

The Tennessee Press

Vol. 74

SEPTEMBER 2010

No. 3



INDEPENDENT APPEAL, SELMER

Kevin Slimp, standing right, works with staff members of the Independent Appeal, Selmer on their computer skills on Aug. 26. At the computer is Keegan Monnard, and from left, standing, are Jeff Whitten, Betty Rail, Sandy Whitaker, Anita Grantham and Logan Watson. The Independent is a McNairy County weekly with 7,200 paid circulation.

Seminar to train for reporting on education

The Tennessee Press Association, aware of the importance of education to our state and society, is sponsoring a seminar to assist member newspapers in reporting on the imminent reform process.

The program will be Friday, Oct. 1.

The idea for the seminar originated with Keith Wilson, publisher of the *Kingsport Times-News*, who for a number of years has been active in promoting education. The project is endorsed by TPA President Art Powers. Wilson is Journalism Education Committee chairman.

TPA mailed a letter on Aug. 26 introducing the project to newspapers. It follows:

"Education reform is here. Very soon in every community across the State, school children, their parents, teachers and school systems will be confronted with a new score card of academic achievement that is benchmarked against the best in the nation. Some at the state level predict that as much as 40 percent of all school children and nearly 50 percent of all schools statewide will be below the minimum standard.

"At TPA we see the looming crisis as an opportunity all across the State for newspapers to do what we do best: report, analyze and lead community discussion on education

reform. This is an opportunity for newspapers statewide to demonstrate the importance of community-based journalism.

"To help your newspaper take a leadership role in informing your community concerning these monumental changes, TPA is conducting a training seminar for editors and reporters. The seminar is designed to help everyone understand the purpose of reform, as well as the sources, uses and validity of the statistical data on your schools.

"We urge all editors and reporters who will be writing about local schools to attend the seminar. The seminar will be conducted in Knoxville at the News Sentinel offices from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

on Oct. 1. Seating is limited to 60 people, but if you cannot attend in person, the seminar may also be viewed live via the Internet.

"A detailed list of speakers and topics will be arriving very soon. However, you may reserve a seat by contacting Angelique Dunn at the TPA offices. The number is (865) 584-5761, extension 100.

"In order for our association to become a stronger voice on education, we need your participation at this event. We strongly urge you to send your personnel to this important conference.

Sincerely,
Keith Wilson Arthur S. Powers"

International Literacy Day coming up

The traditional annual International Literacy Day will be observed on Wednesday, Sept. 8. It focuses attention on literacy needs worldwide.

It is sponsored by the International Reading Association (IRA), which has posted information on its website, www.reading.org.

More than 780 million of the world's adults (nearly two-thirds of whom are women) do not know how to read or

write, and between 94 and 115 million children lack access to education, IRA said.

In a letter about Literacy Day, the association wrote, "... (B) y celebrating International Literacy Day, we have the opportunity to further the understanding of the need to focus specifically on reading instruction as the central element in school and education reform."

TPA board, Government Affairs to meet Sept. 24

The Tennessee Press Association Board of Directors will meet on Friday, Sept. 24, in Knoxville. The schedule calls for a Government Affairs Committee meeting at 1 p.m., the board meeting at 3 p.m. and an optional group dinner.

In addition, TPAers had the option to buy tickets to the University of Tennessee (Vols) vs. University of Alabama Birmingham (Blazers) football game the following day.

All TPA members are invited to attend the meeting and its related activities at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on Summit Hill Drive.

TPA President Art Powers will preside

at the board meeting, and committee co-chairmen Michael Williams and Clint Brewer, at the committee meeting.

DETAILS

WHO: TPA members and their staffs

WHAT: Fall Board Meeting

WHEN: Friday, Sept. 24

WHERE: Crowne Plaza Hotel, (865)

522-2600

REGISTRATION: Details available on www.tnpress.com

Institute offers intensive training in newspaper technology skills

Four scholarships remain available for Tennessee Press Association (TPA) members who want to send staff members to the Oct. 7 though 9 session of the Institute of Newspaper Technology in Knoxville.

Thanks to the generosity of the TPA Foundation, these scholarships reduce the registration fees for TPAers from \$595 to \$145.

The Institute is an intensive training event offering classes in Photoshop, InDesign, Flash, video production, Illustrator, PDF troubleshooting, new technologies and more.

Sofar, the Institute has 47 registrants. Sixty slots are available.



For more information, one should visit www.newspaperinstitute.com. To register online and receive the TPA discount, visit www.newspaperinstitute.com/tpa.html.

Kevin Slimp, Tennessee Press Service technology director, serves as director of the Institute. It is held at the University of Tennessee Communications Building and in cooperation with the UTK College of Communication and Information.



2010 theme: Newspapers—the print and online connector for today's communities

National Newspaper Week Oct. 3-9

Find a kit containing a variety of materials for observing National Newspaper Week beginning Sept. 13 on the TPA website, www.tnpress.com.

The Florida Press Association, of which Dean Ridings is executive director, is putting the kit together.

This year brings the 70th annual celebration observed by thousands of newspapers in the U.S.

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IN CONTACT

Phone: (865) 584-5761
Fax: (865) 558-8687
Online: www.tnpress.com

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Elenora E. Edwards.....Managing Editor
Robyn Gentile.....Production Coordinator
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OFFICIAL WEB SITE OF THE TENNESSEE PRESS ASSOCIATION

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CONTACT THE MANAGING EDITOR

TPAers with suggestions, questions or comments about items in The Tennessee Press are welcome to contact the managing editor. Call Elenora E. Edwards, (865) 457-5459; send a note to P.O. Box 502, Clinton, TN 37717-0502; or e-mail ElenoraEdwards@Comcast.net. The deadline for the October issue is Sept. 13.

These days call for accountability

Accountability... it begins with us!

For years newspapers were king of all media. We refer to them as glory days or those good ole days. As an industry we weathered the threatening storm of radio, magazines, television, cable-TV, pay-channel TV, large billboards, shoppers and other forms of competition. But this changing world has hit us and we're now called on to survive the threat of digital, online and mobile devices like the smart phone, iPad, Google, Facebook and Twitter.

I'm sure we'll survive, although how well is left up to all of us.

This new day calls for an introspection. Each of us needs to become accountable for our time and our actions at work. We cannot just show up anymore without giving our all. The days of performing the same old tasks from nine to five are over. Business is not walking in the door any more. Changing times are upon us, and if we are to survive we must change with them. We must be more aggressive.

Newspapers across the country have spent millions analyzing their situation during these recessed times. They have tested, re-interviewed employees and in some cases even terminated employees in certain departments and had them reapply. Imagine working at a newspaper for 20 or 30 years



**YOUR
PRESIDING
REPORTER**

Art Powers

The result of this direction will come to light in a year or so. For us, now, it is important to realize that new demands are being made on all. We need to accept these new strategies and tactics. We need to make the necessary changes in our own productivity. Those who have not bought into this process better get with it or they may find someone else sitting in their chair. It is up to us.

ART POWERS is publisher of the Johnson City Press.

and your supervisor comes in and says you are no longer employed.

Job descriptions are being rewritten for the first time in years. Employees are now being told new things are expected of them. Sell video ads, sell online directories, sell digital editions as well as print. The slate is being wiped clean and a fresh start for management and employees is upon us.

Many companies are preaching accountability. Others are delineating their goals as KPIs, or Key Performance Indicators. Specific duties are delineated as goals to achieve each and every month. Writers are given goals for the number of stories produced for print and the web each and every week. District managers are reporting how many sales calls they make in the morning and in the afternoon each and every day. All of this is to attempt to become more competitive with these new forces.

ENGRAVINGS

Bristol Herald Courier wins again for investigative series

The Associated Press Managing Editors Association (APME) is the latest journalism organization to honor the *Bristol Herald Courier*.

The newspaper earned an APME Public Service Award in the under 40,000 circulation category for "Underfoot, Out of Reach," an eight-day series and subsequent follow-up stories on how Virginia's system of natural gas royalties is mismanaged.

"It's very gratifying to see yet another national award bestowed upon this deserving body of work—and proof positive that our commitment to quality journalism is paying dividends," Herald

Courier Publisher Carl Esposito said Aug. 25.

APME, an association of editors at AP's 1,500 member newspapers in the U.S. and newspapers served by the Canadian Press in Canada, recognizes journalism excellence with annual awards in six categories.

Kudos

The first registration for the Fall Board Meeting Sept. 24 arrived at the TPA offices Aug. 9. It was from Amanda Hill Bond, *Pickett County Press*, Byrdstown.

APME, Diversity Institute set NewsTrain

Associated Press Managing Editors and the Freedom Forum Diversity Institute, Nashville, will present NewsTrain/Nashville Thursday and Friday, Sept. 23-24, at the John Seigenthaler Center on the Vanderbilt University campus.

This workshop is intended for frontline editors, broadcast producers, newsroom leaders at all levels, college journalism educators and others who want to improve their journalism and leadership skills.

The workshop involves two tracks, The Nimble Leader and The Evolving Journalist. Participants may attend both days and both tracks or may pick a day and pick a track. The cost for one or both days is \$50, including lunches and coffee breaks.

Highlights of the workshop include the following:

- Tom Curley, Associated Press president and chief executive officer, keynote address Sept. 23, "The Renewed Power of the Press"

- John Seigenthaler, First Amendment Center founder, keynote address Sept. 24: "The First Amendment, a Cornerstone of Democracy"

- Reception and performance by Freedom Sings, "Fight the Power," a musical celebration of the First Amendment, hosted by Ken Paulson, First Amendment Center chief executive officer, Sept. 23.

Workshop faculty members are Ronnie Agnew, Jacqui Banaszynski, Patrick Beeson, Bobbie Bowman and Michael Roberts. To register or for a detailed agenda, faculty bios and information about accommodations, see www.apme.com/?page=NashvilleNewsTrain.

Chairman named

Tennessee Press Association President Art Powers has appointed Joe Adams, publisher of *The Lebanon Democrat*, as chairman of the Postal Committee.

Training available online from TPA

Training videos for Tennessee newspaper people are online 24 hours a day, seven days a week. New videos include five segments on Adobe Flash and a segment on new features in Adobe Creative Suite (CS4).

Other topics:

InDesign, Photoshop, Adobe Acrobat, QuarkXpress and OS X. The videos can be accessed through the training page at www.tnpress.com/training.html. A username and password are required. Contact TPA for access information, (865) 584-5761.

First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

"Secrecy is the freedom zealots dream of; no watchman at the door, no accountant to check the books, no judge to check the law. The secret government has no constitution. The rules it follows are the rules it makes up."

—Bill Moyers, Journalist, PBS, 1988

Courtesy, Freedom Forum

NAM works hard to advance newspaper industry

BY GREG SHERRILL
TPA executive director

Executive directors from more than 40 press associations and newspaper-related groups convened Aug. 3 through 6 in New Orleans for the Newspaper Association Managers (NAM) Annual Conference.



Sherrill

The conference allows press associations to share notes on what's happening across the newspaper industry and to share good ideas that we can bring back home to our respective states.

The overall feel of this year's meeting was a little more relaxed than last

summer's gathering, when the economy was in a tailspin and press associations across the country were dealing with declining ad placements and downsizing. While no one thinks we're out of the woods yet, there is definitely light at the end of the proverbial tunnel.

Most states, including Tennessee, reported increases in advertising placements over last year but still not up to levels we saw prior to 2008. A recurring theme throughout our discussions centered on juggling all the services we provide to members using the smaller number of employees that the current advertising climate supports.

The biggest concern among all the states is the looming threat to public notice advertising. State and local governments from coast to coast are facing very serious budget shortfalls in

coming years, and elimination of paid public notice advertising seems all too easy for elected officials. We've got some heavy lifting ahead of us - to convince governments that printed notice is vital to maintaining open government and our functioning democracy.

