

The Tennessee Press

Vol. 75

SEPTEMBER 2011

No. 3

Newspaper Hall of Fame, other TPA events Nov. 4

Watch for details and reservations information related to the upcoming Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame induction, which is set for Friday, Nov. 4, in Knoxville. In addition, attendees can buy tickets for the UT-MTSU game on the following day.

Two newspapermen have been selected for posthumous induction—

- Richard F. Knight, who owned, edited and published the *Livingston Enterprise* and the *Jackson County Sentinel*, Gainesboro. In early years he was with *The Tennessean*, Nashville.

- J. Zollie Howard, who had a 46-year career as a Tennessee journalist. He began work in newspapers as a printer's devil and worked in the roles of reporter, Sunday editor, city editor and news editor for the *Knoxville News Sentinel*. Later he worked for the *Memphis Press-Scimitar* as managing editor, associate editor and editorial page editor.

The induction ceremony will be held in conjunction with the TPA Fall Board of Directors Meeting, and a meeting of the TPA Government Relations Committee is scheduled, also Nov. 4.

The Newspaper Hall of Fame was established in 1966 as a joint project of the Tennessee Press Association and the University of Tennessee. It honors those who have made outstanding contributions to Tennessee newspaper journalism, to newspaper journalism generally or their communities,

regions or the state through newspaper journalism.

The induction ceremony and the meetings will be held at the Knoxville Marriott. The deadline for making reservations at the TPA rate is Oct. 4. The rate is \$139 plus tax per night.

TPAers should receive a mailing the week of Sept. 5. The following is the general schedule:

Nov. 4—Government Relations Committee meeting; Board of Directors meeting; Reception; Dinner and induction ceremony.

Nov. 5—UT vs. MTSU football game

Ownership statement must be printed

Early October brings the period in which a publication with a periodicals permit must file with the U.S. Postal Service as well as print the annual Statement of Ownership form. That means newspapers, of course.

It should be filed with the postmaster and published in the newspaper during October. Dailies must publish it by Oct. 10 and non-dailies, by Oct. 31.

The two-page form is called P.S. Form 3526 Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation. One can download a PDF from <http://about.usps.com/forms/ps3526.pdf>.



The logo for National Newspaper Week, Oct. 2-8, depicts what we know—no other news medium covers community goings-on as well as newspapers. Newspaper Week materials are being prepared by the Florida Press Association, the Florida Society of Newspaper Editors and Newspaper Association Managers. These will be available for download by noon Monday, Sept. 19, at www.nationalnewspaperweek.com. This year brings the 71st annual observance.



Options offered in TPS INT late this month

Details are being firmed up by Kevin Slimp, director, personnel of the UTK College of Communication/School of Journalism and Electronic Media and the Tennessee Press Service staff for the 14th Institute of Newspaper Technology Sept. 29-Oct. 1 on the University of Tennessee-Knoxville campus.

Scholarships for staff members of TPA member newspapers were claimed early. But other people from TPA papers can be included in the Institute, Slimp said.

Attendees can select from four or five options during every three-hour period. These include InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, Acrobat, Dreamweaver, Styles, Photo Editing, Design, Photography, Photo Archiving and Flash. As always, top instructors have been engaged. Some of these are Mary Zimnik, Atlanta, Ga.; Karl Kuntz, Columbus, Ohio; Lisa Griffin, Selma, Ala.; Fred Anders, Austin, Texas; and Rob Heller, UTK.

For registration information, one should see www.newspaperinstitute.com.



SUSAN W. THURMAN | THE DAILY HERALD, COLUMBIA

Columbia Mayor Dean Dickey, center right, presents Sam D. Kennedy a proclamation setting Aug. 18 as Sam Delk Kennedy Day. From left are Rachel Kennedy, granddaughter; Mary Susan Kennedy, daughter-in-law; Eliza Blackstone, granddaughter; Sam Delk Kennedy III, grandson;

Sam Delk Kennedy Jr., son; the honoree; the mayor; Betty Finney Kennedy, wife; behind her, Courtney Moore; Jack Blackstone, grandson; Billy Blackstone, son-in-law; Elizabeth Kennedy Blackstone, daughter; and Emory Blackstone, grandson. See story on page 3.

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IN CONTACT

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

The Tennessee Press

(USPS 616-460)

Published quarterly by the
TENNESSEE PRESS SERVICE, INC.
for the

TENNESSEE PRESS ASSOCIATION, INC.
435 Montbrook Lane
Knoxville, Tennessee 37919

Telephone (865) 584-5761/Fax (865) 558-8687/www.tnpress.com

Subscriptions: \$6 annually
Periodicals Postage Paid At Knoxville, TN

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Tennessee Press,
435 Montbrook Lane, Knoxville, TN 37919.

The Tennessee Press is printed by The Standard Banner, Jefferson City.

Greg M. Sherrill.....Editor
Elenora E. Edwards.....Managing Editor
Robyn Gentile.....Production Coordinator
Angelique Dunn.....Assistant



The Tennessee Press
is printed on recycled paper
and is recyclable.

The Tennessee Press can be read on

www.tnpress.com

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 email ElenoraEdwards@Comcast.net. The deadline for the October issue is Sept. 12.

Postal service tells postmasters not to sell against newspapers

The U.S. Postal Service headquarters is telling its marketing and management team to back off comments critical of newspapers as they promote the new Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) advertising option.

A spate of complaints from newspapers about postmasters and marketing reps who were "trashing" newspaper advertising when they introduced local businesses to the new EDDM saturation mail program led the National Newspaper Association (NNA) to urgently seek a correction from USPS.

Postal Service headquarters advised Max Heath, NNA Postal Committee chair, this week that a new directive has now been issued. Postal employees are being directed to position direct mail as an option to be used in addition to other media, not as a replacement.

USPS says: "EDDM should be positioned as an option that can be blended or used in addition to other media resources (newspaper, television, etc.). It is not our intent to position EDDM 'against' other media choices. Remember when speaking that you will have newspapers and printers in your audience - and they are our friends and partners.

"Our DVD demonstrates what \$3,000 can buy in media dollars as a way to educate the audience on the marketing capabilities and reach EDDM can provide for the dollars spent."

Heath expressed appreciation for the rapid response from USPS headquarters.

He said, "Every Door Direct Mail's pledge has been that it is seeking new mail volume, not trying to divert business from one type of mail to another. Our concern has been that the way this program is presented seemed to urge a migration out of newspapers' Periodicals and Standard mail issues into a direct advertising stream. That was not our understanding of this program. Now we are glad to know that USPS headquarters is trying to keep the program on track."

Every Door Direct Mail allows a small mailer to present direct mail pieces to saturate mailing routes with fewer than 5,000 pieces. They are permitted to bring the mail into a retail center without buying a bulk mail permit and have the pieces delivered as saturation mail, paying the minimum 14.2 cents per piece for DDU entry.

EDDM was made possible by a Jan. 2 rule change to permit simplified

addressing on postal city routes. NNA has fought for many years to extend simplified addressing from rural routes, where it has long permitted newspapers to saturate routes without buying mailing lists, at the request of members.

Newspapers are encouraged to use or sell EDDM themselves and to offer their printing, design and mailing services to customers to help them use EDDM. Periodicals technically are permitted to use the EDDM rule change for sampling, but they must be careful not to jeopardize their mailing privilege eligibility by repeatedly sending sample copies in excess of annual allowances.

Periodicals using EDDM may not enter the mail at retail counters. They are required to bring that mail to Business Mail Entry units. And Periodicals cannot be mailed at Standard Mail rates under this program, as some have misunderstood.

(NNA, Aug. 8, 2011)

NNA marketing rep ready to start

Cassandra Jean Ivy, co-owner of *The Doniphan Herald* and *Blue Hill Leader*, Ivy Rose Publishing in Sutton, Neb., is the National Newspaper Association's (NNA) first 2011 member of the new NNA Marketing Council.

The Marketing Council's mission is to work with NNA directors and state chairs to promote the industry, NNA and community newspaper values. Its key job is member recruitment. Representatives also provide a listening ear to member newspapers facing challenging markets and economies, to feed back concerns to the board.

NNA President Elizabeth K. Parker, co-publisher of Recorder Community Newspapers in Stirling, N.J., said recently, "We're so often accused of being great marketers of every business but our own. Guilty as charged. But we are committed to changing that," Parker said. "NNA's leadership, which reaches into every state and represents 2,200-plus newspapers, is determined to tell the world that community newspapers are alive. We have kicked off the "We Believe in Newspapers" campaign. Our next essential step is to identify publishers who believe what we believe. That is where we are headed. If community newspapers are to thrive, we need a strong NNA, and NNA needs strong newspaper members."

Parker said NNA would be seeking marketing representatives in other regions. People interested in promoting community newspapers can let NNA know in an email to Lynn Edinger at lynn@nna.org. Edinger will send applicants NNA's term sheet.

Ivy has edited copy, helped write, design and sell ads during her newspaper career.

(NNA)

*Tennessee Press Service
Congratulates*


Teri Jennings

*with The Leader in Covington, TN
for filling the entire 2011 Tennessee
BINGO Board!*

Teri Jennings sold TnSCAN, TnDAN, and TnNET ads in categories listed on the Tennessee BINGO Board and was the first sales rep at a participating newspaper to fill the entire board.

*Thanks to ALL reps for making the 2011
TPS contest for sales reps a success!*

Tennessee Press Service
Advertising Placement Snapshot



	ROP:	Network:
July 2011:	\$272,439	\$ 60,878
Year* as of July 31:	\$2,190,125	\$502,766

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

Columbia Council honors Kennedy

BY RICHARD CONN
The Daily Herald, Columbia

Columbia Mayor Dean Dickey admitted the honor was probably a "long time overdue."

But former Daily Herald publisher and Maury County Executive Sam D. Kennedy was still humbled Thursday when the City Council recognized him for his many contributions to the community.

Dickey presented him a proclamation declaring Thursday, Aug. 18, Sam Delk Kennedy Day in Columbia. Kennedy accepted the honor with his family, including his wife of 57 years, the former Betty Finney, by his side.

