama Education Association, including a book published in 1997 on the history of the organization, titled “AEA: Head of the Class in Alabama Politics.”

Prior to opening his private law practice and co-founding the Villager, Eddins worked for 12 years as a journalist, including stints as the state editor for The Columbus Ledger

(Ga.) and as the state capital correspondent for The Huntsville Times.

Eddins was born in Hartford, Alabama in 1948 and raised in Geneva. An alumnus of Geneva High School, Eddins went on to graduate with a bachelor’s degree in journalism from Auburn University, where he served as the sports editor for the student newspaper, The Auburn Plainsman. Eddins also graduated with a master’s degree in political science from Auburn University at Montgomery before earning his law degree from Jones School of Law in Montgomery.

Nikki Eddins, Don’s wife of 46 years, will take over as sole owner and publisher of the Villager, in addition to serving as the paper’s business manager.

Columns

Resolve to be accessible, stay relevant



by Jim Pumarlo

Surviving in today’s fractured media landscape depends on your ability to identify, collect and deliver the relevant community news. That job becomes more challenging if readers become frustrated in their attempts to connect with reporters.

The normal channels of communication took a serious hit during COVID-19 as isolation was the norm for reporters and news sources alike. Though the worst of the pandemic is behind us, communication remains splintered in many circles.

I encourage newspapers to put at the top of their New Year’s resolutions: Make it easy for readers to connect with you.

I’m passionate in my belief that community newspapers can still compete in today’s communications dynamics – if they stick to and excel in the basics. That means owning the franchise for aggressive reporting of local news. That will occur only if readers have a direct pipeline to editors and reporters.

Yes, I understand the important and necessary role of social media both in collecting and reporting the news – in connecting with readers. Social media was integral when I led communications and media relations for a statewide business advocacy organization.

But nothing replaces direct, one-on-one conversation. It’s truly amazing the

barriers that many newspapers place between themselves and their readers – their news sources.

I routinely surf a variety of websites, often looking for contact information. If I can’t track it down within five minutes, I likely give up. If I am successful, the frustration often continues with no phone numbers. Some companies may list a general number, and we’ve all been there. We punch numerous extensions, hoping to get a live voice with someone who can assist.

Why can’t we make it simpler? Here are a handful of tips from someone who has sat on both sides of the editor’s desk:

- Post your contact information or a link to the listing – prominently – on the home page of your website. Include phone numbers as well as email addresses.
- Provide the direct phone numbers and individual email addresses for staff, if available. Readers have no assurance that a general voice mail or email boxes are regularly monitored and messages forwarded to appropriate staff. List cell phones.

Keep contact information current. If you have voice mail, change recordings daily so readers know whether you are on the job and whether you are monitoring messages. Ditto for email; use your “out of office” message when applicable.

- If you must use automated phone answering services during regular business hours, callers still should have an opportunity to connect to a “live voice.”

• Be responsive to customers. Be prompt

in returning phone or email inquiries whether the message is sent directly to an individual or submitted through an on-line form.

Phone calls translate into a conversation, an instant exchange of ideas. You may well miss a chance for a great story if the telephone is your communication of last resort.

Listing cell phone numbers is essential as many companies have eliminated physical offices or greatly reduced hours. Remote offices have become the norm in today’s work environment.

I can hear the naysayers who resist being available 24/7. I recall the days before cell phones and social media when some editors and publishers had unlisted home phones. They didn’t want to be bothered “after hours,” especially by an upset customer.

I welcomed all calls – no matter the hour and no matter the reason. I welcomed the fact that our newspaper was on someone’s mind at all hours of the day.

Remember, while some may view the calls as an interruption in their personal schedules, I viewed them as an opportunity – to resolve a delivery issue, to accept an ad, to explore a potential news story. Those are the connections that keep you relevant to your communities.

Jim Pumarlo writes, speaks and provides training on community newsroom success strategies. He can be reached at www.pumarlo.com and welcomes comments and questions at jim@pumarlo.com.