The reality is that paid public notice advertising is a microscopic portion of most government budgets, and the risk of allowing government actions and spending to go unchecked is far too great. Our member newspapers rely heavily on revenue from public notice ads. This revenue allows newspapers to play an important watchdog role - if our industry does not do this, who will?

Making the issue worse is the incorrect assumption among many lawmakers that our industry is declining. Yes, some newspapers are reporting declines in circulation of their printed product, but those numbers do not reflect the increased number of readers gained through newspaper websites. Survey after survey is showing that for those individuals who choose to seek their news online, their local newspaper website is by far the most visited site.

We've got to do a better job of communicating this growing segment of our industry. And, newspapers can help by making sure their public notice ads are being placed both on their own websites and on an aggregate website run by their state press association (ours is www.tnpublicnotice.com). This will ensure that we as an industry

are providing independent, archivable notices regardless of how readers choose to get their news.

Some states shared ideas for newspaper promotion campaigns, to help readers understand that our industry is strong and to reinforce that community newspapers are still the most reliable and in-depth source for truly local news. I'd like to see us develop some promotion ideas for Tennessee newspapers; perhaps even a contest among our members to see who can come up with the best newspaper promotion ads.

The consensus among the state directors was that the coming years would be challenging for newspapers, and our group of press associations needs to be poised to support and help the industry in new and effective ways. This annual conference is a great way for us to discuss ideas for accomplishing just that.

We are also planning conferences for advertising and classified managers to work on the revenue side and a legislative conference later in the year to make sure we stay on top of the public notice situation as well as other issues affecting our industry on a national level.

This has concluded my first year of service on the NAM Board of Directors, and I am impressed with how hard this bunch works to advance the newspaper industry. I'm proud to be a part of the effort.

FORESIGHT

SEPTEMBER

- 8: International Literacy Day
- 15-17: Workshop for Smaller Newspapers, Crowne Plaza Ravinia, Atlanta, Ga.
- 17: Constitution Day
- 17-18: Mid-America Newspaper Conference, Lake Ozark, Mo.
- 23-24: APME NewsTrain, Nashville
- 23-24: Society of News Design, Denver, Colo.



- 24: Government Affairs Committee, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Knoxville
- 24: TPA Board of Directors, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Knoxville
- 30-Oct. 3: NNA 125th Anniversary Celebration at the 124th Annual Convention and Trade Show, Omaha Hilton and Qwest Center, Omaha, Neb.

OCTOBER

- 1: TPA seminar on reporting education, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., News Sentinel Building, News Sentinel Drive, Knoxville
- 3-5: SPJ convention, Las Vegas, Nev.
- 3-9: National Newspaper Week
- 7-9: 13th TPS Institute of Newspaper Technology, Knoxville
- 17-20: SNPA News Industry Summit (Annual Convention), Barton Creek Resort, Austin, Texas
- 20-23: Associated Press Managing Editors Conference, St. Petersburg, Fla.
- 24-27: Inland Press Association, Chicago, Ill.

DECEMBER

- 10: Deadline for submitting nominations for Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame
- 15: Bill of Rights Day

2011

FEBRUARY

- 9-11: TPA Winter Convention and Press Institute, Nashville

JUNE

- 16-18: TPA Summer Convention, joint with Kentucky Press Association, The Doubletree/Park Vista Hotel, Gatlinburg

Election results

Connie Albrecht won a seat on the Cookeville City Council. She was formerly with Albrecht Newspapers, Cookeville.

Scott Stewart, with the *Pulaski Citizen*, did not win his race for county executive. The incumbent won a third term.

Sam Hatcher of Main Street Media, Lebanon, did not win the Democratic primary in his bid for the District 17 seat in the Tennessee Senate. He received 39 percent of the vote, while his opponent received 42 percent.

Joel Washburn of *The McKenzie Banner* and *Dresden Enterprise*, was re-elected to the Carroll County Commission. He begins his second 4-year term on September 1.

Read

The Tennessee Press
— then pass it on

A Resolution

Whereas, the Tennessee Press Association (TPA) is the trade association representing 124 newspapers across Tennessee; and

Whereas, the Association understands that the United States Postal Service (USPS) is considering an elimination of Saturday delivery; and

Whereas, many newspapers publish a Saturday edition each week; and

Whereas, the newspaper industry is in the midst of the worst recession in many decades and many newspapers would stand to lose significant revenue from elimination of a Saturday edition; and

Whereas, since newspapers would likely contract for carrier delivery in place of USPS delivery, Saturday service reduction would further cause the USPS additional revenue losses and increased delivery competition; and

Whereas, the lives and information needs of the citizens of Tennessee would be greatly inconvenienced by elimination of Saturday mail delivery, including delivery of their daily newspaper and outside-county delivery of non-daily newspapers in a timely manner.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Press Association, assembled on June 24, 2010, that the Association stands in opposition of a movement to eliminate Saturday delivery by the United States Postal Service.

Be it further resolved that the Board of Directors encourages the USPS to form a partnership with newspapers with the goal of increasing newspaper delivery postal volume and revenues in out-of-county periodicals delivery service areas.

In witness thereof, we have hereunto set our hands and caused to be entered into the minutes of Tennessee Press Association, Inc. this twenty-fourth day of June, 2010.

Nominating process open for Hall of Fame

Nominations will be accepted through Dec. 10 for potential inductees to the Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame. The Hall honors those who have made outstanding contributions to Tennessee newspaper journalism or who have made extraordinary contributions to their communities and region, or the

state, through newspaper journalism.

Further information can be found at www.tnpress.com/halloffame.html.

Dr. Peter Gross, director of the UTK School of Journalism and Electronic Media, serves as the Hall of Fame Committee chairman.

TRACKS

Rebecca Long has been named publisher of Marion County Newspapers Inc. She oversees *The Hustler*, South Pittsburg, *The Jasper Journal* and two other publications. She succeeds Ralph Bush.



Long

Long moved from *The Weekly Post*, Rainsville, Ala., where she was publisher five years. She began her newspaper career in 1995 with *The Daily Sentinel*, Scottsboro, Ala., as a graphic designer, then was promoted to classified advertising manager. She moved to accounting and served as business manager for five years. She was named publisher in Rainsville in 2005.

Bush planned to move to Pensacola, Fla. for a time and then further south in that state, where he will work with

Dolphin International Yacht Sales as a broker.

The *Chattanooga Times Free Press* has made some changes in the newsroom. Alison Gerber, former metro editor, is the new managing editor. Chris Vass, former Sunday editor, is the newspaper's new metro editor. Vass serves on the TPA Board of Directors representing District 3.

Heather Nicholson, circulation and marketing manager of *The Lebanon Democrat*, joined the *Chattanooga Times Free Press'* circulation department as customer service manager on Aug. 30. Prior to her work at the Democrat, she worked in circulation as the renewal marketing manager and the project manager for *The Jackson Sun*. Nicholson chaired the TPA Circulation Committee in 2007 and has been an active TPA member.

READS

The New Muckrakers, by Leonard Downie Jr., is available from Investigative Reporters and Editors.

The book examines a crucial era in the rich history of investigative reporting in America and includes insider anecdotes and personal insights from some of the biggest investigations

and investigators of the last century, including Woodward and Bernstein's coverage of Watergate and Seymour Hersh's uncovering of the My Lai massacre.

One can order online, www.ire.org, or contact the IRE Resource Center, rescntr@ire.org or 573-882-3364.

**Tennessee Press Service
Advertising Placement Snapshot**

	ROP:	Network:
July 2010:	\$503,628	\$59,048
Year* as of Nov. 30:	\$3,141,988	\$594,217

*The Tennessee Press Service Inc. fiscal year runs Dec. 1 through Nov. 30.

Newspapers often speak meekly

The cable guy visited a few days ago, and when he asked what the problem was, I said, "You're going to laugh."

(He didn't seem the laughing type, but I thought a little humor might soften his brick face.)

"Sometimes," I said, "when I'm flipping through the channels, the screen will turn green, and it'll stay green unless I turn off the TV. Then, when I turn it back on, it's not green anymore. Unless, of course, it's Kermit the Frog."

Jackie Gleason wouldn't have been able to coax so much as an elevated lip from this guy.

Eschewing eye contact, he near-whispered some incomprehensible cable-guy talk, but he said he'd change the DVR (and no, I don't know what a "DVR" is), and he added, "Tell you what, I'll leave these cables. If changing the DVR doesn't work, try changing the cables."

Note that ominous word: "try."

He was doing what newspapers too often do: Saying something in a voice so meek, it was more like a parakeet's cheep than a bulldog's bark.

I was reading a story by a reporter who was covering a dispute between environmentalists and a developer. For about a dozen or so paragraphs, each side had its (predictable) say.

Then the spokeswoman for the environmentalists asserted, in what I imagined to be a firm, loud voice, that the law prevented development on the land in question.

Aha, I thought: The developer is going to lose.

But two paragraphs later, the developer said the spokeswoman was wrong, that the law, in fact, left room for an exception that would allow his project.

So in the middle of the story, I found out that one of the sides was right, the other wrong.

The reporter, however, never checked to find out what the law actually said. As a result, the story was a typical PROPS 'N' OPPS piece, with the proponents saying, "White," and the opponents saying, "Black."

Just as my cable guy was afraid to promise he had fixed the problem, the reporter feared interpreting a law.

In another story with environmental overtones, a county wanted to make more strict a development code in an industrial area. The companies already there insisted that toughening the code would drive them out of business.

Again, it was PROPS 'N' OPPS.

But the reporter failed on two counts. First, he didn't challenge the county. If, in county officials' eyes, a development code is too lenient, someone with the county should be able to say, "Here are the problems caused by the inadequate existing code."

Second, the reporter didn't read the proposed stricter code.



**WRITING
COACH**

Jim Stasiowski

Instead, he quoted a company owner as saying it would prevent certain changes in the company's building.

Businesspeople reflexively oppose new restrictions. The reporter should read the proposed code, then take the company owner's gripe to the county development officials and ask: "The owner of the XYZ Company says the new code would prevent his changing of his building. Is he right or wrong?"

I read a third story about a proposal floated by a powerful state legislator. He had a plan to solve a problem, but before I had gotten two sentences into his plan, I could see it was illogical, based on a flawed premise.

But the reporter let the legislator spell out his entire flawed plan. The reporter gave him too much respect, too much credibility. It was as if the reporter were afraid to challenge a person so powerful.

That reporter was like the cable guy. He accepted a bad explanation, just as the cable guy accepted his company's method of solving green screen by (1) changing the DVR, then (2) handing new cables to the customer.

The new DVR solved the problem ... for approximately three days. When the green screen returned, I changed the cables, and the green screen now is as much a part of my evening's entertainment as the GEICO gecko.

I don't blame the cable guy for his equivocating; he doesn't make the equipment his company gives him to distribute to disgruntled customers.

But journalists have extraordinary freedom, as well as extraordinary responsibility. As reporters and editors, we are the creators of our stories. We cannot point to others as the cause of our weakness. We have to require direct answers from sources, study every clause of every document, explain the technicalities, wipe out as many ambiguities as we can.

To ensure we all do that, I'm going to install a foolproof feature in every reporter's computer: When we equivocate, the screen will turn green.

And believe me, I have the cables to make that happen.

THE FINAL WORD: The phrase is "all right," two words, both spelled properly, with a space between them.

I suppose some people justify "alright" because of a vaguely related word, "altogether." Say both terms. You'll instinctively add a space, although a short one, between "all" and "right," but you'll pronounce "altogether" altogether.

JIM STASIOWSKI, the writing coach for The Dolan Co., welcomes your questions or comments. Call him at (775) 354-2872 or write to him at 2499 Ivory Ann Drive, Sparks, Nev. 89436.

Experts tell postal commission ending Saturday mail delivery will harm small-town America

The U.S. Postal Service has failed to take into account the effect of the loss of Saturday mail delivery on small-town America and has overlooked new competition it will spur from newspaper carrier forces if it drops Saturdays, National Newspaper Association (NNA) witnesses told the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) on Aug. 4.