"I'm deeply honored. I love Columbia," Kennedy said. "It's always been the prettiest place with some of the finest, nicest people on earth." Kennedy, 84, was editor and publisher of the Herald from 1965 to 1983.

Dickey said Kennedy helped shepherd

See Kennedy photo on page one

the community through tough times during the 1980s, when the phosphate industry had dried up and the county was saddled with soaring unemployment.

"And really the only bright spot that we had was Sam at *The Daily Herald*," Dickey said. "He always managed to write something that was positive and good, and we came out of that unified." After *The Daily Herald* was sold in 1983, Kennedy bought the *Lawrence County Advocate*, *The News Democrat*, *Waverly*, and the *Buffalo River Review*, Linden. He still runs those publications. Kennedy was elected Maury County executive in 1990 and served one term.

Earlier in life, he was a Maury County General Sessions judge and an assistant district attorney and district attorney for Maury, Marshall, Lawrence and Wayne counties.

Kennedy served for many years as chairman of the Tennessee Press Association's (TPA) government relations committee and served as president in 1979-80. He was instrumental in getting Tennessee's open government, or "Sunshine Law," enacted by the legislature in 1974. Frank Gibson, director of the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government, said Kennedy remains one of open government's "most ardent champions."

He also served on the Audit Bureau of Circulations national board, representing daily newspapers with circulations of 15,000 copies or fewer for 10 years. He served for several years on the board of Southern Newspaper Publishers Association. Kennedy said with the honor from the city, Aug. 18 had a doubly special meaning. It was also his son's birthday, who is also named Sam Delk Kennedy.

(Adapted, Aug 21, 2011)

People still turn to Sunday papers for coupons

By AARON BAAR
Marketing Daily/MediaPost

The newspaper industry may be struggling, but people are still turning to the Sunday editions when it comes to clipping coupons, despite the rise of digital media and coupon sites.

According to consumer research firm Scarborough Research, coupon usage for household items such as groceries is up 24 percent since 2006. And although more than a fifth (22 percent) of these coupon users are using digital media such as email, text messaging and the Internet to get coupons, the primary channels continue to be Sunday newspaper inserts (49 percent), in-store coupons (43 percent), direct mailings (33 percent) and in-store circulars (26 percent).

"If you look at free-standing inserts, they've been the dominant source of coupons for a long time," Brian Condon, executive vice president for commercial development for Scarborough, tells Marketing Daily. "To chip away at a share of that is [hard] because it's such a large base."

At the same time, the electronic coupon users, whom Scarborough calls "digital deal seekers" (adults who live in households that usually obtain cents-off coupons through email, text messaging or Internet sites or those who went online for coupons in the past month), are more likely than average adults to patronize local businesses such as florists, malls, restaurants and day spas. Some of that can be attributed to the "Groupon effect," in which people seeking deals are also getting offers from group coupon sites. Or they could just be avid shoppers, according to Condon.

"What we found was that the people who fit into this category were more active shoppers and supporters of local businesses," Condon says. "Plus, people that are redeeming coupons are people who are active shoppers and have an intention to use coupons."

Newspaper coupon theft ends in arrest

BY ANTHONY DAKE
Staff writer

The Daily Post-Athenian, Athens

An Athens woman was arrested (the third weekend of August) after going to some extreme measures to get her hands on money-saving newspaper coupons.

According to a report from the Athens Police Department, the 23-year-old was arrested after being caught red-handed cutting coupons from newspapers.

The report states that for several weeks Soward has been going to the Dollar Tree, picking up papers from in front of the store, cutting out or removing the coupons and returning the papers.

FORESIGHT

2011
SEPTEMBER

25-27: Society of Professional Journalists Excellence in Journalism Convention, to be joined by the Radio Television Digital News Association, New Orleans, La.

29-Oct. 1: Society of News Design 33rd Annual Workshop and Exhibition, St. Louis, Mo.



29-Oct. 1: Institute of Newspaper Technology, UT, Knoxville

OCTOBER

2-8: National Newspaper Week

9-11: Southern Newspaper Publishers Association News Industry Summit and Annual Convention, Williamsburg, Va.

16-18: Inland Press Association 126th Annual Meeting, Renaissance Chicago Hotel

NOVEMBER

4: TPA Fall Board Meeting and Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame Induction, Knoxville

2012
FEBRUARY

8-10: TPA Winter Convention and Press Institute, Doubletree Hotel, Nashville

Stevens announces era of 'locally invested' Leaf-Chronicle leadership

BY JIMMY SETTLE
The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville

In an era where digital and print media are integrating and rapidly changing, *The Leaf-Chronicle* will summon its core values of being "locally invested," its new editor and general manager pledged the afternoon of Aug. 18.

Richard V. Stevens spoke to some 80 community leaders in a reception at the Customs House Museum, just across Second St. from the historic site of Tennessee's oldest newspaper, where his new appointment as the leader of *The Leaf-Chronicle* and Leaf Media Group was the focus along with new company initiatives and past company achievements and contributions.

"I really want the term 'locally invested' to be the watchword of my leadership here," Stevens said.

He was introduced at the podium for remarks by Carol Hudler, president of the Gannett South Group and leader of Gannett Tennessee, as the man who will set the tone and lead the company that's been the news and information leader for Clarksville-Montgomery County from 1808 until now. She said *The Leaf-Chronicle* can look forward to continuing its worthy place in the community for its next 200 years.

"We know who the local voice is, and who will remain the local voice," Hudler told the audience. "I think Richard has a great bond with the community, that started from his first day — the day of the (Jan. 22, 1999) tornado," she said.

Stevens, with 31 years of practical journalism experience, now leads all aspects of the daily operations for *The Leaf-Chronicle*, *The Stewart-Houston Times* and Leaf Media Group. Among those looking on from the audience were current and former *Leaf-Chronicle*



THE LEAF-CHRONICLE | ROBERT SMITH

Richard V. Stevens, left, talks with Frank Lott, center, and F. Gene Washer at the Customs House Museum during a reception introducing Stevens as the editor and general manager of *The Leaf-Chronicle*.

employees and a few who have held principal leadership roles for the company in the past, such as former publisher Andrew Oppmann, former editor Dee Boaz, and longtime former publisher Gene Washer, whom Stevens credited with building *The Leaf-Chronicle*'s presence as a significant news entity regionally and statewide.

"From the day I arrived, Jan. 22, 1999, the day a huge tornado leveled our offices and much of downtown, I have rolled up my sleeves and dug in and invested in the growth and success of *The Leaf-Chronicle* and in Clarksville, Montgomery County, and Fort Campbell.

"My promise to all of you here today is: As leader of *The Leaf-Chronicle* I will remain deeply and profoundly locally invested. I will dedicate the heart and

soul and hard work necessary to make our company and this community as successful as possible," Stevens said.

(Aug. 4, 2011)

Did you know...

61 percent of community newspaper readers seek out newspaper ads for the latest offerings.

NNA Readership Study 2010

Main St. Media, Coupon Mint firm launch venture

Main Street Media announces the launch of a joint venture between GoLoco Media Group, under the Coupon Mint brand name, and Main Street Media LLC.

Main Street Media Chief Executive Officer Sam Hatcher describes the joint venture as follows, "Community newspaper readership is up over 17 percent across the country. Our readers are loyal and seek local community based information. Coupon Mint delivers just that. We see a tremendous opportunity to capitalize on the coupon advertising strategies, relationships, and sales culture of Coupon Mint's 20 year history."

In addition GoLoco Media's digital advertising expertise in Web strategy, social media, email delivery and list-building provide a large variety of additional solutions to loyal advertisers and those who didn't see local papers as a viable option.

William Keever of GoLoco Media Group Inc. praised the joint venture, stating, "GoLoco's digital solutions add value to the Main Street Media newspaper advertiser. We are extremely excited to move forward with the implementation of both print and digital products for Main Street Media's publications and relationships."

The initial launch phase will take place in Wilson, Sumner and Williamson counties. The launch of *The Wilson Post's* branded email coupon program, "My Click, Print, and Save," www.myclickprintandsave.com, will take place with the printed Coupon Mint newspaper inserts on Sept. 17.

Avoid the pitfalls of 'stand-ups'

The story about a government project was weak, without the faintest ripple of skepticism, so as I read it, I slowly stood up and aimed a forefinger at it, as if to blast it back to where it belonged: the graveyard of broken journalism.

I have a nickname for such stories. I call them stand-ups, from the fact that, as I'm reading them, my rising bile causes me to rise involuntarily and threaten violence.

Then came the real killer paragraph: Electronically dredging up a year-old press account, the reporter had used a quotation, a public official's prediction that seemed not only grossly out-of-date, but also preposterously wrong.

Logic compelled me to pull the trigger.

Computers, the Internet, websites, e-mail are all outstanding products of the electronic age. But they're often the McDonald's of newspaper reporting, the drive-through joint you go to for low-nutrition convenience.

Of course, that's a broad brush; no way I'm prying my fingers off my access to the Internet or electronic archives or e-mails.

I may be dreaming, but I think newspapers' use of e-mail interviews is fading. (I do worry that reporters are doing e-mail interviews, then not labeling them as such, employing instead the misleading attribution, "... So-and-so said.")

But if reporters (and editors) have wised up as to the danger inherent in the e-mail interview, they seem to have replaced one danger with another even more insidious.

At least the e-mail interview is an attempt, albeit a foolhardy one, to get current information. The electronic grabbing of old statistics and archived interviews is pure laziness that produces untrustworthy material.

Reporters always have looked back — the traditional newspaper library, bulging with the community's history, was great fun to explore — by sifting through yellowed clips for background, context, names of sources, etc. And I won't swear that I never filched from one of those clips something I shouldn't have.

But the usual payoff for such library mining was to confirm that Action A happened at Time B on Date C at Location D.

Some of my editors were soft-spoken and reasonable, some serpent-fanged and argumentative, but all were demanding, and to comfort me in my times of woe, none ever used these words: "Gee whiz, Jim, what a darn shame to have that hole in your story. Tell you what, just find something old in the library, that'll be good enough."

I was more likely to hear, "... and do not even think about telling me you couldn't get hold of him (her, them)."