Reasons Some Papers Grow

It's not luck. There are definite correlations among growing papers.



by Kevin Slimp

I'm going to let you in on a little secret. I don't plan these columns in advance. Most months, I receive an email from newspaper industry executive Jack Guza reminding me that my column is due in a day or two. Jack's messages generally prompt me to take a seat in my upstairs writer's lair to pen a few words, typically about 800, concerning the current state of newspapers. After 25 years of writing this column, I've found that my most popular tend to be columns written just before deadline. And like most writers, I'll use any excuse to delay the inevitable.

It's early January, and as I drove home tonight after spending the day with a newspaper staff in Tennessee, it dawned on me that I have a lot to say to my readers as we begin this new year. Possibly inspired by today's group, as well as several interactions I've had with publishers in recent weeks, I'd like to share some thoughts about where I see community newspapers heading as we begin 2023.

I noted a few months back that my schedule has become surprisingly busy. Most everyone in the newspaper consulting work that I know noticed a serious drop in requests for help beginning a few years ago. Several stopped working with newspapers altogether and moved into consulting with other industries. I wasn't immune.

Newspapers requesting my help took a serious dip three or four years ago. I used the opportunity to begin a couple of new businesses – using much of the advice I had been giving others for the past 30 years – which have turned out to be quite successful, figuring my days working with newspapers were near an end.

Then came 2022. I can't explain why, but the phone – and inbox – began ringing...a lot. I was busier than ever in 2022 – advising papers, redesigning papers, leading webinars, and fulfilling other requests. I hired additional staff to help with my other businesses to free up time to take advantage of the work offered by newspapers. My calendar in 2023 has just a few free days remaining. I'm busier than ever.

Which begs the question: "What is going on?"

I can only make an educated guess, but I'm sensing undeniable correlations as I hear from and visit publishers these days. I'm learning that many locally owned community papers had an excellent year in 2022, prompting them to reinvest in growing their papers. Unlike in prior years, I hear from papers with increasing readership and advertising revenue.

Luck? Maybe a little. But most of what's happening at these papers can't be attributed to chance. Here are some of the correlations I'm seeing in growing community papers:

- **Growing papers invest in their communities.** Locally owned papers have an undeniable stake in



their communities, causing them to invest more heavily in those areas.

- **Growing papers invest in their staff.** In my experience, it's rare to see staff cuts at successful papers. We've all heard the saying, "You can't cut your way to growth." I've certainly found this true in my businesses and the newspapers I've worked with over the years. Growing papers train and reward their staff, creating better newspapers.
- **Growing newspapers create additional revenue** by creating income through related products, not "get rich quick" schemes. Papers I've worked with that experience growth tend to generate niche publications, quality special sections, and other products that fit the work they've been doing for decades.
- **Growing papers maintain a quality online presence** while understanding most of their income will come from print products for the foreseeable future. Planning for the long term doesn't mean giving up on the successes of the past.
- **Growing papers have management and staff that work together as teams.** Reporting to "unknown" voices in

far-away cities leads to disjointed staff, often competing against each other instead of working together toward a common goal.

- **Growing newspapers make their customers feel important.** While visiting with circulation staff at newspapers, I often suggest writing personal notes on each resubscription notice that goes out. It's just one of many ways we make readers feel important.

I could go on, but I'm guessing you get the idea. There are a lot of community papers doing well right now. Sometimes I feel a little overwhelmed by the requests but feel very fortunate at the same time. My 2023 calendar includes consultations, redesigns, staff training events, and more. I've had to cut back on my convention speaking to keep up with all the requests. Most of the publishers who call me don't need my help for their papers to be successful. They're already successful. And that may be the ultimate clue to what is happening at these newspapers. Growing papers tend to invest in their communities and staff to succeed long-term, not just produce quick income in the short term.

My work today is done. 811 words.

Columns

Advertising's Bill of Rights



Ad-libs
by John Foust

In the advertising business, there are things which must be done in order to create an effective campaign. Think of it as Advertising's Bill of Rights: Send the right message...to the right audience...in the right medium...at the right time...about the right product (or service)...which sells for the right price...in the right environment.