The Commission is hearing testimony on the Postal Service's proposal to repeal a law requiring six-day mail delivery. Postmaster General John Potter has said that if Congress relaxes the constraint, USPS will drop Saturday mail delivery in 2011. The PRC will issue its recommendation in October.

Al Cross, director of the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues based at the University of Kentucky, testified that rural Americans are more heavily dependent on the mail than their urban cousins.

"Reducing the quality of postal service will reduce the quality of life in rural America, making it a less attractive place to live. The resulting out-migration, and suppression of in-migration, will contribute to population loss and stagnation in rural counties and add to suburban sprawl that drains other public resources," Cross said.

NNA postal expert Max Heath, Shelbyville, Ky., affirmed Cross's viewpoint. He challenged comments that Postal Service witness Sam Pulcrano made during PRC hearings about rural citizens. Heath is NNA's Postal Committee chairman and frequent expert witness before the PRC. He has testified in four proceedings in the past decade.

"It is regrettable that policymakers in the nation's capital do not take the time to visit smaller towns," he said. "If the Postal Service had conducted such an investigation, its officials would have quickly learned that sentiments like Mr. Pulcrano's, stated on the witness stand, that rural America chooses to have poorer and lesser services are highly offensive and objectionable."

The loss of Saturday mail will deeply affect many newspapers that count on USPS for delivery over the weekend, Heath testified. A particular loss will be reporting on high school sports.

"Publishers are rightly concerned about the reporting of local sports. That may seem like a parochial fret to someone in Washington, D.C., but anyone who has roots in a small town can attest that the high school football and basketball teams form the nucleus of community gatherings. If the Postal Service's mission is still to bind the nation together, it must use the bindings that the community chooses, not ones selected by Washington. High school sports help bind small towns together—even more than small post offices, in my humble opinion," Heath said. He noted that the news loss would reach far beyond sports coverage, however,

and would affect local elections and politics, zoning decisions, school news, the community groups, the churches, economic development, taxes, crime, highway crashes, honor rolls, births and deaths, public notices, yard sales and a host of other news bites that make newspapers critical.

Cross pointed out that rural dwellers rely on the printed newspaper rather than the Internet.

"The latest data from the Pew Internet and American Life Project, gathered in December 2009, show that while the percentage of rural Americans using the Internet has come close to the overall percentage, they are likely to get less from it, because they lack high-speed broadband and make less use of interactive features," he said. Rural America's access to broadband service at home was only 47 percent, compared to 61 percent for urban America.

Newspaper publishers need Saturday delivery because readers and advertisers want and need it, Heath told the Commission. If USPS will not deliver, publishers will be forced to create private delivery services, which will compete with the Postal Service for mail volume. That trend would reverse one of the Postal Service's few positive growth areas—within-county newspapers.

"Within-county newspaper mail is the only product in market dominant mail that has seen growth in the past few years, having grown 12.8 percent in pieces in FY 2008, then 3.4 percent in FY 2009. So far in 2010, pieces have grown 2.6 percent for the first six months, with the second quarter showing acceleration to 3.6 percent," he said.

NNA President Cheryl Kaechele, publisher of the *Allegan County* (Mich.) *News*, expressed her appreciation for the witnesses' testimony and reiterated NNA's commitment to preserving affordable and timely mail service.

"Our experts are sharing wisdom that the Postal Service needs to hear," she said. "Reducing service in this economy, even as USPS tries to impose a double digit rate increase upon local newspapers, is a recipe for business failure. NNA believes the Postal Service must continue to seek cost controls that do not cut into the muscle of its core franchise. We hope the Commission will agree."

(NNA)

Paper changes days

The *Advocate & Democrat*, Sweetwater, changed publication days with the first issue in May. Now coming out Wednesday and Sunday, the paper earlier had Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday editions. The newspaper comes out in the morning. The *Advocate & Democrat* has added e-mail editions, which it produces Monday through Friday.

WORTH REPEATING

Campaign letters to the editor

BY SAM D. KENNEDY

Kennedy Newspapers, Columbia

Each election season I search to find a solution to a problem.

We want you to have a free right to comment on matters of local interest and to exercise your right of free speech to criticize public officials. Of course your comments must not be libelous, but they do not necessarily have to be polite. As my old law school dean said, the American people have a right to call the sheriff a SOB, but I suggest that it might not be wise to exercise such a right.

But such gives problems during a political campaign.

During an election, letters become campaign platforms and are often

organized by friends or the campaign staff of a candidate. If we ran such we would be overcome. Suddenly we would be giving away the only thing we have to sell, and that is no way to stay in business. More than that, this would give an advantage to the better organized campaigns or special interest groups with large membership and lots of computers. They would fill up this space with garbage.

So we simply say that we will not accept letters either praising or criticizing a candidate during a campaign. What you, or other interested citizens, want to tell the public on behalf of a candidate must be paid for.

Unfortunately, this policy eliminates many interesting, and possibly true,

comments about the candidates.

I love the rough and tumble of a political campaign, and I do not get upset over so-called attack campaign ads. Such makes life more interesting and the American and Lawrence County voters are smart enough to dismiss such for what they are.

So, save yourself a stamp. Go to a political rally and shout your thoughts or pay for an ad if you think your comments are worthy, and know that only in rare instances will any letter commenting on a campaign or candidate during an election be run in the *Advocate*.

Sorry about that, but I know no other way to handle the situation.

(July 2010)

WORTH REPEATING

Bill Rawlins was the 'real deal'

By **JIM CHARLET**
Brentwood

"AP..., Rawlins." That's the grveled sound you heard answering your phone call to the Nashville Associated Press bureau if you were editor of an AP-client Tennessee small daily newspaper in the 1970s.

It was the voice of Bill Rawlins, state editor of the AP bureau headed by the late Fred Moen.

Rawlins worked at the Associated Press Nashville Bureau from 1964 to 1994 when he retired after a total of 46 years with the AP.

The last 20 years of his news reporting career were spent covering Tennessee politics from his document-strewn cubicle on Capitol Hill. He died Aug. 2 at age 82.

Born April 9, 1928 in Pleasantville, Iowa, Rawlins began his AP career in 1948 as a 20-year-old part-time intern in the Albuquerque bureau while a student at the University of New Mexico.

He graduated in 1951 with majors in government and journalism and sometimes said he was "...the first AP intern, no matter what anybody else says."

He transferred to the Nashville bureau in 1952 and later moved to the Knoxville bureau in 1953.

While there he recorded what he often described as his "proudest personal achievement," the first AP man to cover the Clinton High School integration race riots in 1956.

He recalled that on Aug. 27, 1956, it was only Bill Rawlins of Associated Press and Pulitzer winner David Halberstam reporting "...live and in color from Clinton, Tennessee."

Rawlins also reported the trial of John Kasper and the 1956 White Citizens Council trial before being named AP's Chattanooga correspondent in 1960.

And during his Chattanooga stint, he covered the jury-tampering trial and conviction of Teamsters Union president James Hoffa.

It was in this assignment in Rock City, Chattanooga, where he acquired the nickname "Rocky Rawlins."

While sometimes the subject of urban lore musings, Rawlins dismissed the nickname as necessity invention. He said there were three "Bills" in the Chattanooga bureau office, and his "Rocky" reduced it to two "Bills."

But back to the Rocky Rawlins grveled voice telephone mannerisms.

In 1972 and 1973, I was the senior area correspondent covering the 101st Airborne Division at Ft. Campbell near Clarksville, and the parade of high level Washington officials marking return of troops from Vietnam combat.

Army Secretary Bo Calloway, Vice President Spiro Agnew and Army Chief



Rawlins

of Staff General William Westmoreland were among newsmakers passing through.

So I phoned Rawlins at the AP bureau to coordinate what news reports he wanted filed on those events from the Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle.

That's when I was introduced to the trademark Bill Rawlins "pregnant pause" of lingering phrases.

In talking with Rawlins, the time span between "and," "but," "maybe" and "though" was long enough to put the phone down, get a cup of coffee and return without being missed.

So it went, and Rawlins never missed a beat. Taking notes on Rawlins phone calls was vital to connecting the first paragraph with the last.

That's contrasted to his writing and reporting style, which was trademark brevity, clarity and simple paragraphs. His 600-word Capitol Hill reports were pithy, fact-filled and easy reads. Not even his wife could tell if he was a "D" or an "R."

For those of us who worked in 1972 and 1973 within the Tennessee Press Association to secure passage of the Tennessee Open Meetings Act and the Newsman's Shield Law, the Rawlins insight on the state legislature landscape was invaluable.

In 1976, Rawlins scooped national reporters at the Republican National Convention by reporting it was Sen. Bob Dole whom President Gerald Ford had chosen as his running mate. And in 1979, he reported the early removal of Gov. Ray Blanton and his prison pardon and parole scams.

After retirement, Rawlins authored two books, *Tennessee's Blanton Years: A Political Biography* and *The McWherter Years*, both published by Red Desert Publishers of Nashville.

Clearly, Bill Rawlins, the AP man in Nashville, had a defining impact on editors of Tennessee small daily newspapers in the 1960s and the 1970s.

He was a "Tennessee Notable Scribbler" in every sense, and he will be missed. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Suzanne, son, Drew, daughter, Ruth, and three grandchildren.

So long, "Rocky." Glad we got to know ya'.

Jin Charlet is retired editor and publisher of the Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle, and former copy editor and makeup editor of The Atlanta Constitution. He is writing a book, Tennessee's Notable Scribblers.

An absolute

"Liberty cannot be preserved without a general knowledge among the people, who have a right...and a desire to know; but besides this, they have a right, an indisputable, unalienable, indefeasible, divine right to the most dreaded and envied kind of knowledge, I mean of the character and conduct of their rulers."

Allen H. Neuharth
Freedom Forum founder, 2005

OBITUARIES

Wally Lage

Rust CEO

Wally Lage, vice president and chief operating officer of Rust Communications, drowned Aug. 19 in Cumberland County, Maine after slipping off a wharf. He was 66.

Lage was widely known in the newspaper industry. He was the father of Gina Jones, wife of Hugh Jones, publisher of the *Shelbyville Times-Gazette*.

Lage was active in the Cape Girardeau, Mo. community. He was a longtime member of the Lions Club and the Saint Francis Medical Center board of directors. He served on boards of numerous newspaper organizations and was a member of the Missouri Press Association Hall of Fame.

He served in the Army in the late 1960s and graduated with a master's degree from the University of Missouri. Lage joined Rust Communications in 1993.

His golfing friends remember Lage for getting the "yips." Community leaders remember him for his strong-but-quiet input on issues. Industry leaders remember him for being a mentor.

"Our hearts are aching right now," said Jon K. Rust, co-president of Rust Communications and Southeast Missouri publisher. "Wally was not only a tremendous newspaperman but a great friend -- and a rock for his family. May they feel the love of all who've known, admired and respected a remarkable man."

Rust said Lage touched the lives of many. By late Friday morning, the news of his death spread across the country.

"We've received a flood of telephone calls and e-mails from people in Boston, Maine, Florida, Washington and places in between," Rust said. "All are in shock and saddened by this tragic loss. We've also heard stories from employees of Rust Communications from around the Midwest, remembering how he always made them feel at ease and was never shy with his laugh. He was a mentor to many and a friend to all."

Lage leaves his wife, Dori, three other children and eight grandchildren.

Lage began his newspaper career in 1969 with Winsor Newspapers in Canton, Ill. By age 25, he was publisher of the *Boonville Daily News* and publisher of free publications in Jefferson City and Columbia, Mo.

Before joining Rust, Lage was president of newspaper operations in the Paxton Media Group and general manager of the *Paducah Sun*. He oversaw acquisitions of several daily and weekly newspapers.

(From newspaper reports)

Bill Rawlins

Former AP reporter

Bill Rawlins, who wrote about state government and politics during a 48-year career with the Associated Press, died Aug. 2 in Nashville. He was 82.