Sure, in absolutely dire circumstances, an old reference can be better than none at all, but it still isn't "good enough";



WRITING COACH

Jim Stasiowski

more often, it's a sign that we're surrendering to convenience.

And even if it's true that the number of email interviews is decreasing, there's another questionable Internet connection that is flourishing: Reporters, sensing a reprieve from the chore of getting detail and background firsthand from sometimes prickly sources, are clicking on company or personal websites for information, explanations even quotations.

Oh boy.

The pitfalls there are so numerous and obvious that I have a hard time understanding why editors would accept anything straight from a website. Let us review a few of the horrors:

First, very few websites are updated regularly, and I'll wager close to none are updated daily. Thus, a phone call to a source is going to yield fresh information.

Second, there is no guarantee that even the most basic material on a website is accurate. Can you count on a company's website to spell the chief operating officer's name correctly? Probably, but if I'm writing the story, I'm going to make sure I've checked the spelling with the CEO, or at least with someone who speaks officially for the company.

Third, most business and personal websites are nothing more than electronic billboards filled with carefully crafted spin. We swear that we spurn the public-relations-crafted statement, but the stuff on websites is merely that, designed not to inform, but to sell a product or polish an image.

Fourth, when I read a sentence that quotes from a website, I envision a slouching, lazy reporter and a timid editor. Neither inspires confidence in me, and thus, I am left to wonder what other corners the story cuts.

Such references get into newspapers not because reporters use them, but because editors allow them. If you're an editor, and you see a story with that kind of usage, demand better.

In other words, stand up before I do.

THE FINAL WORD: One of the baffling sections of *The Associated Press Stylebook* covers words beginning with the syllable "work."

Almost all of the ones we journalists commonly use are one word: "workday," "workout," "workplace," "workweek." But here's the oddity: "Work force" is two words, the *Stylebook* says, although the dictionary disagrees, preferring "workforce."

Please, AP, go with the flow. I'm tired of having to look on Page 310 every time I use one of those.

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

TRACKS

Meadows takes helm of News-Herald, Connection

Steve Meadows has been named the new editor and publisher of the *News-Herald*, Lenoir City, and *The Connection*.

He replaces **Kevin Burcham**, who is leaving to pursue other interests.

Burcham will remain a resident of the Lenoir City community.

"We're thrilled to have Steve Meadows join our company. Steve is a skilled professional who brings energy and an exceptional record of experience working with daily and non-daily newspapers," said Gregg K. Jones, president and chief executive officer of Jones Media Inc., the parent company of the *News-Herald* and *The Connection*.

"We went through an exhaustive search looking for a replacement for Kevin Burcham and feel extremely fortunate to have found Steve," he said. "I'm confident Steve will do an outstanding job leading the *News-Herald* and *The Connection*. Steve, along with his wife, Kathy, and sons, Seth and Luke, will be a wonderful addition to the Loudon County community.

"I also want to take this opportunity to thank Kevin for his 15 years of service with Jones Media. Kevin has done a fine job, first in Rogersville and for the past 10 years in Loudon County," Jones said. "We wish him well and feel confident that we'll have the opportunity to work together again in the not-so-distant future."

A 25-year veteran of the newspaper industry, Meadows has won numerous Associated Press and Georgia Press Association awards in writing, design and photography. He was top editor of daily newspapers in Thomasville,



Meadows

Valdosta and Warner Robins, all in Georgia, before taking the helm as publisher of *The Clayton (Ga.) Tribune* in December 2002.

Since 2004, the *Tribune* has been named the best weekly newspaper in Georgia six times by the Georgia Press Association and has twice won the top award in The Best of CNI competition conducted by the *Tribune's* parent company, Community Newspapers Inc. The newspaper and its staff can boast more than 170 editorial and advertising awards during that eight-year period.

"I'm thrilled to get the opportunity to join such a vibrant community and lead two quality newspapers," Meadows said. "My goal is to improve on the fantastic work Kevin has done leading these publications. It's a lofty goal, and I obviously have some very big shoes to fill."

Meadows and his family have already relocated to Loudon County.

In addition to his newspaper background, Meadows is a longtime Rotarian, a coach in a variety of youth sports and has served positions on numerous community boards and organizations. He and Kathy have been active members of Clayton (Ga.) Baptist Church, where Steve was a deacon, choir member and Sunday school teacher, and Kathy was leader of women's ministries and in the AWANA program.

"We're looking forward to becoming a part of the community and making Loudon County our home," Meadows said. "This is a beautiful place with an exceptional quality of life, and we're ready to get plugged in and involved."

Burcham is also eager to enjoy the next chapter in his life.

"I have enjoyed the opportunity I had to work with the Jones Media group and serve the residents of Loudon County as publisher of their hometown newspaper. I now look forward to spending more time with my family in the coming months and pursuing interests here in Loudon County," Burcham said.

"I wish Steve the best as he continues to bring the news of interest about Loudon County to its residents," he added.

The *News-Herald* and *The Connection* will host a "Meet the Publisher" event Tuesday, Sept. 13, at the newspapers' offices at 201 Simpson Rd. in Lenoir City.

(Aug 17, 2011)

The ol' boy wasn't all that loony

BY SAM VENABLE

Columnist, News Sentinel, Knoxville

Even after a quarter-century, it's never too late to make amends.

Therefore, I officially apologize for poking fun at Dr. Drought — whoever he may be.

This occurred in a column I wrote on Oct. 25, 1985. In that essay, I discussed some of the, uh, "odd and unusual" folks who occasionally show up unannounced at newspaper offices. Not only was Dr. Drought one of these people, he was the central character in my column.

Dr. Drought abruptly appeared one scorching afternoon at the News



Venable

Sentinel (back when we lived on West Church Avenue, before we lost our hyphen and abandoned downtown) and asked to speak to a reporter.

I don't recall the exact year of his visit, but it was during a blistering summer, just like the one we're experiencing now.

Not only was it hotter than the very hinges of hell, there hadn't been rain in weeks. Lawns were brown. Crops were withering in the fields. Lakes throughout the region were lower than normal. There was talk of an impending water shortage, maybe even rationing.

Dr. Drought knew what the problem was.

"It's because of those planes takin' off over at the airport," he told reporter Stan DeLozier. "I sit on my front porch and watch 'em every day.

"Those airplanes take off real fast, and when they cross Fort Loudoun Lake, it sucks the water up. If this keeps goin' on, that lake's gonna be plum dry."

Stan thanked the man for his information, gently showed him to the front door, then went back to work — but not before adding Dr. Drought to his ever-growing career list of sidewalk screwballs.

Stan is now retired. I called him the other day with the riveting news that Dr. Drought wasn't so far off base; indeed (if you will forgive me), his theory holds water.

It's just that he had things 180 degrees reversed.

I am not making this up. According to the latest findings by the National Center for Atmospheric Research in

Boulder, Colo., airplanes most certainly do affect precipitation.

Except — and here's where Dr. Drought was completely backasswards — they cause more rain and snow to fall near airports. Not less.

I won't get into all the scientific mumbo-jumbo of NCAR's study. Suffice to say massive volumes of air traffic effectively "seed" certain types of clouds, causing them to empty. Google a few computer keys, and you'll find reams of details.

"See?" I told Stan. "Dr. Drought wasn't as nuts as we all thought."

Stan pondered a minute and replied: "You know, if that ol' boy had just been standin' on his head when he made those observations, he would've been right on the money!"

(July 27, 2011)

Have a job opening?

Post your open positions and review resumes in the employment area of www.tnpress.com.

OBITUARIES

Eddie LeSueur

Photographer

BY REX BARBER

Staff writer, Johnson City Press

Longtime Johnson City newspaper and studio photographer Eddie LeSueur died July 24. He was 77.

LeSueur began working at what was then the *Johnson City Press-Chronicle* on May 22, 1961 and retired Aug. 1, 2002. During his more than 40 years in the newspaper business, he could very



LeSueur

likely have met most people in Johnson City, according to several fellow employees who remembered him.

Alan Broyles, now Press information technology director, worked with LeSueur for 20 years in the photography lab.

"He knew everybody," Broyles said. "And everybody in town knew him."

Broyles said one of the things about LeSueur he remembered most was he never let anything stop him from getting the photograph he needed to accompany a news story, an invaluable attribute for a photographer. "If there was a fence in the way, he climbed it," Broyles said. "If there was a river in the way he crossed it. He just always got it done."

Press City Editor Brad Jolly agreed that LeSueur's camera lens was always right where it needed to be to capture

the story of Johnson City.

"Eddie LeSueur immersed himself in Johnson City," Jolly said. "For decades he was front and center at events ranging from house fires to commission meetings to bake sales. He believed the community had a unique character that deserved to be documented, and his vivid photographs show that he was right."

Head Press Photographer Lee Talbert recalled LeSueur as a friend who was always willing to help someone. Talbert said one time, when he was new to the photography department, LeSueur helped him repair his vehicle.

"Eddie looked it over and suggested rebuilding the carburetor, which I didn't have too much knowledge of," Talbert said. "He and Bobby Satterfield

(another Press employee) and I sat in his garage until about 1 a.m. rebuilding the carburetor, on which Eddie did about all the work. Just did it as a friend. If you needed help, Eddie was there."

When it came to photography, though, LeSueur was a wealth of information, Talbert said. LeSueur's family had been in the photography business for many years, owning a studio in downtown that LeSueur had said could be counted among the first businesses in the city.

"With all his years of experience, he had seen about everything anyway," Talbert said, adding LeSueur could usually point photographers and reporters to a reliable source for just about any particular story. "He was a good source of information."

But memories about LeSueur

encompass more than expert photography skills and mechanical prowess. "Eddie always kept these little 6 1/2 ounce Coca Colas, where he found those I'll never know," Talbert said. "And every once in a while he'd treat you to one. Man, they were good."

During his career at the Press, he won several awards and was a member of the Associated Press. He wrote articles for the newspaper after retirement.

LeSueur was an Army veteran, a member of Liberty Church and attended Boones Creek Christian Church. He made his home in Gray.

He leaves his wife, Charlotte Emogene Utsman LeSueur; a daughter, Tammy Burns; a son Eddie LeSueur II; and two grandchildren.

