

# The Tennessee Press

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## Richardson named MVP eastern group publisher

**SUBMITTED**  
**Buffalo River Review**  
**May 13, 2020**

Daniel Richardson has been named group publisher of the eastern division of Magic Valley Publishing Co. (MVP).

The group is made up of seven newspapers in West and Middle Tennessee, including the Buffalo River Review, Shopper News/Family Classifieds, Crockett County Times, Carroll County News-Leader, Camden Chronicle, Waverly News-Democrat, and the Wayne County News.

Scott Whaley, who is the former



Richardson

owner of the Chester County Independent, is group publisher over the western division of the company.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to serve these communities in this way," Richardson said. "I'm looking forward to helping grow these newspapers and communities in the coming months."

Prior to this appointment, Richardson served MVP as Chief Operations Officer and publisher

of the Carroll County News-Leader. He will continue to fill these roles in addition to new responsibilities.

Daniel is the youngest son of Dennis and Lisa Richardson, with Dennis having founded Magic Valley Publishing Co. in 1983.

Daniel is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps and a 2012 graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin.

He resides in Camden with his wife, Lena, and three daughters: Emmalyn, 7, Elizabeth, 5, and Ella, 2.

He is a member of the Camden Church of Christ, the Camden Rotary Club, and is president-elect of

the Tennessee Press Association.

Magic Valley Publishing is a publisher of newspapers and news websites in West and Middle Tennessee, including those mentioned above, and seven more: The Bartlett Express, Millington Star, Shelby Sun-Times, Collierville Herald-Independent, Covington Leader, Chester County Independent, and Lake County Banner.

The company was founded in 1983 with the purchase of a single newspaper in Huntingdon.

The company also offers digital advertising products as well as a full suite of business printing and promotional materials and apparel.

## A formidable balancing act: Weighing our profession and community's needs vs. the need to take care of ourselves

*Editor's note: This column originally appeared in the April edition of the National Newspaper Association's Publisher's Auxiliary and is republished here with the permission of its author, Jackie Spinner. Her background includes 14 years as a staff writer with the Washington Post, including time as war correspondent in the Middle East.*

My physical world, like many of ours, has become smaller in recent weeks even as my digital world has expanded. I'm working from home, and as an editor, I don't have to be out reporting in the community to do my job. I can minimize the risks of exposure (for me and my family) to the coronavirus.

Mark Busch hasn't been able to do that. The photo editor for the DeKalb Daily Chronicle in northern Illinois is still going out to document the coronavirus pandemic, including a recent assignment to photograph two children at home who were supposed to be at Disney World for one of their birthdays. He just finished working 12 days without a break.



**GUEST COLUMN**

JACKIE SPINNER

"When I chose photojournalism as a career I knew to expect long days and the occasional seven day work-week, but never did I think potentially risking my health would be part of the job, especially here in the Midwest," Busch said.

He told me it's unlike any story he's covered in his 28-year career.

This story is unlike any most of us have covered in our careers. But something about this also feels familiar to me.

For months at a time when I was reporting for The Washington Post in Iraq, I was stuck in our bureau in Baghdad. It was dangerous for Western journalists to leave our guarded perimeter because we were targets for kidnapping. Iraqis

who traveled with us were in danger because of their association with a U.S. media organization. It was safer for our Iraqi correspondents to go alone and they often did, reporting for us much of the time. When I did go out, I was constantly on guard, scanning faces for potential threats, watching vehicles that got too close. I also was afraid of getting blown up.

It wasn't ideal to cover a story this way, relying on someone else to report from the community where I was holed up in a fortified house with a garden and a swing set. It didn't feel like journalism without seeing for myself what was happening, without looking at someone while I was interviewing them, watching body language, asking follow-up questions or pivoting based on a response. It was frustrating being in a war zone, itself a danger, and not really being able to cover the people living with the war.

Unlike some of the other major media organizations, The Washington Post gave credit to our

Iraqi team members who were out in the streets. They got by-lines if they wanted them. We also took their safety seriously and supported them as best as we could with the gear they needed. After the U.S. correspondents left, after the story shifted to another part of the world and our bureau closed, we wrote letters of support for their refugee and immigrant applications. Once they arrived in America, many of us kept in touch, checking up on each other, telling stories of shared experiences, remembering.

Not everyone was physically okay. Not everyone was mentally okay.

PTSD seemed like a tornado that destroyed three houses in a row and left one, miraculously, mysteriously, untouched. I was nearly destroyed by post traumatic stress and yet managed to emerge after a year or two of complete misery to a shining sun that awaited me.

There are lessons in this for

See **SPINNER** Page 4

# The Tennessee Press

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TPAers with suggestions, questions or comments about items in The Tennessee Press are welcome to contact the managing editor. Call Mike Towle, (615) 293-5771; send a note to 118 East Kingwood Drive, Suite F16, Murfreesboro, TN 37130, or email editor@tnpress.com. The deadline for the August 2020 issue is July 7.

# We don't yet know what we don't know

Three months-plus into the most wrenching, life-changing story of a generation, an observation by a former U.S. secretary of defense sticks in my mind.

“... There are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know,” Donald Rumsfeld said in 2002.

“But there are also unknown unknowns — the ones we don't know we don't know. And if one looks throughout the history of our country and other free countries, it is the latter category that tends to be the difficult ones.”

Notwithstanding the heat Rumsfeld got for that statement back then, it sure feels like that's where we are in the midst of a global pandemic that has turned our world upside down. Everyone is trying to sift through what we do know (social isolation, contact tracing and wearing a mask helps) and what we know we don't know (Is there immunity? What are the long-term health effects of COVID-19?).

I circle back to Rumsfeld's statement as I talk with other editors and reporters, whose responsibility is to help readers make sense of



**YOUR  
PRESIDING  
REPORTER**

CHRIS VASS

COVID-19 in useful, knowledgeable, trustworthy ways and to hold elected officials accountable for their decisions large and small in this pandemic. Because, as painful as it is to remind ourselves, this journey will be a long one; we just don't know what we don't know, and we won't for a long time.

So in uncharted territory we toil; and yet, in acknowledging discomfort and uncertainty, we can tap our confidence in what we do know: Our readers want and need information. Compiled and curated by local news teams that they have come to trust, that they know we have their interests first and foremost.

It's what we do know about our own communities that prompted TPA Executive Director Carol Daniels to set up what we expect to be a regular set of Zoom calls with member paper publishers, advertising directors and editors to

share ideas about what is working in stressful times.

“It's been rough. I wanted to create opportunities for everyone to be talking, to be chatting about what they are doing,” she said. “And yes, it's also kind of therapeutic.”

The idea exchanges proved that TPA members are meeting the challenges of covering their communities, when nothing, absolutely nothing, is normal, and working hard to stem the financial hurt.

Beefing up online content and strengthening the digital offerings are critical right now. TPA member papers are working hard at this — at a time when resources are thinner than they were just a few months ago. This makes sense and helps lay groundwork for a solid digital future.

In content areas, creative thinking prevails. No traditional high school graduations this year? OK. The Tri-State Defender of Memphis planned to publish valedictorian speeches. The paper also was on the ball at the outset of the pandemic when it chose three local people to follow during the COVID-19 crisis with updates on what they have been experiencing. One is a barber, one has

See **VASS** Page 4

# Readers value great content delivered digitally

I wish there were a magic pill Unfortunately, as we all know, there is not. Interestingly enough, while advertising revenue has plummeted, readership is at an all-time high, especially on digital platforms.

While many newspapers have placed coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic in front of their paywalls or meters, that does not mean they should stop aggressively seeking content-based revenue — e.g., print and digital subscriptions.

Reader revenue is our future, and it must be a conscious business model decision to value our content, get a fairer price for that content in print and online, and rely less on legacy ROP and pre-print advertising revenue.

An aggressive subscription or membership model will not offset sharp declines in print advertising revenue, but it can go a long way toward creating a sustainable model for our future, long after COVID-19.

Newspaper companies and locally owned papers must take an “all-



**GUEST  
COLUMN**

JIM ZACHARY

in” approach in marketing printed and digital products, and it's a steep climb. Audience development can no longer just be the work of legacy circulation departments. We must be honest with our readers about the challenges we face and encourage them to support strong local journalism through their subscriptions or memberships.

What all of this should mean to newspaper publishers is that the work journalists do has never been more crucial to the overall business model than it is now, which is why we must have the highest standards for our coverage and produce local content at extremely high levels.

Adding products to your digital sales inventory that augment the local journalism are a wise move. For examples: (1) daily or twice-daily email newsletters with sponsorship ads can produce a steady revenue stream while keeping readers informed and loyal to your products; (2) niche email newsletters can target a specific audience and produce the same results; (3) adding a text alert or push notification tool creates brand loyalty and can be sponsored by an advertiser as well, producing recurring ad revenue while building a subscriber base.

As hard as it is to say, our future is not in retail advertising. It is in getting more revenue from fewer readers by producing extremely high quality content that readers will value and are willing to pay a premium for in the long run.

Jim Zachary is CNHI deputy national editor and editor of The Valdosta Daily Times.

# TPA members showing fierce determination amid crisis

First things first, how are you doing? I hope you, your families, and your team members have been staying safe, washing your hands, and wearing those darn masks! And most of all, I hope you have been able to remain positive during your efforts to manage through this public health crisis.