The last 42 years of his career were spent in Tennessee and the final 20 of those, reporting from the state Capitol.

Rawlins, who retired in 1994, had been in poor health for about a year.

Shortly before his retirement, a General Assembly resolution honored his "unswerving commitment to fair and accurate reporting." It also cited

his expertise at shorthand, saying he took notes "at such a rapid pace that smoke sometimes seemed to rise from his pad and pencil."

While in Knoxville and Chattanooga, Rawlins wrote often about the Tennessee Valley Authority and the old Atomic Energy Commission.

Rawlins was born in Pleasantville, Iowa.

Besides his wife, Rawlins leaves a son, Drew Rawlins, executive director of the state Bureau of Ethics and Campaign Finance, and a daughter, Ruth Colgan.

Professors to assist in digitization project

Dr. Ed Caudill and Dr. Dwight Teeter, professors in the UTK School of Journalism and Electronic Media, will assist UT Libraries and the Tennessee State Library and Archives in digitizing 100,000 pages of Tennessee newspapers published between 1836 and 1922.

The professors will co-chair an advisory board that will select titles that will best represent the three "states within a state" in Tennessee.

The professors were selected because of their extensive knowledge of Tennessee's publishing history, as well as their expertise in technical writing.

TPA Executive Director Greg Sherrill serves on the advisory board.

The project is funded by a two-year \$325,165 grant provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities as part of the organization's National Digital Newspapers Program

(www.tnjin.com)

REWRITES

AUGUST 1960

James I. Finney Jr., an advertising department employee at *The Daily Herald*, Columbia, and Barbara Jean Wayman of Knoxville were married recently.

The McKenzie Banner marked two milestones. The Carroll County weekly observed its 90th anniversary and added color to its news and advertising columns.

Memphis Mayor Henry Loeb, in an expansion of a new policy of open meetings, admitted newspaper reporters to the formerly closed executive sessions of the City Commission.

Dan Hicks Jr. rejoined the staff of the *Clinton Courier-News*, where he had worked in 1949-50. In the new post he was in charge of advertising.

SEPTEMBER 1960

An Edward J. Meeman Foundation Fund was established at the University of Tennessee to provide cash awards for winners of the annual state press contests sponsored by UT and TPA. The Meeman Foundation was created in 1949 by Meeman, editor of the *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, to provide

support for the conservation of natural resources.

About two-thirds of the nation's households received a daily or Sunday newspaper delivered to their doorsteps, according to the Bureau of the Census.

The price for a single copy of the *Donelson News-Diary* was hiked to a dime. The subscription rate was \$3 a year.

Don't throw away your old newspapers, suggested an item in *The Tennessee Press*. Some day they might be sold for cattle feed. Newsprint is similar to hay cellulose content, and West Coast research scientists were testing a pelleted cattle feed made from newsprint, vitamins and minerals.

The Press reprinted an article from the *Daily Post-Athenian*, Athens, telling about Glenmore Paper Mill in McMinn County, which operated 100 years earlier. In the meantime, Bowaters Southern Paper Corp. was building in McMinn County the largest newsprint mill in the U.S.

AUGUST 1985

The Tennessee Press Service's total gross volume was more than a half-

million dollars in the first half of fiscal 1985, TPS President Jack Fishman reported.

The Commercial Appeal began using a new typeface, Garamond.

A 16-page tabloid for use in Newspaper in Education programs was made available to TPA newspapers. It was sponsored by the TPA Foundation.

Lynn Richardson of the *Johnson City Press-Chronicle* attended a Newspaper in Education conference in Toronto, Canada.

SEPTEMBER 1985

Henry Murchison, editor of the *Halls Graphic*, ended his long career. He first worked at the Graphic in 1930, served stints as West Tennessee stringer for the *Evening Appeal* of Memphis and *The Commercial Appeal*, worked for the *Lawrence News* in Lawrenceburg and for the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* before rejoining the Graphic in 1941. He bought it in 1942.

Kent Flanagan, AP bureau chief for Tennessee, was elected president of the Nashville chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi. Treasurer was Gail McKnight, city hall reporter for *The Tennessean*.

WORTH REPEATING

A right to public records

Anyone who has followed state and local governing bodies is well aware that the public's right to know has traditionally been observed more in the breach than in good faith.

Elected officials have often wrongly conferred or agreed in private on the actions and policies they approve or reject in their public meetings, depriving

the public of the reasoning and factors that lead to their officials' actions, and diminishing their accountability.

Elected and appointed officials and the government employees who exercise control over public records have commonly rejected, hindered or delayed public access to records to which any citizen is fully entitled

under state law to see, read and obtain a copy.

Whether public officials or employees wrongly hinder public access to certain public records or background discussions because they don't know better, or because they believe some public records should not be made public, they are simply wrong, and

acting illegally, when they do so. Absent specific legal exclusions, all public records and accompanying multimedia documents should be made available promptly to citizens who request them. That mandate also includes e-mails and correspondence pertaining to public business between elected public officials.

The breadth of the law seems to be surprising to some. That became apparent Thursday in a County Commission meeting following a presentation on the scope of Tennessee's Public Records and Sunshine Law acts by Elisha Hodge, legal counsel for the state's Office of Open Records. Her office, established under an act of the Legislature by Gov. Phil Bredesen in 2008, was created specifically to help citizens obtain public records if they have been wrongly denied access.

Hodge's appearance was sought by the commission following a request by this newspaper recently for a range of documents, including copies of mail and e-mail, that commissioners have received in the course of their official duties. Some of the commissioners have complied with that request; others have not. Hodge told the commissioners that all their correspondence, e-mails and even telephone messages relating to their office are public records and must be made available to the public on request.

In response to a question by newly elected Commissioner Tim Boyd as to

when he was not in his official capacity, Hodge said he and other commissioners "are always in your official capacity. You can't turn it on or off."

Commissioners and other elected officials may find that uncomfortable, but it should not be onerous. It simply means that public officials may not legally evade the burden of public records' and open meeting mandates by having deliberative discussions or communications with other commissioners on public business outside openly advertised meetings, nor may they conduct any public business in private. Citizens, on the other hand, should be cheered by the clear directives delivered by Hodge, and by her office's fresh emphasis on the broad scope of Tennessee's open records and meetings acts.

The Legislature's creation of her office, in fact, is the result of long and tedious effort by the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government. The advocacy group, representing many organizations, including this paper, has worked for years to require the state's governmental entities, agencies, elected officials and employees to meet the requirements of the state's open records laws.

The effort, spearheaded by the Coalition's executive director, Frank Gibson, assumed urgency after a survey several years ago showed that most public agencies and offices commonly violated the law by denying public access to records. Visits by coalition members across the state showed that sheriffs' offices, planning and zoning commissions, school systems, auditors' offices and myriad other offices commonly and wrongly denied citizens requests for commonly filed records.

The state's Public Records law, enacted in 1957, and the Sunshine Law, adopted in 1974, merit respect and consistent compliance. Hodge's presentation should enhance compliance here. To ensure that, the County Commission decided Thursday to establish a dedicated office where records can be kept and viewed by the public. Commissioners also agreed to provide more access over the Internet to public records, including minutes of public meetings.

City officials and all other state, county and municipal governmental agencies and offices here, including public hospitals, should make the same commitment. Public accountability is crucial to an informed and engaged citizenry. It is also a matter of law. Officials who need to inform themselves of the scope of the law, and citizens who wish to discover the scope of information to which they are entitled, should click on Law at the website for the Office of Open Records Counsel, at <http://www.comptroller1.state.tn.us/openrecords/index.asp>.

(Chattanooga Times Free Press, Aug. 14, 2010)

TPS announces winner of Networks ad contest

BY BETH ELLIOTT

Networks ad manager

"It's that easy?!" exclaimed Scarlet Elliott with *The Milan Mirror-Exchange*. She was referring to how easy it is to sell ads into Tennessee's Advertising Networks. She isn't alone.



Elliott

The Tennessee Press Service Contest for sales reps wrapped up July 31. Three reps sold ads into Tennessee's Statewide Classified Ad Network (TnScan) or Tennessee's Display Ad Network (TnDAN). These reps collectively earned \$6,964.50 for their newspapers!

Richard Southerland with *The Greeneville Sun* was the first place winner with 190 points. "The statewide ad program," said Southerland, "is an

excellent means of providing your client with a vast coverage area and at a very reasonable rate."

Melissa Ferge with the *Bulletin Times*, Bolivar, and Becky Newbold with the *Lewis County Herald*, Hohenwald, tied for second with 10 points each.

Selling ads into TnScan, TnDAN and TnNET really is as easy as 1-2-3. First, ask your existing clients if they've considered running their ad statewide or in a region. Second, collect the money from your client. Third, send the ad to TPS, and we'll do the rest of the work.



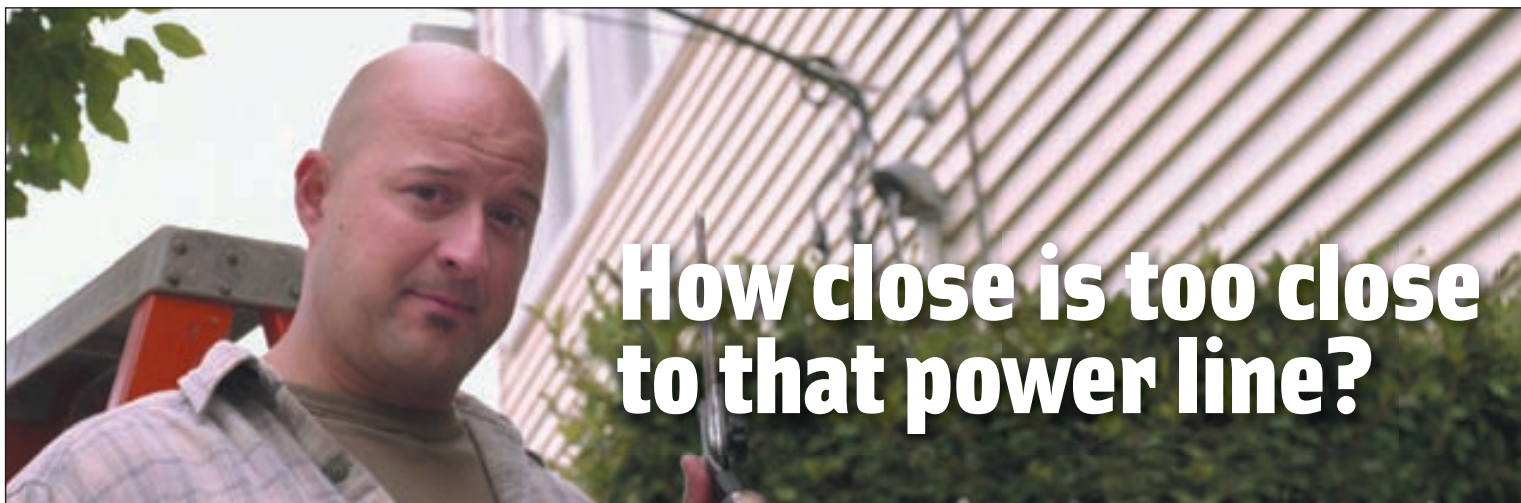
Southerland



Newbold

It really is that easy! Plus, your newspaper keeps 40 percent commission for each ad sold. For instance, when you sell just one statewide TnScan ad, your newspaper keeps \$106. Imagine the possibilities! Sell one TnScan ad each week for a month, your newspaper makes \$424; every week for a year, your newspaper makes \$5,512. Your newspaper can make even more money when you sell the 2x2 or 2x4 ads. Presto, you've just discovered a new revenue stream for your newspaper! Everything you need to sell the ads is available to download from www.tnpress.com/statewides/, or contact TPS at (865) 584-5761 extension 117 or bellott@tnpress.com.