(July 24, 2011)

REWRITES

SEPTEMBER 1961

Thirteen TPA newspapermen were slated to serve on National Editorial Association committees in 1961-62. These included Bill Simonton, *The Covington Leader*, Printing Equipment Committee, Raymond Hamilton, *The Millington Star*, Public Relations; and Horace V. Wells Jr., *Clinton Courier-News*, Program and Objectives. Wells also was renamed state chairman.

Carl A. Jones, publisher of the *Johnson City Press-Chronicle*, protested the Federal Aviation Agency's restriction on aerial photography of a plane crash April 5 in which the pilot and a passenger were killed. The scene, Holston Mountain, was where four air crashes had occurred in the previous three years, killing 15 people.

The *Crossville Chronicle* was a day late the first week of August. When the last four pages of type were placed on the press, someone forgot to lock the forms on it, and the result was four pages of pi and a broken press.

Harris Brown was honored by the Sun Publishing Co. on completion of his 50th year as an editorial writer and news editor of *The Jackson Sun*.

An item in *The Tennessee Press* titled "Who hasn't had the urge?" told that a Linotype operator for Memphis Publishing Co. was under psychiatric observation after smashing 12 typesetting machines with a metal bar at the plant that published *The Commercial Appeal* and the *Memphis Press-Scimitar*.

SEPTEMBER 1986

Registration for the National Newspaper Association's 101st Annual Convention at Opryland Hotel in Nashville were rolling in at a record clip. More than 1,000 editors and publishers were expected to attend. Bob Atkins, publisher of *The News-Examiner*, Gallatin, was convention chairman.

Bill Williams, editor and publisher of *The Paris Post-Intelligencer*, was scheduled to teach a newspaper management course in the fall at Murray State (Ky.) University.

Jerome Moon, publisher of *The Daily Times*, Maryville, was named chairman of a pilot campaign to raise money for the United Way in Maryville and Blount County.

Tennessee's open meetings law was rated the strongest in the U.S., according to research by a journalism faculty member at Oklahoma State University.

A grant from TPAF helped five high school newspaper staff members attend the annual Volunteer Newsmedia Workshop at UT.

Ellis Binkley, who served in a variety of editorial posts at the *Kingsport Times-News* in a career between 1941 and 1973, died.

Joe Worley was appointed executive editor of the *Nashville Banner*.

TPA President R. Jack Fishman told TPAers about a program sponsored by the American Newspaper Publishers Association to fight illiteracy.

Historical newspapers digitized, available online

Tennessee has now made its first contribution to a national electronic database of historical newspapers, thanks to a federal grant.

The Tennessee Digital Newspaper Project (TDNP) is a joint effort between the University of Tennessee and the Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA), funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), to digitize more than 100,000 pages of Tennessee's microfilmed newspapers dating from 1836 to 1922. The NEH has funded similar projects in other states as it builds the national database.

A panel of historians, scholars, librarians and genealogists has selected a range of newspaper titles from across Tennessee for inclusion in the project.

The initial phase of the project focuses on the Civil War and Reconstruction eras.

Issues of the *Memphis Daily Appeal* from 1857 to 1872 were scanned and added to the Library of Congress's Chronicling America website. To view the paper, visit <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>. Access is free to the public.

Pages from the newspaper include:

- Frontline dispatches from Civil War correspondents such as "SHADOW" and "DIXIE;"
- News reports from the cotton industry, railroads and riverboats; and
- Advertisements for farm equipment, clothing, guns, real estate or cure-all medicines such as "Braggs Arctic

Liniment" and "Dr. Mott's Chalybeate Pills."

Additional historical Tennessee newspapers scheduled to be digitized include Brownlow's *Knoxville Whig*, the *Nashville Union and American*, the *Chattanooga Daily Rebel*, the *Athens Post* and the *Clarksville Weekly Chronicle*.

TSLA collects and preserves books and records of historical, documentary and reference value and promotes library and archival development throughout the state. The NEH is an independent federal agency which supports learning in history, literature, philosophy and other areas of the humanities.

(UTK, Aug. 8, 2011)

WHAT'S BEING DONE

Brighter Christmas Fund helps families all year

Brighter Christmas Fund donations made by *The Jackson Sun's* readers in December continue to help struggling families in Jackson and West Tennessee meet their needs throughout the year, even during the hot summer months.

The Fund has been helping families afflicted by illnesses and other hardships since 1973.

"Many people talk about Christmas in July, so we want to use this time to remind our readers that their donations to the Brighter Christmas Fund are still helping people with needs in July and all year long," said Carol Dix, executive assistant to the publisher at *The Jackson Sun*.

The need for help continues all year. The account for the Fund is at the Vinings Branch of Regions Bank on North Parkway in Jackson.

Donations made last year could be designated for one of five families who shared their stories in the newspaper between Thanksgiving and Christmas. The amount designated for each family

went directly to them for their needs.

The Sun's first feature story, on Thanksgiving Day 2010, was about burn victim Erika Jarrett, who was injured in a September explosion at the Kilgore plant in Toone, and the wishes of her three children. The Brighter Christmas Fund provides rent assistance for her family's apartment as her medical treatment continues.

Other stories featured the families of a woman seriously injured in a car accident, a young boy with a skin disease, a father who suffered a heart attack and symptoms of an unknown illness and a woman battling cancer for the second time.

To date, the Brighter Christmas Fund has raised \$836,373 since 1973. In 2010, fundraising totaled \$32,554.

The amount designated to each family went directly to them for their needs. Donations that weren't marked for a family have been used for a variety of needs every month, and the Fund's balance carries forward each year.

In December 2010, about \$5,000 was used to buy toys for the children in the five families and the annual Toy Store at Englewood Baptist Church.


Throughout the year, the Fund gave a total of \$4,600 in rent assistance, \$16,230 for utilities, \$3,516 for dental extractions, \$700 for groceries and \$2,640 for prescription medicine. Money also has been used to pay for doctor's visits and items for the Hub Club's after-school program.

(The Jackson Sun, July 30, 2011)


What we must do

"The journalist's job is to chronicle and comment on the day's intelligence. That means leaving out a lot of stuff that good judgment tells you is unworthy of being repeated. It also means including a lot of stuff some people would prefer not to know but we should tell them anyway."

Edward Mullins, professor of communications, University of Alabama, 2004



In memory of
Eddie LeSueur
by
Art S. Powers, publisher, and
friends at the Johnson City
Press



The Tennessee Press
Association Foundation
gratefully acknowledges
a contribution by
Mike Blinder,
The Blinder Group
New Port Richey, Fla.

TPA officers, directors, members



District 9
Joel Washburn
Dresden Enterprise
Since June 2007



District 6
Joe Adams
The Lebanon Democrat
Since December 2010



District 7
John Finney
Buffalo River Review
Linden
Since June 2007



District 4
Darren Oliver
Overton County News
Livingston
Since June 2010



District 2
Jack McElroy
News Sentinel
Knoxville
Since June 2008



District 1
Keith Wilson
Kingsport Times-News
Elected June 2011
and served previously

Dresden Enterprise
The Tri-City Reporter, Dyer
State Gazette, Dyersburg
The Humboldt Chronicle
Weakley County Press, Martin
The Milan Mirror-Exchange
The Paris Post-Intelligencer
Lake County Banner, Tiptonville
The Gazette, Trenton
Union City Daily Messenger

Ashland City Times
The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville
The Dickson Herald
The Stewart-Houston Times, Dover
Gallatin News Examiner
The Gallatin Newspaper
The Lebanon Democrat
The Wilson Post, Lebanon
Mt. Juliet News
The Tennessean, Nashville
The Portland Leader
The Portland Progressive
Robertson County Times, Springfield
The News-Democrat, Waverly
The Westmoreland Observer

Your Community Shopper, Ardmore
Hickman County Times, Centerville
The Daily Herald, Columbia
The Fairview Observer
Lewis County Herald, Hohenwald
The Democrat-Union, Lawrenceburg
Marshall County Tribune, Lewisburg
Buffalo River Review, Linden
Pulaski Citizen
The Wayne County News, Waynesboro



PRESIDENT
Jeffrey D. Fishman
The Tullahoma News



VICE PRESIDENT DAILIES
Michael Williams
The Paris Post-Intelligencer



VICE PRESIDENT NON-DAILIES
Lynn Richardson
Herald and Tribune, Jonesborough



TREASURER
Dale Gentry
The Standard Banner
Jefferson City



IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT
Art Powers
Johnson City Press

Pickett County Press, Byrdstown
Carthage Courier
Citizen-Statesman, Celina
Dale Hollow Horizon, Celina
Herald-Citizen, Cookeville
Crossville Chronicle
Jackson County Sentinel, Gainesboro
The Hartsville Vidette
Fentress Courier, Jamestown
Macon County Chronicle, Lafayette
Macon County Times, Lafayette
LaFollette Press
Livingston Enterprise
Overton County News, Livingston
Independent Herald, Oneida
Scott County News, Oneida
The Sparta Expositor
The Mountain View, Spencer
Morgan County News, Wartburg

The Courier News, Clinton
The Harriman Record
Roane County News, Kingston
News Sentinel, Knoxville
News-Herald, Lenoir City
The Daily Times, Maryville
The Union News Leader, Maynardville
The Oak Ridger, Oak Ridge
Tennessee Star Journal, Pigeon Forge
The Rockwood Times
The Mountain Press, Sevierville
The Claiborne Progress, Tazewell

Grainger Today, Bean Station
Bristol Herald Courier
Elizabethton Star
The Erwin Record
The Greenville Sun
The Standard Banner, Jefferson City
Johnson City Press
Herald and Tribune, Jonesborough
Kingsport Times-News
Citizen Tribune, Morristown
The Tomahawk, Mountain City
The Newport Plain Talk
Rogersville Review