These are strange and difficult times, all the more so because each day seems to bring a different challenge and a new uncertainty for our businesses and the readers and communities we serve.

I'm certain I have spent more time talking with members over the past couple of months than I did before we began social distancing and state-imposed, stay-at-home orders. I feel like I should whisper this, but, honestly, I've enjoyed this unintended consequence of the crisis. I love connecting with each of you, no matter the reason, please keep the calls coming!

As I write this, the state is starting to lift the "stay at home order," and many of us are a bit conflicted with the decision, a conflict shared by many of our readers and customers. Everybody has cabin fever and is ready to get out and about, but many Tennesseans are concerned that our weeks spent apart to "flatten the



**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

CAROL DANIELS

curve" and prevent a surge of hospital admissions will have been in vain as people return blithely to work, life and play. I have been stunned to read news reports of people reacting violently to being told they must disperse to "social distance" or wear a mask. "Mask shaming" is going to be a thing for a while . . . these are new and strange times!

During this crisis, I have seen fierce determination from our member newspapers in the way you are adapting to the changing times. Every one of you have shown how important your newspapers and websites are to your communities. You've created new sources of revenue. You've adapted to new ways of covering local government and schools. You've worked with your customers and community to advertise and publicize business closures, new hours of operation, new ways of doing business like takeout and curb delivery. And you've helped your readers to adapt in many

different ways.

Every day seems to bring on a new challenge, and you are stepping up for your communities and finding ways to deal with the challenges. As I said last month, I am inspired by each of you.

We all have jobs to perform and figuring out how to accomplish them on a daily basis takes a lot out of us. Before COVID 19 most of us were in offices, had the opportunity to banter back and forth with co-workers, bounce ideas, and quite frankly feel part of a team. Working from home creates challenges, most of you have implemented daily calls, "Zoom" calls, emails, and just about any way you can think of to keep everyone on the same page on assignments and coverage.

For myself, lifting the "stay at home order" causes mixed emotions. Like you, I want to get back to a "new normal." I miss people . . . I really miss seeing faces. But I know from reading our coverage that getting back to "normal" is not so simple. Any re-opening will likely increase the risks and increase the number of infections and COVID-19 cases. What to do? Your communities NEED you now more than ever, to connect them, to keep them informed, to continue to give them a sense of

community. These quarantines have exposed so many issues in our communities and created them, too. The precarious state of mental health for so many in our communities is a prime example, and an essential reason why your communities need you.

I think it's important that we each take a moment now and then to be sure we are well, that our coworkers are well, that our families are well, and that our community is, too.

Please stay safe, continue being the champions of your community, wear masks to protect you and your neighbors, continue washing your hands and make sure you are taking time to check in with your coworkers and taking time to make sure you, too, are staying positive as we move forward with our "new normal."

There will be many versions of what "new normal" looks like, I know that TPA member newspapers will continue to champion the versions that work for our readers, customers and communities.

Thank you!

Carol

*Carol Daniels is executive director of the Tennessee Press Association.*

## FOR YOUR CALENDAR

### June 2020

18: TPA Zoom video meetings for publishers, editors, ad directors

### July 2020

17: Concurrent TPA Board of Directors Meeting and TPA Business Session (All members) via Zoom.

### August 2020

27-30: 2020 Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) Annual Conference, Gaylord National, National Harbor, Md.

30: Deadline for Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame nominations

### September 2020

24-25: 2020 Tennessee Press Association 150th Anniversary Summer Convention and Advertising/Circulation Conference, Music Road Resort, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

### October 2020

1-3: National Newspaper Association's 134th Annual Convention and Trade Show, Hyatt Regency, Jacksonville, Fla.

4-6: 2020 Annual Meeting of America's Newspapers, Watergate Hotel, Washington, D.C.

21-25: College Media Association Fall National College Media Convention 2020, in conjunction with Associated Collegiate Press, Atlanta Hyatt Regency, Atlanta, Ga.

### March 2021

9-14: Spring National College Media Convention 2021, New York Marriott Marquis, New York, N.Y.

### June 2021

23-26: 2021 Tennessee • Arkansas • Mississippi Press Associations Tri-State Convention, Memphis.

### October 2021

14-17: Fall National College Media Convention 2021, offered in conjunction with Associated Collegiate Press, New Orleans, LA, Sheraton New Orleans

## NEWS

### Chronicle goes to two days a week

The Crossville Chronicle has been the community's primary news source since 1886, providing relevant news and other information you need and want. The current coronavirus crisis coverage has underscored the importance of that responsibility.

However, the sudden loss of advertising business has caused us to restructure our resources so we can continue to fulfill our mission.

Readership changes, newsprint prices, print production expenses and delivery costs have resulted in many community newspapers publishing fewer days of the week to remain economically viable in the future.

Effective immediately, we are reducing publishing and delivering the printed newspaper to two days

a week (Tuesday and Friday) instead of three days. News features you have enjoyed on Wednesday will now be published on Tuesday and/or Friday, and always online at [www.crossville-chronicle.com](http://www.crossville-chronicle.com).

Discontinuing one print day of the Crossville Chronicle will allow us to focus our resources on producing more local news more timely on [www.crossville-chronicle.com](http://www.crossville-chronicle.com), our seven-day online news website, as well as more in-depth coverage in print on Tuesday and Friday.

We understand reducing the number of days of publication will change readers' reading habits. For that, we apologize. It is a significant change for us, too, in the way we gather and deliver your news.

As an essential service to the community, we are continuing our critical coronavirus coverage

available free to everybody on our website and through news alerts.

*Crossville Chronicle  
May 5, 2020*

### TPA Board Meeting, Business Session set for July 17

TPA President Chris Vass has called a concurrent Board of Directors Meeting and Business Session for Friday, July 17 via a Zoom video conference at 11:00 a.m. EDT/ 10:00 a.m. CDT.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the summer convention where this meeting is usually held was delayed. However, there is business to conduct.

All member newspapers will be invited to participate in the Business Session, which includes the election of officers and directors.

### Call to update directory listings

The call to update your newspaper's listing in the 2020 Tennessee Newspaper Directory was mailed at the end of May. The deadline to return corrections is Tuesday, June 30.

You may also update your listing by sending an email with changes to Robyn Gentile, member services manager, at [rgentile@tnpress.com](mailto:rgentile@tnpress.com).

### Former CA building to be Memphis emergency hospital

The former Commercial Appeal building at 495 Union Ave. was to be Memphis' second COVID-19

See **NEWS** Page 5

# Advertising will always be a problem-solving business

When I heard the doorbell ring that Saturday afternoon, I did something I had never done before. I bought something from a door-to-door salesperson.

It was a pest control representative who was canvassing the neighborhood for new business. The logo on his bright green golf shirt matched his truck in the driveway. He introduced himself and said, "I see you have a vole problem. Have you tried anything?"

"How do you know there's a vole problem?" I asked.

"When I got out of the truck, I noticed the spongy ground next to the driveway. That's an obvious sign."

In just a few seconds, he had identified a problem. Obviously, he knew what he was doing. "You're right," I said. "We've had voles



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JOHN FOUST

in our yard for several years. A company has been working on the problem, but that doesn't seem to be helping."

Voles are small mole-like rodents that burrow underground and feast on the bulbs and roots of plants.

The ground in an infested area is spongy, because their tunnels are close to the surface. A mating pair can produce up to 100 voles in a year. In other words, if voles settle in your yard, you'll have a lot of

them in a short period of time.

That salesperson caught me at the right time to make a sale, because he was observant. He knew without a doubt that there was a problem that needed to be solved. He said his company had a special treatment which was proven to have impressive results. I agreed to let them give it a try. Within a few weeks after their first treatment, we could tell a difference. Although the treatments haven't eliminated the problem completely (can anything do that?), it has dramatically reduced the infestation.

His approach illustrated the importance of being observant. His company's customer database probably revealed information about neighborhoods with vole problems. And he looked for symptoms when

he pulled into the driveway

Although selling advertising is not quite like selling pest control services, there are a number of things to observe before approaching an advertising prospect. Here are a few examples:

1. **History.** What promotions has your prospect run in past years? What were the results? What lessons can be learned?

2. **Time of year.** Is there a prime buying season for the widgets your prospect sells? People usually don't buy lawnmowers in the winter or snowblowers in the summer.

3. **News stories.** Have they announced the addition of a new product line? Is there going to be a grand opening of a new location? Has there been an ownership change?

4. **Ads in other media.** Are they

running ads in other advertising outlets? That's a clear sign that they have a marketing budget and might be open to other ideas.

5. **Competitors.** What products and services are currently being promoted by their competitors? They're running those ads now for a reason. Maybe you could follow their example.

Who knows? One of these ideas might ring a bell.

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## SPINNER from Page 1

community newspapers whose videographers and photographers are on the frontlines of the pandemic, for our brothers and sisters in broadcast news whose camera people and reporters are still out covering the coronavirus.

There are lessons for us who are able to work from home even if it's not always easy within our protected walls.

The lesson is grace.

The lesson is compassion.

The lesson is care.