If your newspaper does not participate in these programs, you're missing out. Missing out on replacing filler ads with revenue generating ads; a brand new revenue stream; and easy, effective and affordable statewide or regional coverage you can offer your client!



Don't go anywhere near power lines. Those lines will send all that electricity directly into anything – or anyone. You'd be dead in an instant. So keep your distance, and keep your life. Get the facts about power line safety at entergymississippi.com.

Charles Hall, Production Superintendent



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ISWNE members inspired by story of Tom and Pat Gish

BY BRADLEY A. (BRAD) MARTIN
Editor
Hickman County Times, Centerville

Non-daily newspaper editors from four continents spent the last weekend of June in Kentucky, celebrating outstanding journalism, critiquing each other's work and strengthening their abilities in the high-tech marketplace.

The annual conference of the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors (ISWNE) was held at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, but sampled the bourbon and bluegrass of Lexington and studied the mined mountaintops to the east, in the Appalachians, during a four-day conference.

Inspiration? That came during a stop in Whiteville at *The Mountain*



Southerland

Eagle to hear the story of Tom and Pat Gish. They brought a wire service background to that small town, reported comprehensively on government and life - then survived arson to their offices and kept on doing it. Their son, Ben, accepted the ISWNE's highest honor, the Eugene Cervi Award, in recognition of their lifelong devotion to informing the public.

Most important to this group was the half-day spent critiquing each other's editorial pages. Were the local editorials well written and thought out? Should editors run anonymous letters? How can opinion pages better meet community needs? Encouragement of strong and independent newspaper voices is the common interest.

Those are among the questions weekly editors have been wrestling with since 1955 while visiting some of the world's most interesting places. Next summer, the discussion will continue in the United Kingdom, where new president Jeremy Condliffe of the *Congleton Chronicle* promises that

the annual banquet will be held in a medieval castle.

Actually, the discussion now goes on whenever an ISWNE member has a question. Thanks to an Internet hotline service that is coordinated by executive director Chad Stebbins, a professor at Missouri Southern State University in Joplin. Queries tend to be real-time newsroom and business dilemmas - and dozens of colleagues who have been there and done that respond quickly and succinctly.

Back to the conference: Editors' needs were served by staff of the EKU Department of Communications and the University of Kentucky's Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues, which operates www.ruraljournalism.org. One entire day was devoted to understanding the power of websites; how best to make money off the newest technology; the value of posting video; legal issues that the new media raise; ethics, and even a discussion of Internet-only publications.

Conferences usually tackle a topic in the news, and this year it was mountaintop mining; traditional mining has long been a way of life in Eastern Kentucky, though now the practice is turning more and more to mountaintop removal. Editors were escorted through the Rowdy Gap Mine in Hazard, Ky., learning that 2.7 percent of post-mine land has been redeveloped, with up to 200 more years of coal remaining in the ground, at the current removal rate.

It was information that editors and educators from New South Wales in Australia; Yellow Knife in Canada's Northern Territories; County Galway, Ireland; Lusaka, Zambia; and Prince Edward Island in Nova Scotia, and small towns across America will take home and make use of as they try to enlighten their readers about issues that matter.

The best editorials are honored through the society's annual Golden Dozen competition. Mo Mehlsak, editor of *The Forecaster* in Falmouth, Maine,

was the overall Golden Quill winner.

The Golden Dozen included Marcia Martinek of the *Herald Democrat* of Leadville, Colo.; Paul MacNeill of *The Eastern Graphic*, Montague, Prince Edward Island; Tim Waltner of the *Freeman* (S.D.) *Courier*; John M. Wylie II of the *Oologah* (Okla.) *Lake Leader*; Bill Knight of *The Zephyr* in Galesville, Ill.; Peter Weinschenk of the *Record-Review* in Abbotsville, Wis.; Kevin O'Brien of the *Tribune Phonograph* in Abbotsville, Wis.; Dick Crockford of the *Dillon* (Mont.) *Tribune*; David Giffey of the *Home News* in Spring Green, Wis.; M. Dickey Drysdale of *The Herald* of Randolph, Vt.; and Mark Brown of *ByTheSeaFuture* in Lauderdale-By-The-Sea, Fla.

Bradley A. Martin, who is the only Tennessee newspaper editor in the ISWNE, won a Golden Dozen Award in 2005.

Folks who want more info can send an e-mail to Executive Director Chad Stebbins at stebbins-c@mssu.edu, or to me at editor_hctimes@yahoo.com.

WORTH REPEATING

Claims of conspiracy serve as distraction

BY WENDI C. THOMAS

The Commercial Appeal, Memphis

I'm going to tell you a secret about *The Commercial Appeal*, a fact that's true of most newspapers around the country.

Listening? The people who produce a newspaper are doing good to publish the equivalent of a paperback book 365 days a year. We have no time to mount conspiracies.

That includes a conspiracy to oust



the two weakest links on the Memphis City Schools board, Kenneth Whalum and Sharon Webb.

With the deadline to file eight days away, no one had even pulled petitions to run against incumbent board member Whalum, a point I lamented in my Aug. 12 column.

The deadline to file was last Thursday, and now Whalum and Webb have several challengers in the Nov. 2 municipal election.

And I am to blame, or so claim Whalum and Webb.

In *The Commercial Appeal* Friday, Whalum (who loves drama) and Webb accused the newspaper and,

in particular, me of "recruiting" candidates to run against them.

Neither has offered any proof, but you don't need proof when you have a good dose of crazy and in Whalum's case, delusions of grandeur.

That's their theory, but here's a more plausible possibility: Whalum's and Webb's challengers are running because they think they can do a better job than the incumbents.

Take attorney Richard Fields, who has more baggage than Samsonite. He has filed his petition to run against Whalum.

In a heads-up race, Fields has zero chance of beating Whalum, but that's

not the point. Fields is feisty, and he'll prod Whalum, who never met an argument he didn't want to get knee-deep in, into dialogue on the issues. Or so I'm hoping.

The other two incumbents on the board, Martavius Jones and Betty Mallott, had possible opposition, but by the filing deadline Thursday, no one had filed a petition with the Shelby County Election Commission to run against either of them.

In a democracy, that's unfortunate.

Competition is good, and the voters deserve choices in all races. As a Twitter buddy reminded me, competition exposes incompetence.

Speaking of incompetence, or at least the appearance of such, let's turn to Webb.

Her first televised taste of competition came in WMC-TV Channel 5's debate for last year's mayoral race. When asked what two things she'd do to make Memphis better, this sitting school board member could only come up with one idea.

The perception that Webb is a "space cadet" (her words, not mine) is a perception she created all by her lonesome.

This should be a campaign about the issues, but as in most races, locally and nationally, it becomes about personality.

Voters can change that.

Ask each candidate: What is your specific vision for public education? What role do charter schools play? Are all students capable of attending some post-secondary school? (At least one candidate does not think so, but I'll

save that for another column.)

Has MCS Supt. Kriner Cash launched too many initiatives and if so, as a board member, how would you rein him in? What are the best practices in public education and are they in place in our schools?

If elected, will you commit to attending all of the scheduled meetings? Will you work to build consensus? Will you stand alone when you need to and stand united when you can?

These are the things that we need candidates to answer, not useless pontificating about whether the newspaper has it out for you. (News flash: The newspaper has no votes, and I only have one.)

The school board's primary interest should be the children, not the media.

Good luck convincing Whalum of that. The good reverend, who has a budding case of narcissism, is working hard on his narrative that it's that blasted paper that's out to get him (does that sound familiar?).

Never mind that he's irked fellow board members so badly that he can't get the votes needed to pass his ideas, that his combativeness reminds the public of the dysfunctional school board of days gone by, and that he has a spotty board meeting attendance record.

None of that matters when you can blame it on the media, and at the same time, distract voters from the work you're not doing on real issues.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I'll end this so my colleagues can focus on a singular task producing yet another daily newspaper.

(Aug. 1, 2010)

Happy to be back

BY J. TODD FOSTER

Executive editor
Chattanooga Times Free Press

This is not the Chattanooga I left in September 1989.

For one thing, it's hotter here than I remember. Or maybe it's simply a matter of El Niño throwing a temper tantrum.

The air, as hot as it is, is cleaner than I remember. Downtown is far more vibrant. There are a lot more out-of-state license plates clogging Market St. and Frazier Ave. The Read House,



or the Sheraton Read House as they now call it, is so booked I got kicked out after five days and had to crash at a friend's house.

When I left this city 21 years ago, you couldn't ride a hand-carved animal under a pavilion in a place called Coolidge Park. But you can now.

I can't help but wonder what Walter Cronkite would think if only he were alive and could visit the Tennessee Aquarium or take in a Lookouts game. The broadcast icon once voted the "most trusted man in America" broke the news that President Kennedy had been shot in Dallas and then informed the world six years later that Chattanooga was America's "dirtiest city."

An industrial center that used to belch

enough smoke into the air to hide the mountains now sits as a national model for urban revitalization.

As of six days ago, Chattanooga became my home again, if only on a hotel guest register. (As of two days ago, one day before this column was printed, I was supposed to move into a North Chattanooga rental house. I'll let you know later how the move went.)

I couldn't be happier to be anywhere. And I've lived all over. I spent the mid-to late 1980s working as a reporter for the old *Chattanooga News-Free Press*. When I wasn't terrorizing Erlanger Medical Center and the Tennessee Valley Authority, I was whining about

SEE FOSTER, PAGE 8

Meaning of First Amendment escapes some

Sometimes the meaning of the 45 words of the First Amendment seems to escape even those trained in the law.

In Pennsylvania in July, two judges in Centre County – home to Penn State University – signed off on what generally are standard instructions to police and other agencies to expunge certain official records of five people involved in criminal investigations.

But the orders, thanks to the defense attorney for the five, also required that two area newspapers erase archived news reports about the defendants, who faced charges ranging from assault to drug possession.

“Imagine getting such an order, right before the July 4th holiday,” said Bob Heisse, executive editor of the *Centre Daily Times*, one of the newspapers involved.

Both judges have now voided the orders, but news reports now say as many as 41 orders presented to the court by defense attorney Joe Amendola included similar demands of news organizations.

“What’s the sense in having your record expunged if anyone can Google you and it comes up?” Amendola told the *Centre Daily Times*. The lawyer, in later news reports, said the newspapers

were added to the orders without his knowledge, by a staffer in his office.

Regardless of how the newspapers came to be included in the various court orders, what makes “sense” is to report – and retain those reports – on arrests and court recordings, whether it’s the era of Google or in earlier times when the nation’s Founders took care to provide for an independent news media.

Yes, none of us likely would look forward to having our name or face in a newspaper, on a website or on TV if we were to be arrested and face trial. And there surely is a certain amount of pain and shame in having those facts come up in an online search later in life.

But, as Heisse said, “Facts are facts, and we don’t go back and alter the historical record to suit someone.” Elizabeth Murphy, editor in chief of the second newspaper involved, the *Daily Collegian*, said it “is a record of history as it happens from day-to-day. ... We’re here to report the facts as they are and that’s what we did.”

Even when the facts are negative, we’re fortunate to live in a nation where arrests and



INSIDE THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Gene Policinski

court proceedings are on the record, open to public view and not subject to being altered or erased at whim – or government order.

The alternative is so much worse than embarrassment.

In Argentina and Chile, as many as 30,000 people may have gone missing during the 1970s and 1980s after being arrested or abducted by police or paramilitary forces, often in the middle of the night, leaving family and friends with little or no information for years. One of the problems still facing those trying to trace the so-called “Disappeared” from that reprehensible era is a lack of official records that were long since erased, if ever created.

There also is the public’s ability to hold our courts and officials accountable. Journalists, civic action groups and others use individual cases and aggregate data to track and measure aspects of the justice system, from conviction rates to law-enforcement practices to how public funds are spent.

As a practical matter, isn’t a record showing

what the government did not do potentially as valuable as one showing what it did – as opposed to a blank slate? I would think a copy of a court record would trump a Google printout anytime, should there be a question about the outcome of a criminal charge or a lawsuit.