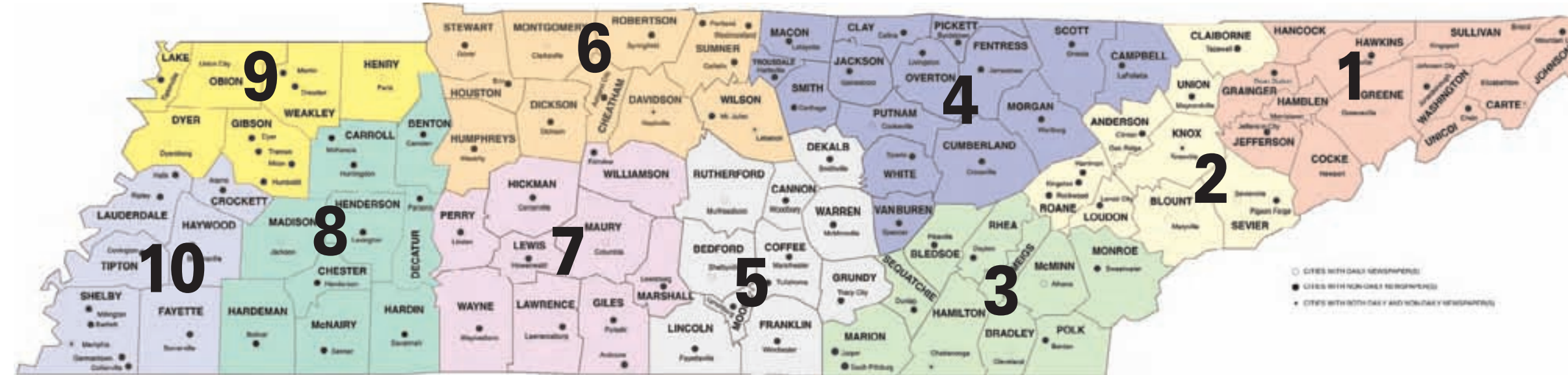
District 10
Eric Barnes
The Daily News
Memphis
Since July 2008



District 8
Brad Franklin
The Lexington Progress
Since June 2006

The Crockett Times, Alamo
Bartlett Express
The States-Graphic, Brownsville
Collierville Herald
The Leader, Covington
Germantown News
The Commercial Appeal, Memphis
The Daily News, Memphis
Memphis Business Journal
The Millington Star
The Lauderdale County Enterprise, Ripley
The Lauderdale Voice, Ripley
The Fayette Falcon, Somerville

Bulletin Times, Bolivar
The Camden Chronicle
Chester County Independent, Henderson
Carroll County News-Leader, Huntingdon
The Jackson Sun
The Lexington Progress
The McKenzie Banner
The News Leader, Parsons
The Courier, Savannah
Independent Appeal, Selmer



District 5
Hugh Jones
Shelbyville Times-Gazette
Since June 2007



District 3
Chris Vass
Chattanooga Times Free Press
Since November 2008

Elk Valley Times, Fayetteville
The Moore County News, Lynchburg
Manchester Times
Southern Standard, McMinnville
The Daily News Journal, Murfreesboro
Shelbyville Times-Gazette
The DeKalb County Times, Smithville
Smithville Review
Grundy County Herald, Tracy City
The Tullahoma News
The Herald-Chronicle, Winchester
Cannon Courier, Woodbury

The Daily Post-Athenian, Athens
Polk County News, Benton
Chattanooga Times Free Press
Hamilton County Herald, Chattanooga
Cleveland Daily Banner
The Herald-News, Dayton
The Dunlap Tribune
Jasper Journal
The Bledsonian-Banner, Pikeville
South Pittsburg Hustler
The Advocate & Democrat, Sweetwater

TPA officers' terms are one year; directors' terms are two years.
Even-numbered districts serve until June 2012; odd-numbered districts serve until June 2013.

TPS officers, directors



PRESIDENT
Michael Williams
The Paris Post-Intelligencer



DIRECTOR
Jeffrey Fishman
The Tullahoma News



DIRECTOR
Victor Parkins
The Milan Mirror-Exchange



DIRECTOR
Art Powers
Johnson City Press



DIRECTOR
Pauline D. Sherrer
Crossville Chronicle



DIRECTOR
Jason Taylor
Chattanooga Times Free Press



PRESIDENT
Gregg K. Jones
The Greenville Sun



VICE PRESIDENT
Victor Parkins
The Milan Mirror-Exchange



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Knoxville

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Joe Albrecht, Albrecht Newspapers, Cookeville
Bob Atkins, Hendersonville
Eric Barnes, The Daily News, Memphis
Tutt Bradford, Maryville, trustee emeritus
Jim Charlet, Brentwood
Nate Crawford, Nashville
David Critchlow Jr., Union City Daily Messenger
John Finney, Buffalo River Review, Linden
Jeffrey Fishman, The Tullahoma News
R. Jack Fishman, Citizen Tribune, Morristown
R. Michael Fishman, Citizen Tribune, Morristown
Dale Gentry, The Standard Banner, Jefferson City

Tom Griscom, Chattanooga
Tom Hill, trustee emeritus
Doug Home, Knoxville
Hugh Jones, Shelbyville Times-Gazette
John M. Jones Sr., Greenville, trustee emeritus
John M. Jones Jr., The Greenville Sun
Sam D. Kennedy, Kennedy Newspapers, Columbia
Hershel Lake, Pulaski Publishing
Steve Lake, Pulaski Citizen
Jack McElroy, News Sentinel, Knoxville
Victor Parkins, The Milan Mirror-Exchange
Mike Pirtle, Murfreesboro

Art Powers, Johnson City Press
Walter T. Pulliam, Knoxville, trustee emeritus
Janet Rail, Independent Appeal, Selmer
Darrell Richardson, The Oak Ridger, Oak Ridge
Pauline D. Sherrer, Crossville Chronicle
Larry K. Smith, LaFollette, trustee emeritus
Joel Washburn, The McKenzie Banner
F. Gene Washer, Clarksville
Scott Whaley, Henderson
Bill Williams, Paris
Michael Williams, The Paris Post-Intelligencer
Keith Wilson, Kingsport Times-News

TPAF officers, trustees



ROBYN GENTILE | TPA

On a visit to the TPA headquarters in Knoxville recently, Earl Goodman, second from left, and Michael Williams, third from left, learned they had something in common. Both once worked at The LaFollette Press. Williams worked there after he graduated from Murray State University and before returning to his home town of Paris, where eventually he became editor and publisher

of the family newspaper, The Paris Post-Intelligencer. Goodman, a native of Caryville, worked in several positions at the Press, including office manager. Goodman is print media buyer for TPS. Williams is TPS president and TPA vice president. With them are Evonne Williams, business manager of The P-I, and TPA Executive Director Greg Sherrill.

Copps asks papers to develop literacy for the young

BY PAT DESMOND

Special to NNA, coverage of the 2011 Government Affairs Conference

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) was invited to help develop journalism literacy for the young by Michael Copps, a commissioner with the Federal Communications Commission.

Copps, one of the political experts who spoke to NNA's 50th Annual Government Affairs Conference in Washington, called for a public/private partnership to move our society from the "Information Age to the Comprehension Age."

He told the audience composed of publishers of community newspapers that there are real problems in a world where broadcast journalism focuses more on entertainment and opinions than on facts.

He pointed out that many young

people today see all information on their computer screens as the same—having equal value.

"We need to be a news literate people—our goal should be that every American possesses the skills to discern news from infotainment," Copps said.

He sees the ownership of the media by larger and larger corporations as one of the roots of the problem and pointed out many journalists have been laid off as the corporations seek to cut expenses to pay down debt incurred as they built those companies.

"Ninety percent of the news Americans rely on and read online originates from traditional journalism—newspapers and broadcasting," Copps said. But he sees an ongoing issue with the fact that there are fewer and fewer original stories. The text of Copps' prepared remarks can be found at www.FCC.gov.

Pat Desmond is NNA Region 1 director.

International Literacy Day: too many have needs

International Literacy Day, traditionally observed annually on Sept. 8, focuses attention on worldwide literacy needs. 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.

In past years International Reading Association councils and individual members have found a variety of ways to observe International Literacy Day, from organizing themed readings in

local schools and libraries to supporting national and international literacy programs. All year round, newspapers support literacy efforts and cooperate with local organizations, exploring and implementing ways to support literacy.

Knowing is half the battle

BY JENNIFER CALDWELL

LaFollette Press

In the newspaper business it is rarely necessary to go looking for trouble. Instead, trouble almost always has a way of finding us.

Whether it's the latest meth lab, the alleged misconduct of a school system employee or a kid getting left on the bus – those stories always make their way to us.

Truthfully the worst and most controversial stories always find us. Why? Who knows? But like it or not everyone seems to want to talk out the negative. It's kind of like that train wreck you can't look away from, I guess.

Just ask my partners in crime.

The minute something bad goes down the office phones and sometimes our personal cell phones start ringing off the hook.

Sometimes the calls come from people we know. Many are the unidentified callers just wanting to share a tip and maybe try to pump us for a little information while they're at it. Shocking, I know.

Where am I going with this, you may



Caldwell

ask? Well, let me fill you in.

I got my nose seriously out of joint at Tuesday night's board of education meeting. After sitting for more than an hour and a half listening to a discussion about budget amendments, recommendations for pay increases and updates on the school department's building projects, I was ready to mark the meeting down as run of the mill. I suspect that most who were there still think it was.

Anyway, when the floor was opened up to the group for comments one particular board member gave a glowing report on the achievements of students participating in the county's Career and Technical Education program which he learned about at a ceremony held to recognize the successes.

The board member went on to point out how disappointing it was that no one from the local media was present at the event. But he didn't stop there. Instead he took another jab, stating, "(the public) never hears about these things."

It was then I wanted to stand up and shout, "We can't report on things we don't know about."

I mean really, it isn't as if we blatantly chose not to cover the event because we'd rather fill the pages of our newspaper with nothing but the negative.

We were not invited to attend.

Now I'm sure there are some of you that by now are imploring me to just get over it. I'm sure I should, and I will.

But before I do I would be remiss if I did not point out some truths about the LaFollette Press.

Our news staff consists of 2.5 reporters. And those 2.5 reporters are responsible for covering the goings on of four municipalities, county government, five law enforcement agencies, utilities boards, a school department comprised of a board and 13 schools and the list goes on. While we do our dead level best to report the good, the bad and the ugly we can't possibly know it all.

Last time I checked we were not assigned a crystal ball upon being hired. I'm not crying in my soup. That's just the way it is.