Managers need to take particular care of their frontline reporters and photographers, supplying the tools they need to protect themselves and sending a message that risk can and should be calculated. They should not ask their photographers and reporters to go inside people's homes. They should not ask that they get closer than they

feel comfortable. No one should feel as if their career depends on them taking risks to tell this story. My own publisher, Don Graham, told me when I left for Iraq the first time that no story was worth my life. I knew he meant it, and I carried his care with me into a different battlefield.

No story is worth exposing our team members to the coronavirus or to putting our communities further at risk even as we pledge—and we should, to stay on the story, to give people information that is vetted and fact-checked and put into context. All of that is important to combat this nonsense that coronavirus is a media hoax.

But this is hard. Many of us are trying to work while also caring for family members and home-schooling our children. Some of our colleagues are still reporting in the community and worrying about bringing the virus home. Or worry

about getting sick, and if they do, how bad it will be.

We need to be compassionate. Based on our individual life experiences, based on our biological make-up, based on whether we have experienced trauma in the past, we will all react differently to the threat of the coronavirus. It's okay to be scared and frightened; it's okay to be a little overwhelmed by the uncertainty, and that's a message we need to send to each other.

The mothers and fathers on our team need extra compassion. The young members of our team who are isolated from friends need our compassion. We need compassion.

## VASS from Page 2

food businesses at the airport and one works for a nonprofit. That's a great way to put a face on the crisis, which helps connect this awful pandemic with real people.

With live sports events gone, newspapers have found ways to cover "sports" in ways that do not involve balls and bats. More features about athletes, for example. Editor consensus — perhaps surprising — is that engagement is up! Who'd think it? That could spell permanent changes in how sports departments choose to cover their beats in the future.

The Johnson City Press has focused on keeping the faces of people on their front page every day. Drive-by birthday parties and other

This is a time to take care of each other, to listen, to pull back on the demands. Your news operation will not crumble if you do. Our news operation in Baghdad did not fall apart when we were kind to each other and cut each other some slack on the days we just couldn't muster the courage to take another risk. Or when we were tired. Or when we missed home.

I learned grace being a journalist in a war zone, a grace that was hardest to offer myself. It's not easy to balance this real responsibility we feel to our profession and to our communities with the need to take care of ourselves. We need to

remind ourselves that it's okay to stop to play a round of Candyland with a 3-year-old. We need to know that our supervisors understand, that our colleagues understand. We can be that supervisor. We can be that colleague.

On the other side of this, the world will have changed. But we will have changed, too. That's a story we will eventually write. But we don't have to write it today.

Jackie Spinner, a former staff writer for *The Washington Post*, is a filmmaker and associate professor of journalism at Columbia College Chicago.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### GM/Sales Manager Positions Available

Skill sets required: Leadership, management, understanding of newspapers, revenue focused, goal oriented, motivated, sales experience, hard worker, great attitude, ready to work!

Send resume with salary expectations to job512541@gmail.com

Post your newspaper's open positions at [www.tnpress.com](http://www.tnpress.com).

celebrations with appropriate social distancing are the norm today and a great way to connect with readers.

In the sales world, ad grant strategies are being used to attract and retain business. Some papers are offering a "buy now, get the free ads" later strategy. One call participant said they have upsized ads for customers who have stuck with them.

Publishers, of course, have to see the big picture and are stretching to meet conflicting goals — reader interest vs. bottom line solvency.

Yep, there have been some furloughs. Some have made the difficult choice to cut days of publication; some are shifting to postal service delivery to cut expenses.

Monthly Zoom calls won't solve all of our problems, for sure.

But they provide a way for TPA members to stay connected, to exchange ideas, to get a booster shot of encouragement. I hope more papers will participate. We must remain connected and united.

In all of this, transparency with our readers is critical. We have to remind them of our commitment to our core values. We have to share with our subscriber family the challenges we face, the difficult choices that sometimes must be made, and the fact that we don't know what we don't know quite yet. It is uncomfortable, but if there is any business that can handle discomfort, it is ours.

Chris Vass is president of the Tennessee Press Association. Email her at [cvass@timesfreepress.com](mailto:cvass@timesfreepress.com).

# You need to be reading your own website

Digital platforms go a long way toward leveling the playing field among daily and nondaily newspapers. Even the smallest of newsrooms can compete with their larger counterparts by posting news as it happens, and then directing readers to print editions for more complete reports.

The value of immediate and continuing reports has escalated during the coronavirus pandemic. Your stories are critical to keeping readers abreast of information valuable to navigating this crisis.

One principle remains, however, whether posting news on print or digital platforms, whether reporting in ordinary or extraordinary times: Reports must be timely and relevant. It is more important than ever to keep websites up to date as newspapers are reducing the frequency of, or eliminating altogether, their print editions as part of cost-cutting measures.

Editors can readily identify those stories that stand out in the daily churn and warrant additional exposure. I remember reprinting an editorial that struck a chord when first published. It was reprinted to stir the waters again when similar circumstances resurfaced. But would you run the same editorial on consecutive days, weeks, even months?

Here's one sampling from a regular scan of newspaper websites that should make any editor groan:

- The top headline under "trending news" reports a foot of fresh snowfall. Weather is always on people's minds. The story, unfortunately, was a month old and readers were looking outside at green grass.

- An editorial page displays the newspaper's election endorsements. I applaud editorial endorsements; I regard them as an exercise of a newspaper's highest responsibility. The editorials,



## COMMUNITY NEWSROOM SUCCESS

JIM PUMARLO

however, were advancing recommendations for the November 2018 elections.

- A newspaper's home page is dominated with photos of the 20-plus candidates originally vying for the Democratic presidential nomination. They remained there for at least three months and were not removed until nearly a week after the race was narrowed to Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders.

- A home page carries breaking news of a professional sports team being bounced from the playoffs. The headline was posted Monday; the playoff loss was Saturday.

- An editorial encourages the community to support the school referendum. It remained the lead editorial three months after the fact.

Digital platforms admittedly can be a blessing and a curse. They present the opportunity to be timely and compete in the 24/7 news cycle. They also challenge staffs to keep content fresh.

At minimum, newsrooms should establish a process and assign responsibilities for posting local news on a regular basis. Identify those items that are collected each day. It sends a poor message to readers and advertisers if the top headlines remain static for a week.

Other sections are more challenging. For example, content for the editorial and business pages is not as easily generated on a daily basis. Readers also might not have the same expectations for seeing a new headline each day. For these and other sections, brainstorm addition-

al content that does not necessarily have to be produced by staff.

For example:

**Editorial page:** Most editors receive a steady stream of submissions from a variety of trade associations, think tanks, advocacy organization, lawmakers and other policymakers. There's a good bet a lot of this never sees your printed edition. Is your website a fit? Pay particular attention to contrary viewpoints on the same issue, and publish them side-by-side as a point/counterpoint.

**Business page:** Here's an idea to produce fresh content and generate some revenue. Offer businesses a profile – a photo/text package and/or a self-produced video – as part of an advertising package. They're a great read to rotate on the site.

**Lifestyle pages:** Local residents will likely welcome the opportunity to contribute articles on topics ranging from cooking and gardening to book and movie reviews to a host of other subjects.

That's a start. Brainstorm content within your newspaper family; seek opinions from employees in all departments that likely represent a cross-section of your community. Solicit ideas from readers as well, but make it clear that the final decisions rest with the newspaper.

Community newspapers proudly promote themselves as the "go to" source for professional journalism and trustworthy advertising. It's a great message that should be repeated often – and then delivered in convincing fashion – to readers

and advertisers in today's challenging and fractured media landscape.

Promoting your brand rings hollow without following through in daily practice.

*Jim Pumarlo writes, speaks and provides training on community newsroom success strategies. He is author of "Journalism Primer: A Guide to Community News Coverage," "Votes and Quotes: A Guide to Outstanding Election Coverage" and "Bad News and Good Judgment: A Guide to Reporting on Sensitive Issues in Small-Town Newspapers." He can be reached at [www.pumarlo.com](http://www.pumarlo.com) and welcomes comments and questions at [jim@pumarlo.com](mailto:jim@pumarlo.com).*

## TPA directory cover photo contest

Whether you are a photographer or not, all TPA members are encouraged to submit a scenic photo in the 2020 Tennessee Newspaper Directory Cover Photo Contest. Entries are being accepted through June 26. Photos should reflect scenic Tennessee through landscapes, architecture, wildlife and/or nature photography. The prize is \$200 and photo credit in the 2020 directory.

The winning entry, to be selected by popular vote of TPA member newspapers, will be featured as the primary image on the cover of the newest edition of the Tennessee Newspaper Directory coming out in September 2020.

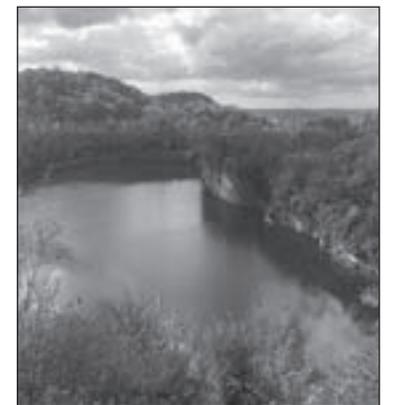
The contest is open to all employees of TPA member newspapers. Entries must have been taken by a regular staff member or employee of a member newspaper and may include published and/or non-published photographs. Multiple entries by one photographer may be submitted.