Although some other rights might be added to the list, this covers the basics. Here's a closer look:

1. Send the right message: In other words, watch your language. Instead of using empty claims and exaggerations like "fantastic," "incredible" and "best ever," stick to legitimate features and benefits. If you're putting together a response ad (as opposed to an image, or institutional ad), make a compelling offer – discounts, time-sensitive offers, two-for-price of one, etc.

2. To the right audience: There's no such thing as selling to "everyone." On

any given day, only a small slice of the total audience is in the market for a new car or a refrigerator or a pair of jeans. Aim your message at the people who want/need/qualify to buy what your advertiser is selling.

3. In the right medium: It's rare when a particular product is limited to only one possible media outlet. As a result, most of your advertisers are deciding between two or more choices. The first order of business is to learn as much as possible about the media product(s) you sell. Then learn all you can about the other choices in your market. That will put you in position to make fair – and convincing – comparisons between Choices A, B and C. Along the way, you will confirm ways to present your paper's print and online products as the right picks.

4. At the right time: While some products and services are viable all year long, others are seasonal. Unless your publication is in a year-round cold climate, don't try to sell snow shovels in July.

5. About the right product (or service): Likewise, it's not smart to advertise lawn furniture or residential termite services in a congested area with high-rise apartment

buildings.

6. Which sells for the right price: A car dealer told me about a salesperson who approached a man in the used car lot. When the man asked, "How much is this truck?" the salesperson replied, "\$19,900." The man said, "But the tag says \$15,000. Do you think I'm some kind of fool?" The salesman said, "No sir, I was just checking to make sure."

Encourage your advertisers to price their products fairly. If the price is wrong, no one will buy.

7. In the right environment: Measurements of success shouldn't stop when an ad runs. Sure, advertising can generate traffic, but if consumers encounter rude employees in the advertiser's place of business, they will leave. And you can say the same for poor parking, inconvenient hours, dirty floors, and complicated return policies.

True advertising success calls for the entire Bill of Rights, not just one or two.

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

Help Wanted

Full-Time Production Manager/Head Pressman - South GA

South Georgia regional printing facility with a significant number of commercial newspaper customers and other publications is hiring a head pressman. Candidate must have prior experience operating and maintaining Goss Community/DGM 4-high presses. The press consists of two 4-high presses and 5-floor units. DGM 4-high has remote registration and manual ink adjustment. Goss 4-high is manually registered with manual ink adjustment. Press line has a single Jardis splicer for the Goss 4-high and a tandem Jardis splicer for the DGM, with one being used for a floor unit. The Goss Community SSC folder includes a quarter folder which is used weekly on shopper publications. Press is operated with 3 people, Head Pressman 2 and Pressman and Press Helper. The plate room consists of a Kodak Trendsetter News CTP. CTP is operated by a commercial customer service person; however, the Candidate must be able to reproduce plates if needed in the absence of a customer service person. The mailroom has a Kansa 480 5-into-1 inserting machine and a Kirk Rudy ink jet labeling machine. The candidate will oversee the mailroom supervisor and help maintain mailroom equipment. The candidate will be responsible for ordering and maintaining needed inventory levels for paper and ink. Oversee that printing plates

have been ordered. The candidate will need to have experience with Excel spreadsheets.

- \$60,000 - \$65,0000 per year
- Dental Insurance
- Health insurance
- Paid time off
- Relocation assistance
- Vision insurance

If interested, email your resume to jimmy.ruff@clantonadvertiser.com

Independent Sales and Telesales Representative Positions - Birmingham, AL

Work from home as a Marketing Consultant/ independent contractor for the leading family & parenting publication in the Birmingham and central Alabama area – Birmingham Parent (Evans Publishing LLC).

Lots of opportunity for sales and price points – \$50 and up! Sell print, digital, web or social media, along with our FOUR GREAT EVENTS each year.