If you know about something great that is coming up or has already happened, give us a call. Don't just assume we know about it. If we can't make it we will be glad to include your submitted information pictures and all in our publication.

So the next time you pick up a copy of the paper and shake your head at all of the bad news, ask yourself if there was something you could have given us a tip on that would have made it better.

After all, we are the community's newspaper.

(June 15, 2011)

Kudos: Examples may be small, but the lessons are large

Kudos goes to TPA members in Lebanon, Benton, Elizabethton, Dayton, Dover and Savannah for their coverage of open government issues. Their examples may seem routine and small, but their lessons are large.

In different ways, they all shined some light on government secrecy in their communities in June and July, covering it just like budgets, taxes and schools.

I try to impart a little knowledge in this space every month about public meetings and open records laws and issues involving press freedom and public notice. This month, the lesson comes from their example. Many in government cannot be trusted to keep citizens informed on matters that affect them.

In the past, newspapers have sometimes been overly timid in covering "sunshine" issues out of some perceived ethical notion that readers will see it as self-serving chest pounding. Sometimes they think it's not worth rocking the boat. There may be times to let things slide.

Reporting on these issues serves two important purposes. Done right, it shows public officials that the public is serious about wanting more government transparency. It also shows citizens and readers that our role as watchdogs is often the only protection they have against harmful government actions.

Citizens ought to be thankful that ethical and responsible journalists are keeping watch and taking their interests seriously. Journalists need to be thankful that those citizens out there – whether you agree with their politics or not – are also keeping watch.

Haslam asked about transparency

A laurel to *The Lebanon Democrat*. When Gov. Bill Haslam came calling at the newspaper office, the staff could have asked him about a number of issues. They chose to ask about transparency and recent attacks on newspapers. They reported that the governor "reaffirmed his commitment to open records and open government." While the governor said some economic development negotiations should be kept "private," he noted "a general rule is if it is to the benefit of state citizens to know, then it should be open."

That made me wonder whether Haslam was referring to the once-secret Amazon.com sales tax deal and that stirring controversy, or how

he didn't know the state was on the hook for \$100 million in incentives to Electrolux in Memphis until after his election in November.

"Publisher Joe Adams reminded Haslam that there were 19 bills (that) 'targeted our industry' in the last General Assembly," the paper reported. "The governor replied that he has found publishers across the state united on that issue."

'Do-over' required

A laurel to *The Courier* in Savannah. The newspaper reported that the Hardin County Commission's budget committee held a "do-over" after the paper "and others" complained it had not given "adequate" notice of a meeting where it discussed raising taxes and cutting the school board's budget request.

"The only written attempt to inform the public consisted of a sheet of paper tacked up on a bulletin board in the courthouse lobby on the same day as the meeting," the paper said. It quoted the mayor as saying he had announced the committee meeting at the last county commission meeting in June. The paper pointed out that the announcement came after adjournment as citizens filed out of the meeting.

The paper quoted a citizen, saying "If any of the elected officials who control policy for Hardin County would bother reading the state-published county handbook, they would find a general discussion of the Sunshine law which states adequate public notice must be given before all meetings."

Star reported meeting

A laurel to *The Elizabethton Star*. The planning director cancelled the June Carter County Planning Commission meeting after a commission staffer couldn't produce a copy of public notice when the mayor asked to see it the day of the meeting. The published notice was required because zoning issues were on the agenda. The planning commission thought it was the mayor's responsibility; the mayor said the county clerk was responsible. The county attorney said because there was doubt the



TENNESSEE COALITION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT

Frank Gibson

notice had run, the meeting should be cancelled.

A cancellation notice was posted beside a courthouse elevator. An unidentified citizen told the Star several people showed up for the meeting and were upset because it was cancelled. How did they know about the meeting?

"Tuesday's meeting actually was advertised with adequate notice in a list of county meetings published in the *Elizabethton Star* on May 25," the Star reported.

Ya think somebody should have asked the county clerk or maybe the newspaper? Wonder which office would be put in charge of posting public notices on the Internet under recent proposals in the legislature. And how would the public know which website to check?

A 'gimme'

A laurel to *The Herald-News* in Dayton. This one is a gimme. It would be news anywhere, but kudos to the newspaper for knowing and accurately reporting the law.

When the city school superintendent retired, the mayor "bought several ads in area newspapers – including *The Herald-News* – asking for superintendent applicants and promising confidentiality for all the candidates..."

The paper reported July 10 that the mayor had agreed to personally pay for the notices after the school board refused. It voted to make the mayor pay because it had not authorized the action and because the promise of confidentiality violated the

Public Records Act. The law says such applications are available to the public.

Editorial was stern

A laurel to *The Stewart-Houston Times*, Dover, for a sternly-worded editorial about how the mayor and the vice mayor "sought and obtained" the resignation of the city administrator. They are two members of the five-member Dover Board of Mayor and Aldermen. The paper polled the other three aldermen and found the development was news to "at least two of their three colleagues." The third member would not comment. The editorial said the mayor and vice mayor "brought public ridicule and suspicion upon their offices and the entire city government process."

Mayor apologized

A laurel to the *Polk County News*, Benton. At the end of its story June 22 on a sometimes-testy Copperhill City Council meeting there was a public apology. The News reported that Mayor Cecil "Arp apologized to the media present for trying to keep them from attending a meeting with the auditor last week. He said he had received a copy of the Sunshine Law and learned that any discussion that could lead to a recommendation or decision is open to the public."

Anybody noticed how "Sunshine" has become a proper adjective and noun?

FRANK GIBSON is TPA government affairs coordinator and executive director of the Tennessee Coalition for Open Government, a member-supported, non-profit organization working to improve and preserve access to public information. He can be reached at (615) 202-2685. Email: fgibson@tcog.info.

For open government, Haslam tells the Democrat

By **SANDY CAMPBELL**

Staff writer, *The Lebanon Democrat*

While visiting the offices of the Democrat [July 28], Gov. Bill Haslam reaffirmed his commitment to open records and open government.

"The more people understand, the more they benefit from government," he said.

Stressing that some government deliberations

should be kept private, such as negotiations to bring industry to the state, he said a "general rule is if it is to the benefit of state citizens to know, then it should be open."

Publisher Joe Adams reminded Haslam that there were 19 bills "targeted at our industry" in the last General Assembly. The governor replied that he has found publishers across the state united on that issue.

Should newspapers charge for obituaries?

The International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors (ISWNE) has posted a query to its membership asking about instituting a fee for publishing previously free obituaries.

The question that was posted on the hotline: "Come the first of the year we are going to start charging for obituaries, and I just wanted to check with you for some ideas. One area newspaper has a flat rate charge. Another charges by the character. Ideally, we would charge by the column inch or the line but we have to figure out how our funeral homes could figure those rates. ... Thanks in advance for your advice."

Some of the responses:

The 22 years Guy and I owned *The Chronicle* here in Angel Fire, N.M., we never charged for obits. Nor did we at our three other weeklies. We believed, and still do, that the milestones of one's life — birth, marriage, death —

deserve complimentary coverage. We often did extensive obits, on both the "prominent" and not so prominent. Every life has a story. My mom recently passed away and at a time of grief it seemed heartless when one newspaper charged over \$350 for a small obit (*The Denver Post* wanted over \$1,000 for that same obit!). Our hometown paper charged \$188.

One has to wonder when deaths stopped being news. Is there a trend to charge for other types of news? No wonder the public is angry with newspapers! Anytime you can (interact) with readers on a positive basis is the right time.

Working with a family to help get information for an obit can produce lasting good will for the paper.

If revenue is tight, sell more ads! Come up with a new special section. But please don't charge for obits.

Marcia Wood

Our obits continue to be free. Our major competitor, a daily, runs two to three pages of paid obits a day, so we figure we're doing our local readers a service. And as long as we have space, we publish with minimal editing. For significant deaths, we'll run the obit and do a news page story.

Mo Mehlsak

<http://theforecaster.net/>

We do not charge for obits or death notices. They are such a part of the news of our small county, that it seems akin to charging to run sports photos or school news. Until last year, we didn't charge for memorials either; but they got so out of hand that we had to start charging, much as we hate to. Most obits and memorials are for people we knew and loved. It's just a part of the small community experience. We have to help each other as much as we can.

Paula Barnett, Publisher
Woodruff County MONITOR

McCrory, Ark. We run obits free of charge at the Sounder, with a word count of 300. Anything over 300 gets edited or people can pay for space at standard display-ad rates. Haven't had anyone run one over 300 so far.

Derek Kilbourn
Editor, *Gabriola Sounder*

We may be a little higher, but we charge a flat \$100 for obits (up to 350 words - \$150 to 450 words), including picture, plus we sell them a thank you ad, if they want, for an additional charge.

It works well and we have plenty of them. It's still cheaper than running a simple death notice in the city daily paper, which is \$300-\$400 for an inch or two.

Kelly Clemmer
Editor-in-Chief
Star News Inc.

1 FOR ALL

1st 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.

Does the First Amendment apply to schools?

Yes. *The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Tinker v. Des Moines Independent School District that students do not "shed" their free-speech rights "at the schoolhouse gate." This means that public school students retain some level of free-expression rights, even during the school day.*

It's time to fix public records problem

Tax dollars, lives are at stake

BY DWIGHT LEWIS

For the Editorial Board
The Tennessean, Nashville

It's obvious: Taxpayers have a right to know how tax dollars are spent.

That's why it is disturbing that anyone searching for public records about the quality of health care

at a Tennessee drug and alcohol rehabilitation center is out of luck.

Tennesseans can no longer access inspection reports filed after so-called sentinel events, such as when a patient dies or has to be rushed to the hospital.

In a move that went largely unnoticed by legislators and advocates, the Tennessee rules governing residential drug and alcohol treatment centers were dramatically narrowed in 2008 after an executive order from former Gov. Phil Bredesen that shifted the inspection process from the Department of Health to the Department of Mental Health.

The move came to light during the investigation that led to a Tennessean



Lewis

story earlier this month about the September 2010 death of 29-year-old Lindsey Poteet, who became ill while a resident at the New Life Lodge, a residential drug rehab facility in Burns in Dickson County. The facility, about 30 miles outside Nashville, treats adults and youths.