**Specifications:** Photos must be submitted as digital files in color (minimum size 8.5 x 11 at 300 resolution) by uploading the file to <https://tinyurl.com/TPA-Photo-Contest>. Vertical images that can be displayed as 8.5 by 11 photos work best for the cover design.

Entry information should then be emailed to TPA Member Ser-



Examples of the main cover image of some recent Tennessee Newspaper Directories. TPA is inviting members to submit a photo for the 2020 cover contest.



vices Manager Robyn Gentile at [rgentile@tnpress.com](mailto:rgentile@tnpress.com) with the file name, name of the photographer, newspaper, contact phone number and some information about the subject/location photographed.

### NEWS from Page 3

overflow hospital, Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland confirmed April 13.

That building, which the paper vacated last year, will join the vacant retail space at Gateway Shopping Center as the overflow space provided to Memphis and Shelby County by the expertise of the U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers with state of Tennessee assistance.

Strickland said the CA building will be the primary hospital used and the shopping center on Jackson Avenue would be the secondary facility.

*The Commercial Appeal, Memphis April 13, 2020*

### Tennessee Newspaper Hall of Fame nominations due by Aug. 31 for possible 2021 induction

All nominees must be deceased two or more years prior to the nomination. Nomination form available at [tnpress.com/hall-of-fame/](http://tnpress.com/hall-of-fame/) or contact [rgentile@tnpress.com](mailto:rgentile@tnpress.com) for the form.

# Newsroom communication in the time of COVID-19

FRED ANKLAM JR.  
Columbia Missourian  
April 20, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has newsroom managers facing an extraordinary moment in journalism — our entire profession forced to adjust on the fly to how it goes about its daily work.

Meeting that challenge at the Columbia Missourian — with an entire newsroom staff working remotely, many in different states — requires clear, effective internal communication. Admittedly, we have a younger, less-experienced team (all college students). The steps we have taken can apply to any size newsroom and are worth sharing. What we have done:

## Select one newsroom communication channel

It's one thing to use a rambling combination of email, text messages, phone calls, digital channel conversations — even calling out loud across the room — to stay up to speed when your team circulates through the newsroom every day. Stay at home restrictions forced us to recreate that convulsion of conversation and information transfer in one new digital place.

There are many messaging options, and a newsroom should use what's handy and comfortable. We already used Slack here for some conversations. We simply made it clear as everyone began operating from their own safe space that ALL communication would begin in Slack: reporter check-ins, story pitches and tips, photo requests and so on. We required everyone to sign up, sign in and stay engaged.

By forcing conversation to one internal communication channel, the editor and reporter are in step



Submitted

The Columbia Missourian newsroom before COVID-19.

on the progress of a story, photo and graphics can weigh in with their offerings, and copy editors and designers have a better sense of what's expected. Everyone is automatically in the loop and able to get their work done more efficiently, with a record of the story's progress.

## Use a video calling service for meetings

Get something that fits your organization's budget and is easily used by all. As part of the University of Missouri School of Journalism, all our editors and students had access to Zoom.

The image above is from an 11 a.m. newsroom budget meeting where we talk about what has been published and discuss story assignments. Our reporters are called on to talk about how they went about reporting a story —

addressing obstacles they had to overcome or providing tips to colleagues on what worked.

This video conferencing has real advantages:

- You can see who's talking and who's about to talk so there is less talking over each other;

- Important information — the story budget for the day, for example — can be shared in real time;

- You can see a colleague's reactions to what's being discussed. Seeing heads nodding in agreement helps maintain newsroom camaraderie in difficult times of isolation.

## Add another meeting

I know, the last thing anyone wants is another meeting. But communication is crucial. When editors can't walk over and huddle about a story in the newsroom, meetings help force the critical



Submitted

Columbia Missourian image from an 11 a.m. newsroom budget meeting via Zoom where discussion focuses on what has been published and story assignments.

communication that makes sure everyone is on the same page.

At the Missouriian we added an editors' meeting to start each day at 8:30 a.m. It's an opportunity to hash out who is going to pursue a story, what the expectations are and who has sources or ideas about how to execute the story. It ensures reporters will clearly understand the scope of their stories.

## Stay in constant contact

As the editor managing daily general assignment reporters, I stay in touch more than ever before. I tell reporters I need updates on how the reporting is going. When I don't hear back, I reach out. That means I put a few administrative details (like writing this column) on the back burner. If reporters are in the field — we do very little field reporting now and always at a socially responsible distance — they know to alert me when they are on the scene and update me on how things went before they leave. We have to ensure that we get what's

needed when we have these rare in-person events.

Recently I was Slacking with a photographer off and on over a 20-minute period, providing information about a photo shoot at a dairy processing plant: What we had been promised for access, what we hoped to illustrate through the images, how much time to spend on the assignment — all things we normally would have covered in the newsroom. The benefits are obvious when the stories arrive well executed with no surprises and illustrated as best as can be expected in today's circumstances.

These tips have proved effective and are hopefully helpful as we all learn new ways to do our jobs. Underlying basics like these are a good foundation for newsroom communication in a time of COVID-19 — and maybe well beyond.

*Fred Anklam Jr. is senior editor of the Columbia Missourian and writes for the Reynolds Journalism Institute about innovative steps being taken in that newsroom..*

# RJI offers journalists a one-stop webpage with COVID-19 resources

SUBMITTED  
Reynolds Journalism Institute  
April 14, 2020

Tips, tools and advice about journalism and COVID-19 have been plentiful. And that's a great thing. But because they're flying around the internet in emails, newsletters and blog posts, it can sometimes be hard to find what you're looking for. The Donald W. Reynolds Jour-

nalism Institute can help.

A one-stop webpage has been created that includes an index of articles, tips, tools and advice all collated by Dorothy Carner, Missouri School of Journalism head librarian, and Sandy Schiefer, the Journalism Research and Digital Access Librarian at the Columbia Missouriian Library.

The information is there to

assist journalists trying to report the news during this period of global pandemic and social distancing.

"Our list is a good place to start and a good place to come back to as things change," said Randy Picht, RJI's executive director.

"Having two librarians on the case, finding the most relevant links and keeping everything updated, is a

wonderful thing."

RJI COVID-19 resources:

<https://www.rjionline.org/covid19resources>

The resources page contains sections devoted to tips and tools for journalists, information on grants and funding, advice and help for freelance journalists, how to manage your people and your balance sheet through this crisis,

resources available through journalism advocates and associations, how to engage with the community, organizations offering funding relief not specific to journalism.

Also available on the site is a list of upcoming RJI webinars presented by Kat Duncan, RJI's interim director of innovation, as well as links to recordings of past webinars.

TPA MEMBER COVERAGE SHOWCASE I: Cleveland Daily Banner

# Fretting over toilet paper anxiety? Resolute's got your back (end)

**TIM SINIARD**  
Cleveland Daily Banner  
March 27, 2020

Resolute Forest Products in Calhoun, Tenn., is producing bathroom tissue at heightened capacity in response to shortages caused by panic buying brought about by the novel coronavirus outbreak.

According to Debbie Johnston, public affairs director for the United States market, the Calhoun plant — which is one of Resolute's three mills that produce tissue for retail and industrial markets — is now manufacturing only one grade of tissue paper in order to make way for increased production.

"We have reduced the tissue options we offer in order to produce more," Johnston said.

Manufacturing just one grade of tissue will increase capacity because the machine used to produce bathroom tissue will not require retooling to make different grades of tissue — imprinted paper, for example — for its private-label customers.

"For the time being, we are minimizing changes to produce less varieties," she said.

Resolute's Calhoun plant pro-

duces premium private-label tissue, while the company's Hialeah and Sanford mills, both located in Florida, manufacture branded, as well as private-label grades.

The plant, which employs 569 workers, produces 66,000 short tons of premium tissue annually. In addition, the plant manufactures market pulp and specialized paper.

According to Resolute's website, its tissue products are "manufactured from recycled pulp and/or from virgin fiber, almost exclusively from the company's internal pulp network."

Resolute recently invested more than \$400 million in the Calhoun mill to improve efficiency, add capacity, and install a new tissue manufacturing and conversion operation, including a \$270 million tissue machine.

The mill was constructed in 1954, and is one of the largest pulp, paper and tissue manufacturing facilities in North America.

The sudden stockpiling that is wiping out retail shelves — from grocery stores to department stores and discount sites in between — is expected to last for weeks as resolution of the viral outbreak remains

uncertain.

Costco Wholesale Corporation's Chief Financial Officer Richard Galanti described the buying frenzy as "off the charts" throughout the U.S. in a call with investors this week, the Associated Press reported.

One AP account stated some, like Kroger Company, are now placing limits on certain items such as cold and flu-related products to five each per order.

Major retailers are in talks with suppliers to replenish shelves stripped bare by hordes of shoppers who descended on the stores to stock up for possible quarantines, which last up to 14 days.

In addition, "the New Jersey-based Campbell Soup Co. said it's stepping up production because of increased orders from grocery stores and other retailers as demand started growing this week," according to the AP.

The shortages caused by the frenzied buying has resulted in frustrated customers, as well as a flood of memes appearing on social media poking fun at the shortage.