All too often, we fall into the easy thinking that news reports about arrests and trials just add to the burden facing defendants or litigants. High-profile cases like the O.J. Simpson trial and voyeuristic reports on Lindsay Lohan’s legal woes obscure the reality of the issues at stake daily in courts in every state: freedom and justice for all.

The Founders knew the dangers of Star Chamber inquisitions and secret trials with pre-determined outcomes. The result of their experience was the First Amendment’s provision for a free press.

What the Founders never experienced – nor should we – is the result from printing newspapers with court-ordered disappearing ink.

GENE POLICINSKI is vice president and executive director of the First Amendment Center, 555 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C., 20001. Web: www.firstamendmentcenter.org. E-mail: gpolicinski@fac.org.

Idiom problems, some obvious, some not

I mentally stumbled as I read this recently in a newspaper profile of U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham:

His give-and-take brand of conservatism has never been an obvious fit in blood-red South Carolina, and even more so during the past Tea-Party-agitated year.

In a roundabout way, I suppose you could say the writer was trying to convey that it’s more so that it’s not obvious, but that’s a tortured construction. The concept of more or less more clearly refers to “obvious fit,” not to “has never been”:

His give-and-take brand of conservatism has never been an obvious fit in blood-red South Carolina, and [was] even less so during the past Tea-Party-agitated year.

Such problems often fall under idiom, phrasing unique to a language or dialect. Idiom is widely known but usually arbitrary, and often the words taken at face value don’t produce the same meaning. Idiom can convey a broad concept quickly, but imprecision can make writing sound tinny, like a cracked bell.

Sometimes idiom problems are not so obvious: *His house is right next to Sarge Frye Field, which is getting ready to be demolished.* Idiomatically, “is getting ready” indicates the field is somehow preparing itself to be demolished. Better would be “about to be demolished,” which indicates a third party will do it.

With negative phrases, as in the Graham profile, idiom often has us changing associated words: *Digital signs are allowed in Columbia and unincorporated parts of Lexington County, but not in the town of Lexington and unincorporated parts of Richland County.* (Better is “but not in the town of Lexington or unincorporated parts of Richland County.”)

The best way to learn or brush up on idiom is to read good writing. Idiom dictionaries can help, but idiom does change. For instance, strictly you should say “could not care less.” But “could care less” is so widely used now that some dictionaries accept it idiomatically – the words don’t make exact sense, but people understand the meaning.

Closely related to idiom is usage. It changes more quickly, which means we often see heated debates about what is “correct.” Here are three to think about:

Reuniting with old friends might be nice, but if coach Oliver Purnell has his way, Clemson will not be traveling to his stomping grounds in three weeks.

The 32-foot-tall fiberglass sculpture makes quite a statement at the gateway to Denver International Airport. But that begs the question: What kind of statement, exactly?

Vista West would be comprised of antique shops, restaurants, bars and coffee shops.

The traditional Americanism is “stamping grounds” (think of bison on the Great Plains stamping their hooves). And I have just been with friends in Stamping Ground, Ky. But “stomping,” which my dictionary says better means “treading heavily and noisily, typically to show anger,” is moving into common usage.

“Begs the question” traditionally means twisted



COMMON SENSE JOURNALISM

Doug Fisher

logic that assumes what you are trying to prove is true. But it has become frequently used to mean pose an obvious question. Language expert Bryan Garner calls it a “skunked” term – you will annoy someone no matter what. So consider a clearer, less-debated phrase, such as “raises” or “poses” the question.

In the third example, “composed of” is the traditional usage; “comprised of” is still not accepted in many stylebooks and more formal writing. The general guide is that the whole comprises the parts (the graduating class comprises five boys and three girls) while the parts compose the whole.

In many cases, the simpler “has” or “have” does just as well: *Vista West would have antique shops, etc.* Or consider using “consist of.”

In trying to save headline space, increasing use of the noun descriptive instead of the adjective rings oddly with me:

Arrest made in Australia fires (Australian fires)

S.C. legislators slam environment rules (environmental rules)

Haiti earthquake not a surprise to everyone (Haitian earthquake)

China sales hold up for Chevy, Honda (Chinese sales)

Our idiom is inconsistent, as it often is. For instance, we’d say “Ohio” fires; we don’t have another adjective form for our states as we have for many countries.

Is idiom changing? For instance, a recent photo caption saying a German player “looks at Spain players as they celebrate” seemed odd but made some sense. “Spain’s players” is not exactly correct because it wasn’t all of them. And “Spanish players” seems to get to their ethnic, not team, identity, though I did just use “German,” not “Germany” player, didn’t I?

What do you think? Let me know.

DOUG FISHER, a former AP news editor, teaches journalism at the University of South Carolina. One can reach him at dfisher@sc.edu or (803) 777-3315. Past issues of Common Sense Journalism can be found at www.jour.sc.edu/news/csj/index.html.

HAPPY TO BE BACK: Foster

FROM PAGE 7

misplaced hyphens. “How can a newspaper call itself ‘news-free’?” I used to lament. Then I moved to Fort Walton Beach, Fla., and then to Coeur d’Alene, Idaho – two of America’s most beautiful panhandles – before moving on to Spokane, Wash., and Portland, Ore., Washington, D.C., Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley and then to the Virginia-Tennessee state line, where I watched my first NASCAR race, at Bristol Motor Speedway.

Aside from our nation’s capital, I loved all those locales. But not like I loved Chattanooga. Tennessee was where I was born and lived for the first 29 years of my life. Chattanooga is where I want to spend however many years I have left.

The career investigative reporter universally named by his peers as the “most likely reporter to be seen in the editor’s office getting yelled at for his obstinance” is now sitting in the executive editor’s chair at your newspaper. The bull in the china shop has bought the shop and now has to eat the breakages.

I can’t make any promises about how this is going to work out. But I will promise you this: The *Chattanooga Times Free Press* will comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable – the mantra that every good newspaper lives by.

I owe this opportunity to newspaper owner Walter E. Hussman Jr.; Paul Smith, president of

WEHCO Media Inc.’s newspaper division; some nice words from David Bailey, the managing editor of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* (Mr. Hussman’s flagship paper); and this newspaper’s president, Jason Taylor. Those four men have risen to the top of my Christmas card list.

And I will share with you a pledge I made July 3 to Ruth Holmberg, the former owner of *The Chattanooga Times* and arguably this community’s most gracious matriarch: We will give the news impartially, without fear or favor – the motto that Mrs. Holmberg placed below her newspaper’s nameplate and the motto that is on this newspaper now.

(Aug. 1, 2010)

Silliness abounds in response to public records requests

It's the silly season. That's the only way to explain responses that reporters and citizens have been getting in recent weeks to requests for public records and efforts to stay in public meetings.

I'm not sure whether it's the heat of summer (where are those climate change skeptics who were making fun last winter?) or some other kind of heat, but officials are using laughable excuses to deny access. No group of officialdom seems to be immune. Bizarre responses have come from police departments, school boards, the federal TVA, state and local election officials, court clerks and county commissions.

An old city editor once told me not to use the word "bizarre" in news stories. Simply saying something was bizarre, he would say, doesn't make it so. Tell the story and let the reader draw conclusions. I guess he'd feel the same way about "silly."

At least 10 of the four dozen calls to the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government in July and early August fell somewhere between bizarre and silly.

Everyone, I'm sure, has heard about the situation in Bell, Calif. The city manager and chief of police (and deputy city manager) got caught paying themselves half a million dollars a year in salaries with retirement benefits to be almost the same.

I asked my counterpart at the California First Amendment Coalition (CFAC) how that happened. Easy answer: city council members were paying themselves about \$100,000 each – five times more than a member of the Tennessee legislature – and rewarding their staff handsomely. Obscenely, local residents and taxpayers there say.

The CFAC director said the situation went unnoticed because Bell doesn't have a newspaper, doesn't get any outside news coverage, and citizens never questioned anything. That wouldn't happen in Tennessee.

The story reminded me of TVA's refusal to disclose the salaries of top executives. The very public utility told the *News Sentinel* that releasing the information would invade the privacy of employees. The *News Sentinel* had routinely reported the information in years past, but TVA spokesmen clung to the "privacy" argument about 48 hours before relenting.

More silliness. In Maury County, the school board was sued by the parents of a child allegedly molested by a school employee on a trip to Nashville. The parents claimed officials should have known the employee was a suspected sex offender but allowed him to chaperone the trip anyway.

The school board settled the lawsuit but refused a reporter's request for details of the settlement.

Officials gave two reasons. The terms were confidential to protect the privacy of "Janie Doe" under the federal FERPA law. The court clerk said the agreement was confidential because it had been sealed by a judge. Which was it, and why both excuses?

Here's the silly part. Details, the amount anyway, could be released without identifying the student. The lawsuit was filed on behalf of the parents of "Janie Doe." The newspaper wouldn't use the name anyway, even in the unlikely event it was in the agreement. The clerk's office said the reporter couldn't see the court documents asking for secrecy because they—and the judge's order—were all sealed.

Unfortunately, in this state, lawyers don't have to make a case to get court records sealed and judges don't have to explain their reasons for sealing them. Our efforts to fix that hole in the law a few years back failed when lobbyists for insurance companies and corporate attorneys intervened.

What's silly is that Tennessee courts have said public bodies and agencies can't enter into such confidentiality agreements. In one case, the court made the city pay \$20,000 in legal fees to make the point.

Other silliness. In Memphis, ESPN.com sought a five-year-old domestic violence complaint filed with the Memphis Police Department (MPD) against Memphis Grizzlies basketball star Lorenzen Wright. The player's body was found July 18 in a wooded area in suburban Shelby County.

The 2005 complaint was reported at the time by *The Commercial Appeal* despite attempts by the MPD to withhold it. The MPD said the record was confidential under a statute that requires physicians to report suspected cases of domestic violence. To encourage reporting, it allows doctors to file reports in confidence.

No doctor was involved in the 2005 incident, so the report was released.

Anyway, when ESPN.com reporters asked for the same record, they were told they couldn't see the old incident report because the NBA player's death was still under investigation and it was part of the investigative file. That's not a valid argument, because the 2005 case was closed and



TENNESSEE COALITION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT

Frank Gibson

our courts have ruled once records are public they remain public.

Also in Memphis—I guess it's hotter down there—a TV station wanted to see whether convicted rapists on the state's sex offender registry were living near their victims. The court clerk refused to release court records that included the names and addresses of the victims despite a long and well-documented philosophy of the press not reporting anything that identifies sex crime victims.

In Blount County, the sheriff's department was withholding addresses and dates of birth of people involved in traffic accidents. Officials claimed they couldn't release that information under the federal Drivers Privacy Protection Act (DPPA). The DPPA says nothing about accident reports and does not apply to driving records.

DPPA, a farce of an anti-stalking law passed by Congress 20 years ago, closes a state's driver's license database to everybody but companies that buy a license to use it.

Blount County officials said because the department has access to the state DMV database it can't release any information on accident reports if the same is contained in the state database. Neither federal nor state law restricts information about age.

The Office of Open Records Counsel has said in an opinion posted on its website that the information is not confidential if it is obtained independent of the state database and verified by checking the database. Looking at someone's driver's license is not looking at the database. It's okay to withhold Social Security and driver's license numbers, but withholding ages and addresses that help differentiate one John Smith from another is absurd.

And there were these examples:

On Aug. 5, a poll official in one Cannon County voting precinct stopped a local radio station from taking photographs inside the 100-foot boundary used to curtail campaign activity too close to the polls. The pictures were for the station's website.

I guess the poll official missed those decades of news photos published of political candidates voting—inside the 100-foot limit.

In Dayton, school board and county commission officials kicked reporters out of a meeting where they planned to interview companies bidding to

build a new school. There is no legal exemption that allows local legislative bodies to close those meetings.