The facility, which first opened in 1983, is owned by California-based CRC Health, which bought the operation for \$3.8 million in 2006. Between TennCare and state contracts with the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Children's Services, New Life Lodge benefits from about \$10 million annually in government funding, according to public records.

Under the new regulations, public records at Tennessee drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers are unavailable for more than emergency situations. Plans, staff qualifications, patient-staff ratios are among other things hidden from public view.

"It is troubling to learn the state has backed off regulatory oversight in health issues at rehab centers," state Sen. Jim Summerville, whose district is home to New Life Lodge, told reporter Nate Rau. "Someone needs to be sure such health care is first-rate."

It is indeed troubling when reports surfaced that three deaths occurred at New Life Lodge in 2010. Officials at the facility said earlier this month that only one death had occurred.

The public has a need to know and a right to know the facts — facts about the quality of health at New Life Lodge as well as other Tennessee drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers. And no one is asking for names of residents in each instance — state and federal confidentiality laws prohibit that.

Tennessee could use the Pennsylvania approach as a model for openness.

For example, an Allentown, Pa., facility's inspection results were described on a state website. "Based on a review of personnel records and an interview with the Quality Improvement Director and the Facility Director, the facility failed to ensure that each counselor met the qualifications for the position in two of fourteen records, as required."

The plan of correction said, "The personnel record for employee #21 is that she will receive close (weekly) supervision for the next 9.5 months."

It's time to fix this problem. In addition to tax dollars, lives are at stake.

(July 31, 2011)

Rural newspapers doing fine

BY AL CROSS

Institute for Rural Journalism
and Community Issues
Lexington, Ky.

"With newspaper ad sales falling at an unexpectedly abrupt rate, many publishers at mid-year were laying off staff, requiring unpaid furloughs, consolidating plants and taking other measures to buttress their bottom lines," Alan Mutter notes on his newspaper industry blog, Reflections of a Newsosaur. But he's writing about daily newspapers, mainly those in metropolitan areas.

In contrast, "Rural journalism is surviving, even thriving," Geoff McGhee writes for the Rural West Initiative of the Bill Lane Center for the American West at Stanford University. The writer of this blog item, the director of the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues,

was a major source for Lane's report. He uses our definition of community newspapers, those with circulations of less than 30,000. But his report is not mainly figures; he also writes about community journalists "developing a relationship with the local readers that some people say that mainstream journalism has lost, a relationship with all the complications that intimacy and proximity bring."

McGhee also relies on Judy Muller, a former ABC News reporter who is a professor at the University of Southern California, and her new book, *Emus Loose in Egnar: Big News from Small Towns*. And near the end of his 3,238-word article, he quotes a Mutter blog post from March 15, 2010 about the business side of rural newspapering, perhaps threatened less by the Internet than population loss and other demographic changes.

(July 8, 2011)

CORRECTIONS

In a photo on page one of the August edition of *The Tennessee Press*, Keith Whitson, publisher of *The Erwin Record*, was misidentified.

The Tennessee Press erred in a story about the President's Award recognizing the work of Gregg K. Jones, president and chief executive officer of Jones Media Inc.

On page 7 of the Summer Convention report, the newspaper stated that "He is a former member of the board of the Associated Press Managing Editors." Actually, Jones served seven years as a member of the board of directors of The Associated Press.

We regret the errors.

In defense of posed photos

COLUMNIST'S NOTE: This column is a departure from the norm. It was written years ago by my friend and colleague Ken Blum, who recently ran it again as part of his "Black Inklings" newsletter. Ken stated his case so logically, so convincingly that I asked him if I could reprint it. I believe it is a powerful reminder of our mission as journalists. I hope you will agree.

A good photojournalist is very much like his fellow journalists who write.

One uses a typewriter or computer to tell a story the best way he or she can, while the other uses a camera to accomplish the same purpose.

The professional photojournalist's goal is to capture pictures that do the best job of telling a story, that have bona fide visual impact and grasp the reader's attention.

Thus, it's not hard to understand why most newspaper photographers are adamantly opposed to assignments to take photos of people lined up against walls, check passings, speakers at podiums, groundbreakings and groups of people.

From most photojournalists' viewpoint, any picture that doesn't tell a story is a picture not worth the space it may occupy.

I can empathize with their line of thinking. As a former editor of a weekly newspaper, perhaps my favorite job was photography, and I was pretty good at it, winning awards from the Ohio Newspaper Association, Ohio Newspaper Photographers Association, National Newspaper Association, National Press Photographers Association and the National Association of Advertising Publishers.

I was asked to write a chapter about photography for the book *The Newspaper*, published by the

National Newspaper Foundation. In the chapter, I wrote extensively about what constitutes a good picture and how to handle good pictures effectively in a newspaper.

So it's with at least some degree of expertise that I'm going to respectfully disagree with the photojournalists and their associations who contend that any group or posed picture is a bad picture to run in a community newspaper.

I'm still as opposed as ever to pictures of check-passings or people lined up against a wall, etc. I

still genuinely appreciate the impact and value of a good news or feature picture.

But here's the confession of a former photojournalist: I sometimes encouraged group pictures and posed pictures to appear in the community newspapers I used to run.

Why? Because my audience, the readers of our products, like them. And it's my job to see that my audience is as happy as possible with the product they read



BY
DESIGN

Ed Henninger



Photos such as this may never win a Pulitzer Prize... but they are needed nevertheless.

every week.

A couple of cases in point:

In a recent issue of one of our weeklies, *The Holmes County Hub*, we ran 129 posed pictures of winners at our county fair. There was one group photo of 22 people (the fair queen and king and their court) run the full width of a page. There were pictures of kids with ducks, cows, rabbits, sheep, goats, pigs and chickens.

It was enough to give some photojournalists nightmares.

The month before, the same newspaper ran team pictures of 405 kids involved in the county's Little League program.

I know that there are many editors, photographers and contest judges who would insist that these pictures were a meaningless waste of valuable space.

But they didn't see the increase in newsstand sales during the weeks the pictures appeared. If readers are our audience, then these two issues played to a packed house. Why?

Because community journalism is personal journalism. Because those 400 little-leaguers have 4,000 moms and dads, aunts, uncles, cousins, teachers

and preachers who are interested in them.

In the personal world of a community newspaper, a picture of a human face is a picture that tells a story.

I don't in any way want to disparage the great work many dedicated photojournalists are contributing to community newspapers. Nobody appreciates a good picture in a newspaper more than I do. There are many times I still wish I was out there chasing fire trucks or climbing trees to get the perfect angle for a good feature photo. But when it comes to some types of posed pictures, some photographers need to chill out a bit and recognize their value to a community newspaper.

Writers at community papers recognize the value of "mundane" assignments such as the preparation of court news, coming events or the junior high-school honor role.

Photographers also need to realize that not all assignments will provide an opportunity for a Pulitzer Prize, but they are needed nevertheless.

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.

Newspaper discussions, visits along the way

BY KEVIN SLIMP
TPS technology director



Slimp

Talk about a busy week. After two days with the West Virginia Press Association in Morgantown, I've spent the past four days with Alyse Mitten, executive director of Mid-Atlantic Community Papers Association, driving through Ohio and Pennsylvania. It's one of those trips where regional training events are held on college campuses and training facilities for area newspaper staffs.

It's a longer trip than usual, with lots of traveling built in. I normally don't do these long trips any more, scheduling most of my out-of-state travel on weekends, but Alyse booked this adventure three years ago and I wasn't about to let her down.

On the first day of our journey, Alyse had an idea that, in my humble opinion, was quite innovative.

In addition to the scheduled training events, she decided to contact publishers along the seven-hour route between Mansfield, Ohio and Philadelphia, Pa. and ask if they'd like to host gatherings around meals. This provided us the opportunity to meet with their staffs and discuss anything that might be on their minds.

I was surprised when, at the first stop in New Castle, Pa., Karen Hutchinson and 20 of her employees showed up at Compadres Mexican Restaurant full of excitement about the opportunity to discuss the future of our industry. It was late in the evening and I didn't expect more than a couple of folks to show up.

Karen giggled as she explained to me that she told her staff a few hours earlier that I was coming to town and any of them were welcome to join us for dinner. I laughed. I laughed harder when Mark, the paper's editor, handed a magazine to me and asked if I would autograph the page with my column.

I've been asked to sign Acrobat boxes, programs, shirts and all kinds of items during my travels, but it still takes me by surprise whenever it happens.

The discussion turned to business very quickly. We spent over an hour discussing the paper's online presence and strategizing what could be done to draw more visitors and advertisers to the site.

We held healthy discussions concerning technical issues like color settings to improve their photo quality, best ways to create PDF files and the need to upgrade some of the software and hardware being used.

At one point I turned to Karen, who was sitting next to me, and asked her to tell me how she got started in the business. We laughed when she told me about typing the stories on a typewriter and using stencils for the headlines. She beamed when she talked about their first computer: an Apple



ALYSE MITTEN | MID-ATLANTIC COMMUNITY PAPERS ASSOCIATION

Kevin found himself signing autographs in August in New Castle, Pa. Here, he autographs his column in Ink Magazine for Mark Beers, a newspaper editor in New Castle.

classic with a nine-inch screen. She and her late husband, Frank, couldn't figure out how to use the computer to create pages. Luckily their 13-year-old son figured it out and they were in the digital age at last.

I asked Karen how business was going and, like most publishers I visit these days, she told me they were having a good year. It's always comforting to hear that.

Frank Jr., Karen's son and the paper's publisher, turned the topic to revenue. He said he'd heard that I sometimes spoke at conferences on the topic of making money on newspaper websites. He was eager to hear my ideas.

I quickly transformed from Kevin the dinner guest to Kevin the lecturer and shared some ideas sent to me from readers of my column. I noticed several people around the long table frantically writing notes as I suggested possible ways to increase revenue on their site.

After learning how their current website was created and maintained, I suggested moving immediately to a vendor who could greatly enhance their product in just a few days. Time was wasting and they had new online

competition in their community.