Some irate toilet-tissue hunters



Submitted photo

A Resolute Forest Products employee, above, inspects paper towels produced at one of the manufacturer's North American plants.

have called 911 for assistance, according to a message posted on an Oregon police department's social media page.

"It's hard to believe that we even have to post this," the Newport

Police Department stated. "Do not call 911 just because you ran out of toilet paper. You will survive without our assistance ... we cannot

See **PAPER** Page 12

TPA MEMBER COVERAGE SHOWCASE II: The Mountain Press, Sevierville

# Tennessee distilleries going all-in on hand sanitizer

**JASON DAVIS**  
The Mountain Press, Sevierville  
March 25, 2020

When life hands you lemons, the old saying goes, you make lemonade. In these times, when anyone hands you something, you reach for hand sanitizer.

With that precious commodity flying off retail shelves weeks ago, local moonshine and whiskey distilleries saw an opportunity to help their community and country, while also ensuring their employees have plenty of work to do.

The morning of March 24, a Tuesday, master distillers and other officials from three separate distilleries met in Pigeon Forge to discuss ramping up their efforts to produce huge sums of medical-grade hand sanitizer, while just miles down the road a professional race car

driver and his family's distillery were working on their own efforts to meet local needs.

In a move mirroring that of many liquor manufacturers across the country, a number of area moonshine companies — including Sugarlands Distilling Company, Old Forge Distillery, Old Tennessee Distilling Company and Tennessee Shine Company — have switched production from drinkable spirits to crafting hand sanitizer.

Others, like Ole Smoky Moonshine, are preparing to begin their transition to the much-needed product.

With the go-ahead from state regulators, several local distillers are combining their efforts while others are going it alone.

## Teamwork among competitors



The Mountain Press photos by Jason Davis

A group of distillers met in Pigeon Forge March 24 to discuss their plan to tackle the widespread need for hand sanitizer. From left, Greg Eidam of Sugarland Distilling Company; Old Forge Distillery's head distiller Keener Shanton; and master distiller Jason Franklin and company president Kent Merritt of Old Tennessee Distilling Company stand at a fermentation tank at Old Forge.

Several distilling companies in Sevier County, all of which are part of the Tennessee Whiskey Trail and affiliated with the

Tennessee Distillers Guild, are working in concert to gather supplies, distill, mix and distribute sanitizer.

Old Forge Distillery's head distiller Keener Shanton hosted Sugarlands Distilling's head distiller Greg Eidam, master distiller Jason Franklin and company president Kent Merritt of Old Tennessee Distilling Company to discuss the group's plans.

Eidam said he first thought about the arising need for hand sanitizer when his own business's supply was running short.

"I think we were all thinking there's a need here and trying to assess what that need was," Eidam said. "We're all good friends and so, basically, we started talking and said, 'There's a bigger need than what we realized, let's figure this out.'"

"There's a lot of legal aspects from the (Tennessee Tax and

See **SANITIZER** Page 12

# County locks out Knox News reporter from coronavirus media update

**HAYES HICKMAN**  
**Knoxville News Sentinel**  
**May 8, 2020**

A Knox News reporter who covers the science of the coronavirus crisis was barred by a Knox County official from participating in the Friday, May 8, health department media briefing.

Science, technology and culture reporter Vincent Gabrielle has pressed the health department during the briefings - conducted every weekday online in the Zoom video conferencing tool - for specific information about the data it is using to inform its decisions.

In a piece published online May 7 and in print May 8, Gabrielle explained the health department has repeatedly refused to explain the targets used to make sure the county is hitting its marks during each phase of its three-phase reopening plan.

When Gabrielle, who holds a master's degree in immunology and microbial disease from Albany Medical College, tried to dial into Friday's Zoom media briefing, he was unable to enter. When he texted the health department's media line to ask if there was a technical problem, an unidentified representative responded: "For the time being I've been asked to refer you to (county spokesman) Mike Donila."

Knox News Executive Editor Joel Christopher said the county government's actions are inappropriate and alarming.

"What all of us don't know right now are how literal life-and-death decisions are being made by the people we pay to act in our collective interests," Christopher said. "In the midst of a public health crisis, every reputable medical and crisis response expert says clear communication with the public, through media, is vital. Even if an agency doesn't have the answer, saying so has been proven to build public trust."

Donila told Knox News late Friday he made the decision to bar Gabrielle because of "unprofessional behavior directed toward the Health Department and his inaccurate reporting that has been constantly riddled with half-truths, missing facts and a constant false narrative."

He went on to point out that Christopher was allowed in at the end of the media briefing to ask



**Gabrielle**

questions. "Invitations to these calls are courtesies provided by Knox County and not mandated by law," Donila said.

Christopher said he stands by Gabrielle's professional conduct and reporting, which also relies on interviews and assessments by some of the nation's top epidemiologists, crisis communicators and science professors. County officials have not raised concerns about the reporting previously, Christopher said, and Donila gave no specifics in his statement:

"The media briefings also are livestreamed to the community on YouTube and Facebook, and anyone can watch the daily update, which includes vital community safety information and an update on the latest coronavirus numbers, including case counts, deaths, hospitalizations and recoveries.

"Gabrielle, like the rest of the public, is free to watch these meetings on the Facebook livestream and the livestream available on the Health Department's website."

But only reporters in the Zoom can ask questions. Journalists type their questions into the Zoom chat, and they are read aloud to the person conducting the briefing, usually Dr. Martha Buchanan, health department director, or one of her deputies. Donila said Gabrielle will be allowed to attend the Monday briefing.

Christopher said Knox News always prefers to resolve issues outside of a courtroom, but would not shy away from legal action if necessary. "We're simply looking for government officials to answer the legitimate questions we've posed on the public's behalf."

Knox News began asking last week what exact targets the county is using to show progress after the health department unveiled its website showing how well Knox County is progressing toward goals that allow for more businesses to open and social distancing guidelines to be relaxed.

Knox News has submitted those questions in writing to the Knox County COVID-19 Joint Information Center and during the daily media briefings. Throughout the



**Christopher**

past week, Knox County officials punted on when they would answer those questions.

Gabrielle said the county's presentation on its website showing its success meeting benchmarks without saying what the targets are is akin to a teacher giving a student an A without saying which work was actually evaluated.

Here are some of the questions Gabrielle has posed to the health department:

- Based on data made available by your department, it appears Knox County has not been hit as hard as other places. That would point to a success story that Knox County should be trumpeting, but it's impossible to do that without knowing all the underlying data. Does the health department intend to tell that full story, undergirded by data, and if so, when and how?

- You have said that you rely on multiple models when making decisions about Knox County, but you have not specified which models you are using. Please list the models you are using when making decisions about Knox County.

- Do these models calculate our effective transmission number? If so, please tell us what the effective transmission (R) is.

- You've said in multiple news conferences that you'll base decisions on "data" but you have not provided specific metrics or benchmarks you use to make decisions. What specific data, metrics and benchmarks will trigger a change in policy? If you are declining to provide those benchmarks, please explain why.

- You have said you're tracking COVID-like illness and clinical presentation of COVID. When are you going to make that information public?

- What are the raw case numbers, the incidence and prevalence of COVID-like illness in the county?

- The state and federal government have been tracking COVID-like illness in emergency rooms since at least February using the syndromic surveillance network. That's also part of the county-level

pandemic plan. Have you been tracking COVID-like illness using this system? If not, why not?

- The scientific process is constantly evolving, and includes uncertainty. What are some of the limitations of the information you're using and how are you accounting for it in your decision-making?

Deborah Fisher, executive director of the Tennessee Coalition

for Open Government, called the county's intentional move to shut out Gabrielle "concerning."

"They shouldn't be able to pick and choose which reporters get to ask questions," Fisher said. "The public expects reporters to ask hard questions."

"I don't see any reason for denying a reporter access just because they ask hard questions or a question you don't like."

## Banning Knox News reporter described as 'less than ideal'

**TYLER WHETSTONE**  
**Knoxville News Sentinel**  
**May 12, 2020**

Knox County Health Department Director Martha Buchanan said Monday, May 11, it was the county mayor's office, not her, who blocked a Knox News reporter from Friday's daily coronavirus crisis briefing.

Buchanan addressed Friday's events, where Knox News science reporter Vincent Gabrielle was denied access to the Zoom videoconferencing meeting, at the outset of Monday's briefing.

"The decision not to allow a reporter into the virtual media briefing was not made by myself or my staff," she said. "It was a decision made by the county's communications director that we had to honor."

"The way things played out on Friday was less than ideal, but I still stand by the volume of information we are providing to the community, the frequency which we've made ourselves available and the work of my staff."

The health department says it was working to provide the requested information and had

said it would deliver it by Friday. It put out a release around 6:30 p.m. Friday that answered many of the questions.

"As it was mentioned in the media briefing, those in the media who have consistently worked with us over the years can attest to our commitment to availability and transparency," said Amy Dolinsky, a health department spokesperson.

When Gabrielle, who holds a master's degree in immunology and microbial disease from Albany Medical College, tried to dial into Friday's Zoom media briefing, he was unable to enter. When he texted the health department's media line to ask if there was a technical problem, an unidentified representative responded: "For the time being I've been asked to refer you to (county spokesman) Mike Donila."