Now, it would be a different if the school director and the county mayor appointed a committee to conduct the interviews because the committee would be reporting to them. That group wouldn't be covered by the "sunshine law" because they are not members of a "governing body."

Apparently, school board members and Rhea County commissioners didn't want to trust such a group to perform that function but wanted the people of Rhea County to trust them to get behind closed doors with a group of contractors. Silly.

In Sumner County, the school system got a less than stellar audit. The audit report referenced certain public documents to support its findings. When a reporter asked to see those documents, she was told she'd have to wait seven days to see them, even though no searching/redacting was required.

And, running close to the winner for the most bizarre and silly is the state coordinator of elections. Amid all the chest pounding about voter rolls being filled with convicted felons, dead people and illegal immigrants comes this pearl.

When a reporter asked for an electronic copy of the state's voting roll, he was told that he could get it only if he would sign an oath that the records would be used "for a political purpose."

Finally, in Hamilton County, a *Chattanooga Times Free Press* reporter was denied access to materials provided to county commissioners before each commission meeting. The reason: it contained personal mail sent to them at the county commission offices.

That raises two questions: why are they getting personal mail at the courthouse, and why couldn't their staff simply remove material not created or received as part of the transaction of official business?

I'm sure many public officials think those types of questions are silly. They're not nearly as silly as some of the answers many of them have been giving to deny access.

FRANK GIBSON is TPA's Government Affairs Committee coordinator and executive director of the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government. He can be reached at (615) 202-2685 or fgibson@tcog.info. TCOG is a non-partisan, non-profit advocacy group created to improve and preserve access to public records and meetings. Send contributions to P.O. Box 22248, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.

WORTH REPEATING

Federal shield law is long overdue

For years we have urged Congress to "act quickly" to pass various attempts to enact a federal shield law to protect reporters — and their informants — from having to reveal confidential sources. Once again there is an opportunity to pass the Free Flow of Information Act. We urge the U.S. Senate, the final hurdle, to schedule an up-or-down vote on the merits of the legislation before the end of the year.

This legislation has been before Congress for six years. It passed the U.S. House unanimously in 2009. The Senate Judiciary Committee also passed its bill in 2009, but it has stalled in the

full Senate.

The legislation has been fully vetted and has earned wide bipartisan support. It offers clear and consistent standards and safeguards for issues regarding national security, such as when the government is seeking information to prevent a terrorist attack. The act is fair and reasonable.

Forty-nine states and the District of Columbia have enacted shield laws, and they have worked well. But they don't protect newspaper, broadcast or online journalists covering federal issues. This lack of protection, and increasing litigation against journalists, endangers

one of our most important First Amendment responsibilities, that of watchdog journalism.

In Tennessee, for example, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the Milan Army Arsenal are federal government operations that affect the lives of millions of people. Sometimes, reporters must rely on confidential sources to get information regarding federal government operations. But each time they do, they face the possibility of government and law enforcement interference, prosecution

and even jail time for protecting their sources.

Important national stories including Watergate, the safety of nuclear power facilities, fraud at Enron, soldier abuse at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, the Bush administration domestic spying program, Abu Ghraib prison atrocities and the leak of CIA operative Valerie Plame's name relied on confidential sources.

It is important to note that the Free Flow of Information Act would not protect the identity of the informant behind the recent Afghanistan War

documents released by Wikileaks, since clearly they involve issues of national security.

A federal shield law is long overdue. The Free Flow of Information Act would ensure the First Amendment rights and watchdog journalism responsibilities of the media and the public's right to know what its government is doing. A strong democracy depends on the free flow of information. The U.S. Senate can strengthen those rights by passing the Free Flow of information Act this year.

(The Jackson Sun, Aug. 19, 2010)

Ridden out on a rail

Me and my big mouth.

Some time ago, I asked readers to submit ideas for columns. Some did...and that was good. Some of the topics were ideas that I could easily write about, in part because I had touched on those subjects in the past.

But then comes Lauri Shillings, a dedicated column reader and a frequent contributor to my blog, with this one: "How do you go about making your front page look 'great' with an entire column of 1x1 ads running down the left side of 1A?"

Now, that's a tough one—and I'm not at all sure you can have a "great" looking front page with a rail of ads.

But there may be some steps you can take to make it at least a "good" front page. Most of those steps lie in strongly separating the ads from the rest of the front.

Here are some ideas:

NEGATIVE SPACE: Leave more than the standard gutter space between the ad rail and the rest of the page. If your gutter is 1 pica, consider 2 picas, perhaps even 3 picas. This will help readers to see that the ad rail and the news area of the page are separate entities.

A HEAVY RULE: For some editors, just a 2 point or 3 point rule will do the job of separating ads from the news.

A TINT BLOCK: Placing a tint behind the ads serves two purposes. First, it will help to group the ads together into one



**BY
DESIGN**

Ed Henninger

mass. Second, it again will help to separate the ad rail from the rest of the page. For this approach to work best, choose a tint block with a neutral hue, like a gray or a soft tan. Stay away from aggressive colors such as yellow or red.

A FADED TINT: Using a gradient tint may give the ad rail even greater separation, especially if the gradient is lighter at the outside edge of the page.

A COMBINATION: If using the rule alone does the trick for you, fine. But you may want to try a combination of the rule, extra space and a tint block to develop a look that works best for you.

None of these approaches will negate the pull from an ad rail—especially one with strong colors, reverses and the like. But separating the rail from the news hole will at least give the design of the news area a fighting chance.

FREE DESIGN EVALUATION: Ed Henninger offers design evaluations—at no charge and with no obligation—to readers of this column. For more information, check the FREEBIE page on Ed's website: www.henningerconsulting.com

ED HENNINGER is an independent newspaper consultant and the director of Henninger Consulting, offering comprehensive newspaper design services including redesigns, workshops, staff training and evaluations. E-mail: edh@henningerconsulting.com. On the Web: www.henningerconsulting.com. Phone: (803) 327-3322.

A few words about opening lines

Aaron was telling me how he handles one of the most awkward moments in the sales process. "When I first started selling advertising, I spent a lot of time developing opening lines that I could use with prospective customers. It reminded me of my college days, when a bunch of us would sit around in the dorm and brainstorm on clever ways to strike up conversations with girls.

"In both cases, it was a complete waste of time," he said, "because all of the opening lines were self-centered. In college, it was all about 'Let me tell you how suave and sophisticated I am.' And in my early days in advertising, it was all about 'Let me tell you how great my paper is.' I'm sure it was a blur of meaningless chatter to those poor people on the receiving end of my monologues.

"Then I learned a simple technique which has made people more receptive in conversations. It has even increased the return rate from my voice mail messages and e-mails. I simply say, 'Hello, I'm Aaron (and last name) with *The Gazette*. I'd like to learn about your business and see how we can help you generate more customers.'

Let's take a closer look at the dynamics of Aaron's simple opening:

1. "I'm Aaron with *The Gazette*." Don't keep your identity a secret. Right up front, let people know your company's name.

"Some sales experts say you should withhold that information until later in the conversation, but I disagree," Aaron said. "When I get calls at work or at home, I want to know their company names. And I believe most people feel



Ad-libs

John Foust

the same way."

2. "I'd like to learn about your business." This puts the focus squarely on the prospect and lets that person know that you are interested and that you are going to ask questions.

"To tell people that you would like to learn about their businesses is different from what they hear from most sales people," Aaron explained. "It's a welcome break from the typical me-me-me opening line. People love to talk about themselves. I've found that prospects are more willing to give me a few minutes of their time when I tell them I want to learn about them and their businesses."

3. "...and see how we can help you generate more customers." This answers the classic "What's in it for me" question and promises a benefit which appeals

to business owners and marketing departments.

"I think this is an important part of the opening, because it lets other people know that you might have a solution to a specific problem – the need for more customers," Aaron said. "You're letting them know, before the conversation really begins, that you're there to help."

Aaron's technique takes only a couple of seconds. But those brief moments can create positive first impressions. Which can lead to sales presentations. Which can lead to sales. Which can lead to long-term advertisers. Which can lead to referrals.

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E-MAIL JOHN FOUST for information about his training videos for ad departments: jfoust@mindspring.com.

API seminars to talk product and advertising integration

The American Press Institute is offering two seminars this fall that will help newspaper employees make better decisions about developing and integrating their product and advertising portfolios.

At the Value Optimized Pricing Seminar Sept. 20 and 21, an attendee will get new ideas and profit-generating tactics from cross-media experts who will

share pricing strategies for leveraging product and advertising portfolios to increase the value proposition for your customers and organization.

New digital devices and platforms offer opportunities for the delivery of content and advertising. At API's Digital Delivery Seminar Nov. 8 and 9, an attendee will gain insight from news media thought leaders and vendors into

the most promising opportunities for news organizations to expand audience and grow revenue through online, mobile and social media platforms, e-readers and tablets.

One tuition costs \$995 and additional ones get a 20 percent discount.

API is in Reston, Va. Find out more at www.americanpressinstitute.org/10/.

NNA convention to feature Slimp

The outlook for the economy is looking better all the time, although it has been said that it will be a slow recovery. That is all the more reason, the National Newspaper Association asserts, to join NNA Thursday through Sunday, Sept. 30-Oct. 3, in Omaha, Neb. for its 125th Anniversary Celebration.

Attending the convention and trade show will guarantee you some new ideas to put into practice at your newspaper, and perhaps you can help a peer with a success story of your own. If you implement the ideas you gather during the convention, the benefit will far exceed the cost of your registration.

You will want to arrive in time to take advantage of one of the two exceptional pre-convention educational workshops during the afternoon of Sept. 30. There is an additional fee to attend them, but for conference attendees is nominal charge.

Every year, conference evaluations request that NNA bring Kevin Slimp on board, but so often the convention conflicts with his schedule at the Institute of Newspaper Technology in Knoxville, points out NNA. "We are pleased to report that Slimp will be in Omaha, Thursday, Sept. 30, so hold onto your seats and take a ride with him for a three-hour session about 'New Technology for Newspapers'; '10 Quick Ideas to Make Money on Your Newspaper Website'; and to close the workshop, 'The Fastest 30 Minutes of Your Life: Info and Tips Using Photoshop, InDesign, Bridge, Flash and More.'"

The second workshop, "Be the Mobile Leader in Your Community," will be presented by the American Press Institute. As people in your community spend more of their time and attention

on iPhones, BlackBerries, Droids, iPads and other mobile devices, the community news organization needs to plan its mobile future as well.

Steve Buttry, director of community engagement for Allbritton Communications, will discuss how a community news organization can develop a mobile-first strategy that will help an organization be as indispensable to mobile consumers as it is to faithful print readers. He also will help plan how to develop a healthy mobile business model by serving business customers who need to connect with people on the go.

If you don't arrive in time to attend one of these workshops, the convention has much to offer.

The Welcome Reception will be held in the Quest Center's exhibit hall Sept. 30 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. This is an opportunity to see what exhibiting companies have to offer newspapers. There will be light reception fare, cocktails and your first opportunity to meet up with old friends and make new friends. We hope to create a bit of excitement during the evening as well. You can enjoy dinner on your own at one of the many fine restaurants Omaha has to offer—just remember, one must stay until the end of the reception or maybe miss out on a great prize.

Registration information is available at www.nnaweb.org.

Ssh

"Secrecy is one of the handiest tools for government that wants to be accountable only to itself regardless of the spirit of any law."

Tom Curley
President and chief executive officer
Associated Press, 2008



Institute of Newspaper Technology

October 7-9, 2010
Knoxville, TN USA

Past sessions have filled to capacity. Don't wait! Online registration available NOW at newspaperinstitute.com/tpa.html.

HUGE NEWS! Tennessee Press Association Foundation recently approved the donation of 22 scholarships – \$450 each – for TPA members who register for the Institute. The scholarships are limited to the first 22 registrants from TPA member newspapers.