Great opportunity for someone needing a flexible schedule, wanting to set their own hours and earning potential, a retiree or mom looking for a little something extra who enjoys getting out and meeting people, talking on the phone and earning extra income! Full time and part time will be considered.

- Hours are flexible and home-based
- Applicants must be able to meet clients in per-

son when required

- Attend special expo events
- Generous commission schedule helps you grow your own base with no caps on growth
- High commission percentage for closers with bonuses
- Help local businesses reach a top influencer in home and family spending – MOMS!

Evans Publishing LLC, dba Birmingham Parent, a 19-year-old local company, is seeking self-motivated, independent marketing specialists responsible for directly prospecting/warm calling, following up on leads provided (face-to-face, phone sales, and email) to generate advertising and event sales and sponsorships.

The position requires a detail-oriented "people" person that can manage multiple clients and is willing to listen, learn and execute management directives in securing new advertising revenue. Knowledge of web and Word-based programs for customer relationship management is required. Advertising sales experience is strongly preferred, but a top producer sales background will be considered.

To apply send you resume to carol@birminghamparent.com.

Note: Office address is in Clanton, but we work from home offices, so Shelby and Jefferson counties are our main focus for sales.

Help continued on next page

Help Wanted

Data Reporter - Birmingham, AL

The Birmingham Business Journal is looking for a driven and innovative Data Reporter to build on the newsroom's strong legacy of using data to drive essential, exclusive business coverage.

A data Reporter is able to gather and analyze original data on the industries, companies and trends driving business decisions in the metro Birmingham region, and communicate what he or she uncovers using both text and visual storytelling techniques.

Skills

- Strong news judgment, news analysis and news writing skills
- Proven ability to work with databases and spreadsheets to find patterns and stories
- Meticulous eye for detail
- Passionate about finding and dissecting data
- Ability to get people to tell you things they don't want to
- Strong customer service skills
- Solid Microsoft Excel skills a must
- Comfort with basic math
- Ability to mine and analyze data from surveys, regulatory agencies, other public documents and sources
- Knowledge of computer data-management applications a plus
- Drive for 100 percent accuracy

Experience

- 1-2 years of journalism or equivalent experience, with a track record of reporting on business data
- Familiarity with public-company, bank and regulatory agency filings a plus

Education

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent work experience

Job Responsibilities

- Collects and analyzes company and industry data for Birmingham Business Journal's weekly industry Lists, using surveys, public documents and other relevant sources.
- Manages and actively builds Birmingham Business Journal database of regional companies.
- Regularly reports stories based on data from the Lists and other research projects using appropriate narrative and visual storytelling techniques.
- Reports and writes four to six cover stories a year using data resources.
- Oversees creation of charts and infographics to illustrate research data findings.
- Works alongside reporters and editors on enterprise projects that include or are driven by data.
- Actively looks for creative ways to tell important stories using data.
- Participates in regular page proofing rotation.
- Produces stories for the daily newsletter as needed.

- Attends BBJ events and networks in the community.

Additional Job Information

The well-being of our employees is paramount. For that reason, ACBJ offers a variety of rich and competitive benefits including bundled health, dental and vision plans designed to meet our employees' needs. We also provide programs to support mental health and wellness and a generous time-off policy in support of taking the time needed to recharge.

Here are just a few of our programs:

- * Paid Parental Leave
- * 401K Plan with Employer Match
- * Flexible Spending Accounts
- * Employee Assistance Program
- * Multiple Employee Dependent Scholarship

Programs

- * Commuter Flexible Spending
- * Lifestyle Programs (Including incentives for healthy habits)
- * Medical Infertility Services
- * Corporate discount programs
- * Employee Recognition/Service Awards
- * And so much more!

APPLY HERE: <https://recruiting.adp.com/srccar/public/nghome.guid?>

For more information on the above listed positions and others [CLICK HERE](#) to view the APA Help Wanted page - updated frequently.

Remember these ads?

Don't forget to remind your readers, and legislators, how critical public notices are.

Find them on Bamanet (ad department) in the "Public Notices ads" folder.