Donila later told Knox News he had ordered Gabrielle's exclusion because he was unhappy with his reporting. Gabrielle participated in Monday's briefing.

"We were happy to hear Dr. Buchanan's explanation of Friday's events," said Joel Christopher, Knox News executive editor.



### Tennessee Press Service Advertising Placement Snapshot

|                      | ROP:      | Networks: |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| April 2020           | \$45,217  | \$16,718  |
| Year* as of April 30 | \$575,495 | \$63,914  |

\* The TPS Fiscal Year runs Dec. 1 through Nov. 30

## TRACKS

### Williams retires at Times, succeeded by Bone

Jamie Bone of Lewisburg has succeeded Lucy Carter Williams as publisher of The Elk Valley Times, as announced by Brian Blackley, vice president of weekly Tennessee newspapers for Lakeway Publishers Inc.

Williams retired from The Times at the end of April after 32 years at the paper. She first joined the newspaper in the summer of 1982 as a student reporter and then returned in 1988 after accepting the editor's position. She had served as editor, publisher, and chief executive officer since 1990.



Lucy Carter Williams

As he prepared to name a new editor to succeed Lucy Williams, Blackley noted that the new editor would also succeed Sandy Williams, who served as The Times' news editor across a career with the newspaper that spanned 31 years. Sandy Williams has joined the Fayetteville City School System. Under their leadership, The Times won numerous Tennessee Press Association awards, including first place in Best



Bone

Breaking News Coverage for 2019.

"I want to congratulate Jamie on his new role here at the EVT," said Lucy Williams. "I have every confidence that he will work

hard to preserve the critical role of our newspaper in the community.

"I would like to thank Lakeway for the opportunity to serve my hometown in this capacity for the last three decades," she said. "Too, I would like to thank Sandy and the rest of my staff for their dedication

and loyalty – the staff here has always been truly committed to providing Fayetteville and Lincoln County with the best community newspaper possible."

Bone joins The Times after serving as state area director for Bios Corp., small business counselor with the University of North Alabama, and career counselor with Goodwill Career Solutions. His experience also includes an eight-year stint as editor and general manager of the Marshall County Tribune in Lewisburg, where he also formerly served as mayor and chief executive officer for four years.

"Lucy and her staff have built a great community newspaper here

in Fayetteville," said Bone. "I hope to build on that and continue to provide Lincoln County with the very best local news of people, government, business, schools, sports and those things affecting our daily lives.

"We'll continue to work hard to fulfill our obligation to keep readers informed. The newspaper business has changed a great deal over the years, and The Times has done a good job of adapting."

Bone is a graduate of Southwest Bible College, Belmont University, and Columbia State Community College.

*Elk Valley Times, Fayetteville  
April 21, 2020*

## TPA members share wide-ranging suggestions for other members via Zoom

**ROBYN GENTILE**  
TPA Member Services Manager  
May 1, 2020

TPA members participated in April 29 Zoom video meetings to share ideas. Following is the summary of ideas and topics from publishers, editors and ad directors. We hope you will participate in future Zoom meetings when they are announced.

### Advertising Ideas:

Advertising Grants —This idea was shared with publishers and again in the advertising group meeting. Many papers are offering this and approaches are different.

One paper is offering ad grants starting at \$500. The advertiser gets \$500 of advertising to use in May, June or July, but must spend \$500 before the end of the year. For others, it is a buy-now, get-the-free-ads later. One paper is offering the matching ad grants starting at \$100 in value. Another paper is offering matching ad grants for the month of May only (to be reviewed and considered for extension). Another paper is offering a buy-one ad, get-one free. One participant said they have upsized ads for customers that have stuck with them. The Mountain Press said of the 20 ad grants that have been applied for, 18 were from new or inactive advertisers.

Most papers have done something saluting essential workers. Most participants said they are working on graduation sections now. Some are doing something

for Nurses week (May 6-12) and several are working on something for Mother's Day.

Roger Wells of the Cookeville Herald-Citizen said they are seeing an increase in advertising for telehealth and encourages other papers to pursue that type of business. He also said they are expanding their graduation section with ads from parents and grandparents at a non-profit rate.

Shelia Rouse of The State Gazette, Dyersburg, shared this idea during the publisher's meeting — Advertiser brackets. They had already sold a four-week run of a business card-sized ads to advertisers around March Madness. Since the games were canceled, they went ahead and did brackets with advertisers. Each week, they did a Facebook Live event coin toss to determine which advertisers moved into the next round. The winner of the final round received a full page, full color ad as their prize. The cost to advertisers was \$40 per week. This might be something fun that your newspaper could adapt.

Richard Clark of the Johnson City Press said they created a "What's Open" page. They are also doing an online graduation section with an upsell. They purchased a ready-to-go COVID-19 section and secured sponsorship from Food City. On their buy-one, get-one ads, the customer chooses the paid run day and the paper runs the second one on a day of its choosing. Clark says he likes to buy prepared creative, which saves time and usually

money, too.

Joi Whaley of The Daily Times of Maryville said any time they sell an ad they include the cost of an ad for their online service directory. She also talked about offering targeted email campaigns for clients.

Joe Martin said The Tullahoma News has a monthly medical publication that it is expanding during the crisis.

### Editorial Ideas:

The Tri-State Defender of Memphis is planning to publish the speeches of the valedictorians. The newspaper also selected three local people to follow during the COVID-19 crisis with updates on what they have been experiencing. One is a barber, one has food businesses at the airport and one works for a non-profit. Editor Karanja Ajanaku said people are reacting well to photos. He told of the TSD Covid-19 Flash Blog and how it saw an uptick when he added music.

The Chattanooga Times Free Press had a Zoom meeting with reporter Elizabeth Fite, who is the lead on the Coronavirus coverage, and invited subscribers to participate. Since it was the first one, they limited the number but had approximately 45 people including some of the papers editors. They have another one planned for next week to feature the Chamber of Commerce, the small business association and readers who will ask questions.

• The Chattanooga Times Free Press also launched a digital

resources page for families <https://www.timesfreepress.com/tfpfamilies/>

The group provides the content and the CTFP has an e-newsletter that goes out to let people know about new posts.

The Times Free Press also launched a community survey using Google Forms. They sent it Monday and had over 1,000 responses. Questions asked the respondents things such as whether or not they will dine in a restaurant when restaurants re-open for dining. The last question asks if the CTFP business editor may contact you. They will take the data and create a story.

The TFP is staying in touch with reporters and editors with daily Zoom calls and by using Slack.

Friends Indeed — The features editor of the Times Free Press is highlighting goodness and acts of kindness and asks readers to engage. It is published every Sunday and is being considered for twice a week.

Sports—Several papers said their sports pages are now more engaging than they were before the pandemic. And, they plan to keep it that way. They are very focused on features now. One example is the Johnson City Press.

Crockett County Times editor Cynthia Kilburn said their paper is talking to the seniors who missed out on their spring sports and asking them what their favorite memory from their participation in sports is. For the summer, she

plans to revive a feature on people who used to play sports in their county — focusing on how sports benefited their lives.

Cynthia also said they are running pieces and photos of seniors signing with colleges since they didn't get their "signing day."

The Johnson City Press is focusing on keeping the faces of people on their front page every day. Sam Watson said their Wednesday paper featured a drive-by birthday party.

See **SUGGESTIONS** Page 12

## Free webinars for TPA members

June 11  
Self Care for Journalists

June 18  
Let's Talk Recruitment Marketing

Register at  
[www.OnlineMediaCampus.com](http://www.OnlineMediaCampus.com)  
Contact [rgentile@tnpress.com](mailto:rgentile@tnpress.com)  
for the coupon code.

All archived webinars are free to TPA members.  
Contact TPA for the code.

## Tennessean snags six first-place awards in annual Associated Press contest

**BRINLEY HINEMAN**  
The Tennessean, Nashville  
April 24, 2020

The Tennessean, Nashville, was honored with six first-place awards in the Tennessee Associated Press Broadcasters and Media Editors' annual contest.

The honors include first place for sports, editorials, investigative, photos and business.

Tennessean reporters Anita Wadhvani, Natalie Allison and Brett Kelman won a Malcolm Law Award for Investigative Reporting for their work on how the state was stockpiling \$730 million meant for poor working families.

The Malcolm Law Award is one of the most prestigious honors in Tennessee journalism.

"I am extremely proud of our journalists and their accomplishments," said Maria De Varenne, executive editor of The Tennessean. "From our beat reporting and investigative reporting to our feature writing and visual journalism, we continue to illuminate the stories of importance in our community. Our journalists hold those in



Sparks



Nelles



Wadhvani



Whitney



Kelman



Plazas



Mazza



Walker



Bliss



McCormack



Reicher



Allison



Skrbina

power accountable for their actions, give voice to those less fortunate and shine a spotlight on the unsung heroes who help others. It is gratifying to have their work recognized."

Wadhvani was also named the newspaper Journalist of the Year by the AP.