"Don't spend another year or two trying to create your own perfect website," I told them. "Find a content management vendor that can get a better, easy to use, site online within the next few days."

More frantic writing followed. Fortunately, all I had to do was talk.

Two nights later, I met with a group of publishers and newspaper lobbyists in Allentown, Pennsylvania. It was interesting to see that the factories that were torn down in the Billy Joel song are now casinos.

Our discussion focused on the future of our industry and everyone agreed that things are definitely looking up this year. That's always good news. I thought about our newspapers in Tennessee that are doing redesigns, installing new equipment, training their staffs and more. It also dawned on me that we have a record number of TPA members attending the Institute of Newspaper Technology this year.

My enthusiasm about our business is fueled when I take a trip like this. Meeting so many people who are excited about the role of newspapers in their communities and looking for ideas

to move into the future provides an adrenaline rush that's hard to match.

On July 28, I had the opportunity to visit with the *Herald and Tribune* staff in Jonesborough. It was just a few weeks before that I was with the folks at *The Lebanon Democrat*. It's exciting to see our members investing in the future.

From my travels this year, it seems apparent that community newspapers are beginning to move past the negativity of the past three years. I loved talking with Victor Parkins at the TPA Summer Convention and hearing about the great year they're having. It seems I'm involved in more conversations like this over the past few months.

I had a chance to visit with Ken Blum recently. You may know Ken from his guide on running a newspaper, *Black Ink: The Book*.

Ken and I are friends and he, with a lot of other experts, was quick to predict the end of printed newspapers a few years back. If memory serves me correctly (and I'm pretty sure it does), Ken and I sat next to each other in a meeting in Atlanta three years ago when he predicted that the printed newspaper would be a thing of the past within 10 years.

Ken contacted me last week because he is speaking on this topic at an upcoming conference. He said he's going to serve as both the prosecuting and defense attorneys in a mock trial concerning the future of newspapers. He asked if I could provide some quotes that he could use to promote the idea that printed newspapers have a future. You can bet I sent him plenty. He said he'd be using them.

We have a full house for the Institute of Newspaper Technology next month. A record number of TPA members will be present, along with publishers and staffs representing newspapers all over the U.S. It's going to be a great three days.

If you're interested in on-site training for your staff, November and December are the easiest months of the year to find available dates. Contact me at [kslump@tnpress.com](mailto:kslimp@tnpress.com) and we'll make it happen.

In October, I will be representing TPA in Memphis, teaching classes at University of Memphis and speaking at a couple of events open to the public. These are related to the topics of print and online journalism. If you're in the area and interested in attending, contact Thomas Hrach at the School of Journalism for more information. His email is thrach@memphis.edu.

HOW TO 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)

Greg Sherrill (gsherrill)

Kevin Slimp (kslump)

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

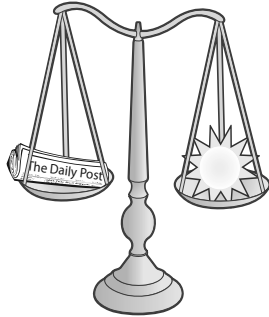
Tennessee Press Association Foundation

Mail: 435 Montbrook Lane, Knoxville, TN 37919

Phone: (865) 584-5761

Fax: (865) 558-8687

Web: www.tnpress.com



Have questions about the Sunshine Law, Open Meetings Law or other legal matters of concern to newspapers?

**Member newspapers can call
Richard L. (Rick) Hollow on the
TPA LEGAL HOTLINE
at (865) 769-1715**

NAM looks at press association business model

BY GREG SHERRILL
TPA executive director

I joined 42 newspaper association executive directors from states and provinces across North America August 2-5 in Branson, Mo. for the 88th annual Newspaper Association Managers Conference.



Sherrill

With our industry in tremendous flux, our topics of discussion centered around looking at the press association business model to make sure that we were meeting the needs of our member publications. While there are significant differences among states, and especially with our Canadian counterparts, most of the services we provide on a state level through some combination of membership associations, press services and foundations are really quite similar. It's very unusual to find an issue or problem that isn't simultaneously being worked through in at least one other state.

During the past few years, the importance of revenue generation has

gradually taken a back seat to public policy and efforts to protect public notices. With the economy in worse shape than we've seen in a few decades, governments are taking drastic steps to reduce spending, and government officials have been quick to put public notices on the chopping block under the guise of saving a few dollars. In some cases these have been well-intentioned attempts at cost cutting, but in many cases the underlying goal is to permit government to operate in secrecy or even to take downright punitive actions against newspapers.

We all agree that our most important role at this time is to fight back these attacks on public notices and to do a better job of building public support for the effort. This will take a heavy dose of education, as many states are finding an increasingly apathetic or ill-informed public when it comes to the perils of ending printed public notice.

We did a lot of strategy sharing of things that worked in other states, and also shared descriptions of the many ways state and local governments are attacking public notices, freedom of information or access issues. We all need to know what to watch out for in our respective states.

Another common problem comes from within. Newspapers have been so quick to report drops in newspaper circulation and problems with our own business models that many readers now see newspapers as a dying industry. This is not, in fact, the case at all. A closer look at our expanding online readership shows tremendous growth. Newspapers across the country, large and small, are putting up paywalls to protect their valuable content. And many community newspapers are now posting print circulation gains!

One speaker suggested that we counsel members against listing their product price for under a dollar, saying that we've conditioned readers for decades that that's all a newspaper is worth. He wasn't advocating a dramatic increase in subscription revenue, but instead that we find some way to better assign a value to the tremendous amount of local coverage and investigative journalism found in newspapers and nowhere else.

We looked at several new ways that newspapers are reaching out to a more diverse group of readers, such as tablets, mobile phone apps, online videos and social networking. With such a tremendous overload of

information, newspapers will need to shift to become news sources and supply content in all these different forms. And more. Going back to the economy, newspapers have become increasingly important in the delivery of coupons and helping our readers stay on tight budgets.

"When the Sunday paper arrives at my house it's like someone dropped \$200 in my driveway," said acclaimed coupon expert Jill Cataldo on ABC World News recently.

No one knows exactly how newspapers will expand to serve all these information delivery possibilities. But we learned that these are discussions that we should be having NOW with our members so that we can change with the industry and continue to serve its needs. Change can be both exciting and a little scary, and state press associations are determined to be in a position to help members along every step of the way.

Greg Sherrill is a member of the board of NAM.

See awards section

This issue of *The Tennessee Press* includes a special 28-page section on newspapers and people winning awards in the UT-TPA State Press Contests.

'Snuffy Smith' cartoonist visits 'kin' in East Tennessee

John Rose, "Snuffy Smith" cartoonist, paid a visit to the *News Sentinel*, Knoxville, June 27, and the turnout confirmed that East Tennesseans are proud to be hillbillies.

The facts developed over two or three months after *News Sentinel* Editor Jack McElroy asked readers in January to take a survey to "share their thoughts" about the comics.

McElroy reported in March the results of the survey, including that "Zits" and "Pickles" were favorites but that "Snuffy Smith" was one readers didn't feel passionate about. He said the newspaper would be retiring "Snuffy."

Soon thereafter, though, McElroy announced a turnaround.

"Response to cancellation of the strip was such that we've decided to bring the old hillbilly back," the editor reported.

"Among the calls, emails and letters I received was one from John Rose, the cartoonist who now draws Snuffy. He said he'd never written to a newspaper before but was moved to do so this time."

Rose wrote, "I've always felt a special connection to your readers in the Smoky Mountains area of Tennessee. Not only is my strip set in the mountains, but I live in Virginia and, since my teenage years, I've vacationed very often in Pigeon Forge."

Rose said he felt a true kinship with East Tennessee and hoped the *News Sentinel* would reinstate his comic strip. He went on to offer to visit the *News Sentinel* and do an art-signing event

at the newspaper.

"Who could resist such a gracious letter and offer?" McElroy said. He promised that "Snuffy" would return in April and that the paper would invite Rose to visit.

Staff members filed the following story the day after Rose's visit.

Dozens of comic strip fans at a reception (June 28) were eager to tell cartoonist John Rose that ain't much better 'n his beloved hillbilly character Snuffy Smith.

The longtime syndicated strip was set to be dropped from the pages of the *News Sentinel* a few months ago until an outpouring of letters and phone calls persuaded Editor Jack McElroy to keep the whiskered Smith running.

"He's probably the epitome of country writing, because of the language he uses," said Richard Arnold of Knoxville, one of many local fans who caught an autograph from Rose during his appearance at the *News Sentinel* offices.

Arnold, a 70-year-old retired TVA engineer, said he's followed the comic strip since he was old enough to read. And he was one of many fans who voiced their support for keeping Snuffy.

"I hope they keep this up, I really do," Arnold said.

The comic started as "Barney Google" by Billy DeBeck in 1919. Cartooning legend Fred Lasswell took over in 1942 after DeBeck's death and shifted the strip's focus to Snuffy. Rose, who started out as an inking assistant on the strip in 1988, has continued to produce the comic since Lasswell's death in 2001.



PHOTOS BY PAUL EFIRD | NEWS SENTINEL, KNOXVILLE

(Left) Annette Newport of Wartburg waits in line to meet "Snuffy Smith" cartoonist John Rose at the *News Sentinel*. She said she loves the comic strip because the characters "sound like I talk." (Right) Cartoonist John Rose greets fans. "I'm very surprised and thankful," Rose said of the turnout.

Snuffy currently appears in 500 newspapers published in 11 countries, including Norway, where a collection of reprinted strips is published each year.

"I'm very surprised and very thankful," Rose said of the turnout (June 27). "I think it has such strong characters that people really love. That's what's kept it popular for so long. I think the strip can go on and on."

Not everyone at the Monday appearance was a longtime fan,

though.

Nine-year-old Hannah Lee, already a regular Snuffy reader and a budding cartoonist, came by with her parents, Jason and Kristie Lee of Knoxville, to get an autograph and share some of her own artwork with Rose, who encouraged her to keep being creative.

(Based on items by Editor Jack McElroy, Features Editor Susan Alexander and *News Sentinel* staff members.)

TPAF 
GOAL: \$1,000,000

Foundation Campaign 2011-16

HILLBILLY

\$113,500
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