Distiller is best method for creating PDFs

BY KEVIN SLIMP
TPS technology director



Slimp

OK. You might want to put this column down without reading it. At the very least, close your door so no one hears the venting. It might be safest just to turn the page now.

Yesterday afternoon, on a website visited by several well-known Adobe-related staff and trainers, I posted that I had discovered a simple work-around to the Snow Leopard PDF driver issue.

In the simplest of terms, when Apple released their latest operating system, dubbed "Snow Leopard," a few months ago, people quickly realized that they couldn't create Postscript files using the PDF printer driver. This is only a problem if you believe, as I do, that perfect PDF files are imperative.

Anyhow, on a recent trip to Minnesota to work with a small newspaper, I found a way to make the process work as it always had. Since then, the publisher tells me she's had nothing but perfect results. Not always the case when she was exporting her PDFs.

On the website, trainers and authors shared their views that it isn't necessary to make PDFs the "old-fashioned way," because InDesign exports perfect PDF files. No mess. No fuss.

If it were only that simple.

A few minutes later, I received an e-mail from a pretty famous guy. He's not related to the newspaper industry, but you'd probably recognize his name. He writes a lot of books about design and software.

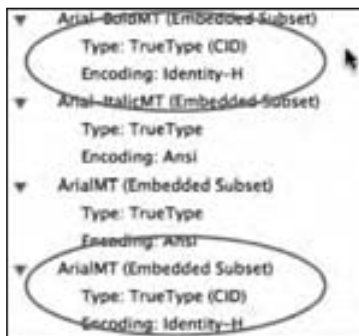
He was a tad upset with me. First, he wanted me to know that it's just stupid to create PDFs using Acrobat Distiller, when it's so much simpler to export them from InDesign. Then he went on to remind me that there are no problems of any type with files exported from InDesign.

When I disagreed, he wished me good luck in dealing with my "twentieth century technology," which I took as an insult to my industry, and was gone.

Next I visited with a good friend who also does a lot of training in the publishing world. He agreed that using the Postscript/Distiller method is sometimes unnecessary. "After CS2, InDesign doesn't export CID fonts."

CID fonts, you see, are one of the big issues with exported files. They come out of nowhere and haunt your files, creating printing issues, characters that print as squares and numbers that change from a 5 to a 2, for example. I'll never forget when Gregg K. Jones, publisher of *The Greeneville Sun*, called in a panic because an ad printed with strawberries listed at 5 for \$1 instead of 2 for \$1. The advertiser was not pleased.

Later, I heard back from the author.



After his first test was successful in proving that exporting a PDF file from InDesign can create CID fonts, Kevin ran two more tests. This screenshot is from the second test. In all, four fonts in this file were converted to CID. Two are shown here.

He challenged me to show him one PDF file from a recent version of InDesign that included a CID font.

My first instinct was to tell him where to put his PDF file, but I came to my senses and decided to close this debate once and for all.

This is what I did. Yesterday, I led a training event for a New York agency. During the course of the training, we created a few pages of a magazine. The pages we created included no files from anyone else. Just simple text, entered in InCopy, and a few photos.

This morning I opened the file and exported it, using the setting that all

these experts told me works perfectly every time. Before looking at the results, I decided that I would try this one time only. If exporting the file converted any of the fonts to CID, I was right. This would indicate that using Distiller is, indeed, the best method for creating a PDF.

If, on the other hand, no CID fonts were created, I would admit I was wrong and had been living in the past. I would no longer consider myself the PDF Guru, as so many people have come to know me over the years.

You guessed it. CID font. I sent the file directly to the author. He admitted he was surprised. Said he couldn't make it happen. Imagine that.

OK. I'll say my piece and then be gone.

It makes me angry when people refer to newspapers as dinosaurs and primitive. The last time I checked, most of us were doing pretty well. I'm contacted regularly by people wanting to buy newspapers and asking for my advice on good opportunities. My daily paper is delivered every day. My community paper is delivered every week.

My business is as good as it has ever been. Just yesterday, I received requests to train newspaper groups in Los Angeles, Toronto and New York. Newspapers are investing in new equipment and training.

Strange behavior for a dying industry. OK, I've said enough.

HOWTO CONTACT US

Tennessee Press Association

Mail: 435 Montbrook Lane, Knoxville, TN 37919

Phone: (865) 584-5761

Fax: (865) 558-8687

Web: www.tnpress.com

E-mail: (name)@tnpress.com

Those with boxes, listed alphabetically:

Laurie Alford (lalford)

Jeanie Bell (jbell)

Pam Corley (pcorley)

Angelique Dunn (adunn)

Beth Elliott (belliott)

Robyn Gentile (rgentile)

Earl Goodman (egoodman)

Kathy Hensley (khensley)

Barry Jarrell (bjarrell)

Jessica Price (jprice)

Greg Sherrill (gsherrill)

Kevin Slimp (kslimp)

Advertising e-mail:

knoxads@tnpress.com

Tennessee Press Service

Mail: 435 Montbrook Lane, Knoxville, TN 37919

Phone: (865) 584-5761

Fax: (865) 558-8687

Web: www.tnadvertising.biz

Tennessee Press Association Foundation

Mail: 435 Montbrook Lane, Knoxville, TN 37919

Phone: (865) 584-5761

Fax: (865) 558-8687

Web: www.tnpress.com

Important upgrades you might consider

BY KEVIN SLIMP
TPS technology director

When I was younger, I owned a graphic design business. It started out small but grew to a few employees and bigger clients as the years went on.

As much as we enjoyed our work, like most businesses, making a profit was a priority. One of the lessons I learned pretty quickly was that the faster our computers, the more money we could make. Our output could double or triple with an investment in new computers and software.

I thought of this a few days ago when a publisher told me his papers were still using QuarkXpress 4.1 to paginate. Normally, I wouldn't have given this a second thought. But for some reason, I haven't been able to shake the memory.

Don't get me wrong; I realize there are limits to what we can spend. However, using software that's 11 years old on computers, which I'm assuming are pretty old, just doesn't make a lot of business sense.

Consider this. Since version 4.1, there have been five upgrades to QuarkXpress, the latest being version 8. In that same time, there have been seven versions of Adobe InDesign, now the industry standard for pagination. Imagine the

extra time it takes to create ads and pages in software that's been around for 11 years.

Let's face it: Computer years are like dog years. In most businesses, computers are replaced every two to three years. Software upgrades are routine. Even though computers will run longer than three years, it doesn't make sense, from a business point of view, to keep them much longer than that.

With this in mind, it seemed a good time to share my thoughts on a few of the most important upgrades you might want to consider:

• **Page Layout & Design:** Most newspapers use Adobe InDesign for ad design and pagination. If you're a Quark user and are determined to stick with it, then upgrade to QuarkXpress 8. No, I don't like it as much as InDesign. But it's far superior to other versions of QuarkXpress and will pay for itself in terms of speed and fewer problems. If you're an InDesign user, you should be using version CS3 or later. The latest version of Adobe's Creative Suite is CS5.

• **Computers:** If you're using older versions of software, you're probably using older computers as well. On the Mac platform, most current



applications require Intel-based computers. Both the iMac and the new Mac Minis are great computers for newspaper design. When upgrading Windows-based machines, consider buying computers with the Windows 7 operating system.

• **Scanners:** Buying a new scanner is one of the least expensive ways to make your paper look better. The tubes that do the scanning start to wear down after a couple of years and you pay for this with photos that seem too yellow, red or blue and with noisy pictures. By spending \$89 on a new scanner, you can bring new life to your scanned images.

• **Cameras:** Digital SLR cameras continue to improve in speed and quality at lower prices. Both Canon and Nikon, as well as other vendors, offer

great cameras at affordable prices. With the ability to shoot high-definition video with many current models, buying a new camera seems like a good bet. If you're looking for a camera that does a lot at an affordable price, consider the Canon 550D (\$799) or Nikon D5000 (\$569). Both shoot high-definition video (the Canon shoots higher definition than the Nikon) and are solid cameras.

OK. That's my two cents' worth. If you want to use older computers and older software, go right ahead. I won't be there to watch you. However, if increasing production quality and speed are important to you, consider a few of these updates at your newspaper.

Read *The Tennessee Press*
—then pass it on!



Sgt. Maj. Kit Crawford, returning recently from a year's duty in Afghanistan, is greeted by his father, Nate Crawford, public affairs specialist with the Tennessee National Guard, Nashville. The younger Crawford's home is in Elizabethton. The elder Crawford, a trustee of the Tennessee Press Association Foundation, is a former editor of the Democrat-Union, Lawrenceburg.

1 For All offers new free ads

1 For All, the First Amendment awareness campaign, offers newspapers new ads featuring John Mellencamp.

David Gregory, Brad Paisley and new country band Gloriana will be featured soon. See the ads at <http://1forall.us/media-resources/print-and-web-ads/>.

Middle Tennessee State University and the University of Tennessee have received grants to hold First Amendment events.

Details will be provided as the events are developed.

The fight for a federal shield law

The proposed Free Flow of Information Act, also known as the federal shield law, protects journalists from having to reveal their sources and documents. The law, if enacted, maintains vital information for citizens and ensures journalists and confidential informants won't be silenced due to the threat of federal prosecution or subpoena.

Under the proposed law, the federal government must prove to a judge that the information sought outweighs the journalist's need to keep confidential information.

For too long, journalists have been prosecuted and incarcerated for refusing to hand over source names and information they have gathered while on the job. Many have lost countless dollars and resources fighting the battle.

Others have lost days of their lives in jail. The Society of Professional Journalists, with other news

organizations and press advocates, strongly encourages the passage of this law and will continue to push for its approval. A variety of information is available at www.spj.org.

The Free Flow of Information Act of 2007 has progressed further in the 110th Congress than any shield bill introduced to date. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi will bring the House version of the bill, H.R. 2102, to the floor for a full House vote on Oct. 16.

Presently, the bill has 71 co-sponsors, including 45 Democrats and 26 Republicans. 218 votes are required for the bill's passage in the House.

What you can do:

- Contact your local representative TODAY and let him or her know that you support a federal shield law and expect that he or she will, too. Your voice will make a difference.

- Write stories about the importance

of this bill's passing, or encourage your news team to draw attention. For a good example, check out former SPJ President Christine Tatum's column on www.spj.org.

- Host discussions in your newsroom and in your community about the need for a federal shield law. Educate the public on the legislative process.

- Contribute to SPJ's Federal Shield Law Campaign by calling (317) 927-8000, extension 200.

Some of the other journalism organizations that support a federal shield law are as follows:

American Society of Newspaper Editors, Associated Press Managing Editors, Investigative Reporters and Editors, Newspaper Association of America and Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

(From www.spj.org)

UTKCCI wins grant for First Amendment events

As part of the 1 For All campaign to build awareness of the First Amendment, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, has won a McCormick Foundation grant to conduct a semester-long program on the amendment.

1 For All is a project of the First Amendment Center.

The University of Tennessee, through the College of Communication and

Information, was one of six universities picked to receive grants. The *News Sentinel*, Knoxville, has offered its support to the initiative.

With the money, the CCI and other departments will put on six events next spring dealing with "The Future of the First Amendment: Traditional Values and Non-Traditional Media." Programs will range from speakers to

symposia to a "First Amendment Free Food Festival."

A permanent kiosk with First Amendment information, documents and Web links will be installed in the college's new Scripps Convergence Lab.

(From blog by Jack McElroy, editor, *News Sentinel*, Knoxville)

The ad below is available for newspapers to run free of charge at <http://1forall.us/media-resources/print-and-web-ads/>.

Tennessee Press Service Congratulates the Winners of the 2010 TPS Contest for Sales Reps

And, the winners are...

1st Place

Richard Southerland
The Greeneville Sun

2nd Place was a tie.

Becky Newbold
Hohenwald, *Lewis County Herald*

Melissa Ferge
Bolivar, *Bulletin Times*

Contact TPS to find out how your newspaper can benefit from participating in Tennessee's Advertising Networks.

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