The Tennessean received the following honors:

- Newspaper Journalist of the Year: Anita Wadhvani
- Sports-Outdoors: First place, Paul Skrbina; Third place, Adam Sparks
- Business News: First place, Sandy Mazza; Second place, Anita Wadhvani and Mike Reicher
- Editorials: First place, David Plazas; Third place, David Plazas
- Malcolm Law Award for Investigative Reporting: First, Anita

- Wadhvani, Natalie Allison and Brett Kelman; Third place, Anita Wadhvani and Mike Reicher
- Sports Photography: First place, Andrew Nelles; Third place, George Walker IV
- Photojournalism: First place, Mark Zaleski; Second place, Larry McCormack
- Features: Second place, Jessica Bliss

- Video: Second place, Andrew Nelles; Third place, Ayrika L. Whitney
- Multimedia: Second place, The Tennessean staff; Third place, The Tennessean staff

• Individual Achievement / Body of Work in Photography: Third, Andrew Nelles

Jamie Satterfield of the Knoxville News-Sentinel was the recipient of the John Seigenthaler Award of Excellence for her work on the Kingston coal ash workers. Like The Tennessean, the News Sentinel is part of the USA TODAY Network - Tennessee.

The Daily News Journal in Murfreesboro won 14 awards; The Leaf Chronicle in Clarksville won 13 awards; The Jackson Sun won 10 awards; The Knoxville News Sentinel won six awards; and The Commercial Appeal in Memphis won five awards. These papers are all part of USA TODAY Network - Tennessee newsrooms.

## Knox News' biggest stories, photos and videos honored with AP awards

**ALLIE CLOUSE**  
Knoxville News Sentinel  
April 30, 2020

Knox News was honored with six awards by the Tennessee Associated Press Broadcasters and Media Editors for its work in 2019, including the coveted John Seigenthaler Award of Excellence.

"Life-changing investigations, powerful accountability journalism, a gripping whodunit, delightful storytelling and captivating photos and videos — we are there for you where it matters most," said Joel Christopher, Knox News editor.

Investigative journalist Jamie Satterfield was honored with the Seigenthaler, Tennessee's most prestigious journalism award, for "Legacy of Coal Ash." Over 25 months, Satterfield revealed new evidence that the Tennessee Valley Authority knew the coal ash waste its power plants produced was toxic even as it sent hundreds of workers to toil in a massive 2008 cleanup of the nation's largest coal ash spill.

"There is no reporter who fights harder to uncover the truth



McMekin



Mattheis



Hickman



Satterfield



Wilusz

for East Tennesseans, taking on powerful people and institutions who don't have your best interests front and center," Christopher said. "Jamie Satterfield loves this place and its people and her passion permeates all her work."

This is the second straight year Satterfield has won the Seigenthaler.

Urban life writer Ryan Wilusz took first place in features for his thoughtful story about a 78-year-old Knoxville resident and the rebirth of the city's downtown. "Downtown's growth takes patience — take it from Miss P" tells the history of 25 years of the city from "drug deals in front of boarded-up windows to families taking photos in front of beauti-

fully renovated buildings."

Wilusz worked closely with Calvin Mattheis, a Knox News photographer who introduced Wilusz to "Miss P."

"We learned about every picture on her walls and heard every downtown story she could remember. We even dug into our files to find old News Sentinel stories about her," Wilusz said. "Calvin, Patti and I had fun. And, honestly, this is one of the most enjoyable stories I have ever worked on. ... If there's one thing I hope this story proved is that everyone has a story to tell. And that's why this award means so much."

Caitie McMekin, a Knox News photographer, won first place for her video "Olivia Shines," a touch-

ing tribute to a Farragut High School basketball player with Down Syndrome. The video features multiple voices, cinematic shots and an intimate view from the family's perspective.

McMekin also was awarded second place in spot news photography for her dedication to capturing the aftermath of historic flooding in 2019. "One minute I was sitting at home in my pajamas; the next I was racing out to find an overturned firetruck in rising flood waters," McMekin said.

"There are very few jobs where you can go up to a stranger and say you want to tell their story, and then they invite you into their home, with a camera," McMekin said. "At the end, they aren't strangers anymore, and you learn a lot from them in the process."

The Knoxville News Sentinel also won first place in the multi-

media contest for "The Fritts Conundrum," a compilation of coverage from the summer of 2019, when a Knox County Sheriff's Office detective called for the violent persecution of LGBTQ+ people in a sermon. The newsroom came together to cover the story from all angles, committing the time, space and resources to report the hard truth without amplifying the hate-filled message. The entry was shepherded by multimedia journalist Angela Gosnell.

Hayes Hickman, a news reporter, took third place for his feature story about an unsolved mystery involving the torso of Paul Hurst, a local Golden Gloves welterweight champion, that still haunts Knoxville 40 years later. The story is full of twists and turns and ends with Sunny Hurst, the boxer's son, becoming an investigator to find his father's killer.

"Your story is our story, and vice versa," Christopher said. "We've been with you for generations, and we ask for your support to keep creating our collective history."

# Herald Courier rakes in awards in Tennessee AP contest

**SUBMITTED**  
**Bristol Herald Courier**  
**April 26, 2020**

The Bristol Herald Courier has won several awards, including the Outstanding News Operations Newspaper, from the Tennessee Associated Press Broadcasters and Media Editors 2019 Contest.

The newspaper beat several newspapers, including daily papers in Knoxville, Nashville and Memphis, to win the Outstanding News Operations Newspaper contest.

In Division II, which includes the Bristol Herald Courier, the newspaper won first place in the Malcolm Law Award for Investigative Reporting for its "Critical Mass" project about jail overcrowding.

Judges said the Herald Courier's "thorough, stinging and deeply reported journalism shows work that clearly took remarkable planning and effort to execute. Articles, photos, multimedia all told engaging and important stories,



Adams



Crigger



Cumber



Greiss



Hayes

Sullivan County Sheriff's Office Sgt. Steve Hinkle. Sorrell, Lowery and reporter Leif Greiss also won second place in Daily Deadline for "Jr. Survives Plane Crash."

recognition and these awards in the Tennessee Associated Press Broadcasters and Media Editors 2019 Contest," Publisher Jim Maxwell said. "To be recognized as the Outstanding News Operation Newspaper, in the state of Tennessee, is both humbling and a testament to the exceptional work our newsroom produces."

Maxwell said the all-hands-on-deck investigative and multimedia reporting effort to produce "Critical Mass" was "truly ground-breaking."

"It is extremely gratifying for the Herald Courier to receive the first place award in the Malcolm Law Investigative Reporting category for this exceptional effort," Maxwell said. "Our news team leaders continue to position our organization ahead of the curve when reporting on important issues in our community. All of the awards being received validate the good work our news professionals including reporters, editors and photographers do every day."



Lowery



McGee



Sorrell



Teague

and the community engagement efforts were an excellent value-added component for readers."

Sports writer Tim Hayes won first place in Sports-Outdoors. Allen Gregory won third place in the category.

Cliff Cumber won second place in

Editorials while Dalena Adams, David McGee and David Crigger won third place for "Critical Mass: Part 1" in the video category.

In Daily Deadline, reporter Robert Sorrell and former reporter Lurah Lowery won first place for "Tragic Day," about the death of

In Sports Photography, Andre Teague won first place for "Minor League Pitch." David Crigger won second place for "Eyes on the Quarterback" and third place for "The Catch."

Teague also won third place for "Deputy Shot and Killed" in the Spot News Photography category. In Photojournalism, Crigger won third place for "Bristol Rhythm and Roots Festival."

In Individual Achievement/Body of Work in Photography, Teague won second and Crigger won third in the category.

"In these extraordinary times, it's very exciting to receive this

# Sun staffers win awards in AP journalism contest

**SUBMITTED**  
**The Greeneville Sun**  
**April 25, 2020**

The Greeneville Sun won 13 awards in the annual Tennessee Associated Press Broadcasters and Media Editors competition for work produced in 2019.

The AP competition, which received more than 840 entries, is sponsored by Middle Tennessee State University's School of Journalism and Strategic Media.

The Sun's entries in categories spanning writing, reporting, photography, videography and multimedia use competed with those submitted by newspapers with circulations up to 15,000, including papers in Athens, Cleveland, Cookeville, Crossville, Dyersburg, McMinnville, Murfreesboro, Oak Ridge, Paris, Sevierville, Shelbyville, Tullahoma and Union City.

The Sun's awards included five first-place recognitions and a sweep of the multimedia category.

Individual winners: director of online operations Brian Cutshall won first place in spot news photography for "Battling The Cold"; second place in feature photography for "Rockin' Into The Night"; and third place in videos for "Emotional



Cutshall



Little



Goff



Reneau



Bundy



Jenkins



Russell

'Last' Meeting After 1949 Murder."

Cutshall and reporter Ken Little teamed up to win first place in the multimedia category for "Rains, Floods Batter Greene County."

Former editor Michael Reneau won second place in the multimedia category for "Company Asks To Renew Water Permit" and third place in multimedia for "No Jail Time, But Bryant, Courts Have Tussled Over Debt."

Little also won second place in

Jenkins won first place in editorial writing and first place in feature photography for "Fall Flurries."

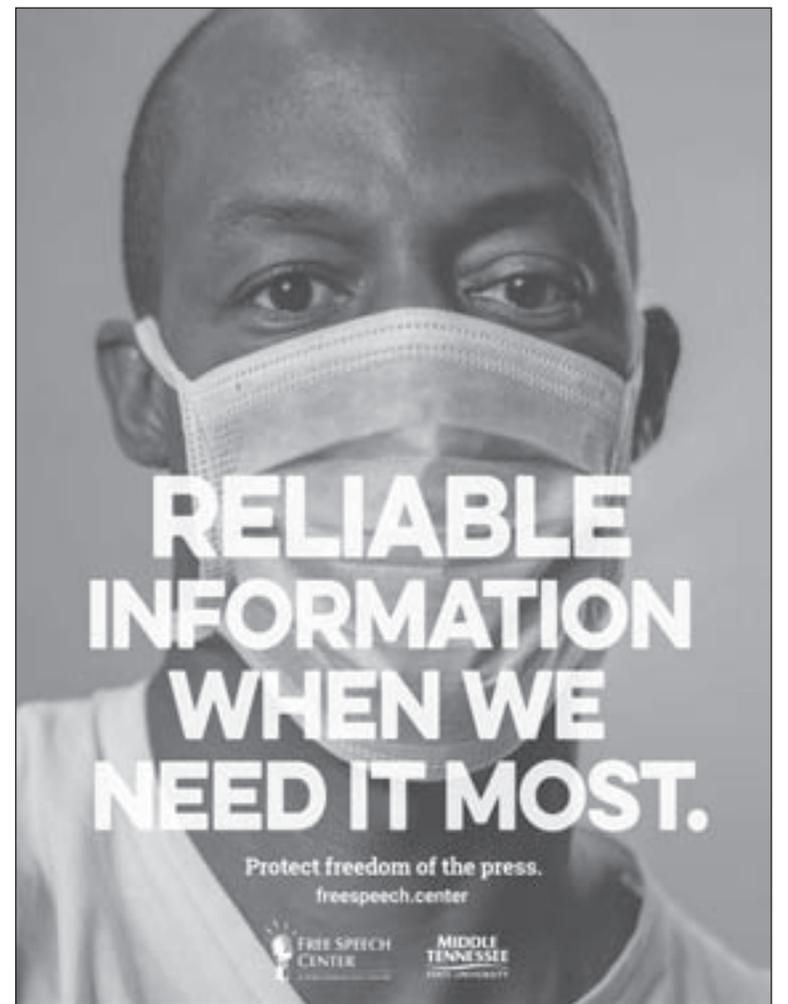
Assistant Sports Editor Tate Russell won first place in sports photography for "Go Team Go!"

Lifestyles Editor Lorelei Goff won second place in business writing for "Hemp Growers Optimistic, Uncertain."

Sports Editor Sam Bundy won third place in sports-outdoors for "Bundy's Best!"

daily deadline reporting for "Resident Recalls Arson At Home" and third place in daily deadline reporting for "Firefighters Surrounded By Flames."

Editor Scott



## SUGGESTIONS from Page 9

The paper has a feature on its website to tell what is open. The paper keeps an alert the top of the web page with the state and regional COVID-19 numbers and both of these items go into its daily newsletter.

One editor said they have been spending a lot of time getting their paper online.

## Governing Bodies Meeting Online

Sam Watson of the Johnson City Press said it has been a good process for their community and is in some ways easier with the ability

to connect by Zoom and also to watch the recorded version when necessary. He hopes they will continue the streaming practice after the pandemic.

Tracey Wolfe of Grainger Today said their paper streamed their county commission meeting on their Facebook page.

## Publishers' Discussion Ideas

The Cookeville Herald-Citizen was approached by their local university, Tennessee Tech, to produce a graduation publication for its spring class. Jack McNeely recommends that papers who have not done so, to reach out to local

colleges about doing one for them.

Dave Gould of Main Street Media of Tennessee said they are creating podcasts for their papers and for clients.

## Changes in frequency/switching to postal delivery

The Union City Daily Messenger has recently cut publication days, but says there is more local news in the two days than they had in five. They also supplement with an electronic update on non-print days. Another newspaper is considering a print frequency reduction and also considering switching from

carrier delivery to mail. Their data suggests a 7 to 8 cent savings per piece with mail delivery.

Shelia Rouse of the State Gazette has already been through the process of frequency reduction and, in addition to answering other questions, pointed out that it is crucial to have a good person answering the phone when customers call with concerns or complaints. She says to be sure to have your story together for all staff, but especially for those on the front lines. Brian Blackley of The Tullahoma News shared that they cut a publication day a year ago and it has gone well.

On whether or not to extend subscriptions when changes to frequency are made, one publisher

said don't automatically do it. If print days are cut, you are probably increasing the frequency of online content updates so most subscribers are still being served daily. A suggestion was made that if you get a lot of pushback, particularly from seniors who don't go online, then consider extending their subscriptions. Another suggestion is to create an email update since that may be more appealing to some groups.

Several vendors were mentioned during the discussions. Email me if you would like to know which ones.

Email Robyn Gentile at [rgentile@tnpress.com](mailto:rgentile@tnpress.com)

## PAPER from Page 7

bring you toilet paper."

The police department then gave a brief historical analysis of sanitary measures utilized by human civilization.

"Mayans used corn cobs," the post stated. "Colonial Americans also used the core of the cob. Farmers not only used corn cobs,

but used pages from the Farmers' Almanac."

Newport police said "many Americans took advantage of the numerous pages torn from free catalogs such as Sears and Roebuck."

"The Sears Christmas catalog, four times thicker than the normal catalog, could get a family of three wiped clean from December through Valentine's Day or Saint

Patrick's Day if they were frugal," the post stated.

The department listed additional alternatives to toilet paper, including grocery receipts, newspaper, cloth rags, lace, cotton balls and "that empty toilet paper roll sitting on the holder right now."

"Plus, there are a variety of leaves you can safely use," the police department implored city

residents. "When all else fails, you have magazine pages. Start saving those catalogs you get in the mail that you usually toss into the recycle bin. Be resourceful. Be patient .... this too shall pass. Just don't call 911. We cannot bring you toilet paper."

For those using alternative materials for hygiene — assuming their toilet-paper supply is

exhausted and they can't replenish their supplies due to empty shelves at the store — it is recommended being careful about what is flushed.

Certain materials could clog pipes, and for those with septic tanks, not all types of paper are septic-friendly.

A general rule of thumb: When in doubt, don't flush it.

## SANITIZER from Page 7

Trade Bureau), FDA, and then just the logistics of getting the raw materials. We were like, 'Let's go down this path together.' "

Making sanitizer is actually very similar to making a flavored moonshine, the group said, although it requires a higher alcohol content to start than most anyone would ever drink — something that's nearly pure alcohol.

"You're looking for alcohol that's high proof," Eidam explained. "We're trying to come off the still much, much higher proof. We're trying to get — just buy — bulk alcohol that we can use, and then it's (about) blending it. It's really like making a blended moonshine."

"We're taking some of that sourced, bulk alcohol that is very, very high proof," Shanton said, "and we have actually increased production of our 100-percent corn whiskey to juice that (supplement that high-proof alcohol) so that we can find some kind of an aggregate that still meets the World Health Organization standards."

Most commercial sanitizer is 60-75 percent alcohol, Shanton said, after adding other ingredients —

glycerin and hydrogen peroxide — the group needs to make its sanitizer 80 percent alcohol.

"Which is 160-proof . . . typically higher than any of us are going to distill any kind of a whiskey," Shanton said.

As to where the sanitizer will go, it's primarily going to be pushed toward medical facilities, according to the group.

"We've had nursing homes contacting us and things like that that we need to do first, because they have higher priority," Merritt said.

"Our first 265-gallon blend, that's been spoken for a week," Shanton said.

"We're trying to scale this up to more of a macro distillery size instead of craft, by pooling our resources," Eidam said.

Eventually, the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency may get the sanitizer and distribute it to areas of most critical need.

It's possible the product might one day trickle down to everyday consumers, but as of now medical sites that are in most desperate need will be the recipients of the effort.

Just last week the group's first small batch — which was produced before its efforts were really ramped up — went entirely to a



Lower-proof alcohol is dispensed from a still at Old Forge. That alcohol will be used with other ingredients to convert higher proofed alcohol purchased in bulk to blend hand sanitizer.

state agency in need.

"Somebody from the Tennessee Department of Intellectual Disabilities drove from Middle Tennessee late Friday night, and they took all 13 gallons," Shanton said.

Meanwhile, down the road in Wears Valley, Tennessee Shine Company, also known as Tennessee XXX Moonshine, got the OK



Hand sanitizer, in familiar airplane bottles, await packaging and distribution at Tennessee Shine Company in Wears Valley.

from the TTB and started manufacturing its sanitizer earlier as well.

They've already given away nearly 300 gallons of their non-potable alcohol product.

Proprietor Teddy Jones and his son, 23-year-old Blake Jones, are running off batches of 192-proof alcohol in their distillery, then mixing in the other necessary ingredients, to meet needs around the area.

Teddy said he's been contacted by commercial interests in the

region to stock the product, but to this point the company has given away all of the sanitizer it has made.

He saw the need to move to sanitizer last week, both to help the community and to keep his employees working during a time of great national labor uncertainty.

Once community needs are met, Jones may begin supplying commercial retailers to allow the best distribution to meet the needs of everyday consumers, he said.